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Evaluating Critical Thinking Skills in Moroccan EFL Textbooks: Gateway to English 2 as a Case

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to evaluate critical thinking skills (CTS) in a Moroccan textbook of English as a foreign language entitled Gateway to English 2 (GTE2 henceforth) according to Bloom's taxonomy. Alongside with this, a survey is conducted to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of a sample of Moroccan high school teachers towards CTS and their inclusion in the aforementioned textbook. The research design adopted in this study is the mixed methods research approach and three instruments are used to collect data: document analysis, a content analysis card and a questionnaire. The participants' sample consists of 75 Moroccan high school teachers of English who use GTE2 textbook. The three instruments were intended to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The findings of the study revealed that the current educational policy aims to foster the CTS of Moroccan students, but the textbooks used, namely GTE2, targets only lower order thinking skills, especially comprehension, and application at the expense of higher order thinking skills which will benefit students both academically and professionally. For this reason, the study suggests activities and materials to enrich the textbook in terms of thinking skills.

Key words: Bloom's taxonomy; Critical thinking; EFL; Textbook evaluation

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INTRODUCTION

Developing the CTS of learners has become one of the goals of education in general and language teaching in particular. As a matter of fact, there is a consensus among educators worldwide that enabling twenty-first century learners to develop CTS is a top priority (Williams, Anderson, & Day, 2007). The goal is to train effective learners, productive citizens and skilled future employees. According to the Higher Council of Education Training and Scientific Research in Morocco, Moroccan education is still lagging behind in terms of developing learners' CTS (Higher Council of Education, Training and Scientific Research, 2014). English Language Teaching (ELT) in Morocco is not an exception to this tendency. A number of English language teachers claim that current ELT textbooks in Morocco do not contribute significantly to the development of learners' higher order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation. One of the factors which can play a significant role in fostering the CTS of learners is enriching instruction materials with these skills (Bessick, 2008) . This study aims at investigating the manifestation of CTS in a Moroccan textbook of English for second year baccalaureate level entitled GTE2. The textbook was designed by Moroccan writers in 2007 for students of second year baccalaureate (Hassim, M., Blibil, M. & Rasmy, A. 2007). Two main research questions are set for this study:

- To what extent does GTE2 cultivate CTS in the Moroccan high school students?
- What are the perceptions and attitudes of Moroccan high school teachers towards CTS in GTE2?

The two questions aim at eliciting data about the presence of CTS in GTE2, the importance of each skill in the textbook, and the teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards such CTS in GTE2. Bloom's Taxonomy is adopted as a framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical Thinking

Defining the term Critical Thinking (CT) is rather a challenging task. This difficulty originates from the slippery nature of the concept. Besides, CT represents an area of interest and study for different knowledge fields and disciplines, namely philosophy, cognitive psychology and education. A review of the literature on CT reveals a wide range of definitions. For example, Butterworth and Thwaites (2013) suggest that "critical thinking is a fair and open-minded, active and informed, sceptical, and independent process" (pp. 8-9). These qualities are self-explanatory. We cannot judge fairly and objectively without an open mind; hasty, uniformed judgments are never critical. Moreover, some degree of scepticism is needed: a willingness to question or to entertain doubt. However, scepticism does not mean cynicism, i.e., doubting everything. Finally, to think critically one needs to be independent, to listen to others, and to respect their beliefs and opinions. Yet, one needs to ask their own questions and reach their own conclusions. Facione (2011, p. 4), in his turn, asserts that 'Critical thinking is thinking that has a purpose such as proving a point, interpreting what something means, and solving a problem. However, CT can be a collaborative non-competitive endeavour.' The term CT is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned and goal directed. It is the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions (Halpern, 1998; Facione, 2011).

Basically, CT "is about finding out whether something is true, partly or not true at all" (Hughes, 2014, p. 2). Finding out the truth or falsity of something is not necessarily as easy as it might seem. Sometimes, the skilful use of language by the writer of an article or a book can be misleading and make it difficult for the reader to distinguish facts from opinions, or to recognise a writer's bias. The only way to cope with this difficulty is to employ CTS. According to Sternberg (1986), "critical thinking comprises the mental processes, strategies, and representations people use to solve problems, make decisions, and learn new concepts" (p. 2). The components of CT differ from one person, one task and one situation to another, especially in terms of scope and quality.

In this study, the evaluation is mainly based on Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive skills. Bloom's taxonomy is a classification of six CTS arranged according to the level of complexity. The lowest three levels are: knowledge, comprehension, and application. The highest three levels are: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Forehand, 2005). The original Bloom's taxonomy is still largely used today as an educational planning tool by educators in all levels. In 2001, a former student of Bloom and other researchers published a new version of the taxonomy to better fit educational practices of the twenty-first century. The six categories were changed from nouns to verbs because verbs describe actions and thinking is an active process. Both models are designed as hierarchical frameworks where each level is subsumed by the higher, more complex level. The *knowledge* skill involves the recall of specifics and universals, the recall of methods and processes, or the recall of a pattern, structure, or setting. The next level is *comprehension* which represents the lowest level of understanding. It refers to the individual's ability to know what is being communicated and can make use of the material or idea being communicated without necessarily relating it to other material or seeing its fullest implications. The next level is 'application' which is a higher level. It involves the use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations. The abstractions may be in the form of general ideas, rules of procedures, or generalized methods. The abstractions may also be technical principles, ideas and theories which must be remembered and applied.

A level higher up is *analysis*. This skill requires one to break down communication into its constituent elements or parts such that the relative hierarchy of ideas is made clear and /or the relations between the ideas expressed are made explicit. Such analyses are intended to clarify communication, to indicate how communication is organized, and the way in which it manages to convey its effects, as well as its basis and arrangement. The next level is *synthesis*, which requires the putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole. This involves the process of working with pieces, parts, elements, etc., and combining and arranging them in a somewhat creative way. Finally, and at the highest level is *evaluation*. It refers to the ability to make judgement about the value of material and methods for given purposes. These judgements can be quantitative and qualitative ones about the extent to which material and methods satisfy the criteria. It also requires the use of a standard of appraisal.

Textbook Evaluation

Textbook evaluation refers to the process of collecting and analysing information about a textbook for purposes of decision making. This process can be carried out through three stages: initial evaluation, detailed evaluation and in-use evaluation (Grant, 1987). Besides, textbook evaluation makes use of methods such as the impressionistic, the checklist and the in-depth methods. Approaches to materials evaluation in a textbook include a predictive approach and a retrospective approach. These stages, methods and approaches are discussed in detail in the paragraphs that follow.

According to Grant (1987), textbook evaluation is a three-stage process. The first stage is called *initial evaluation* which covers filtering out obviously unsuitable materials. It is not easy to evaluate a textbook in a short time. Sometimes publishers come to schools with tempting textbooks; they are attractive and beautifully

presented, which puts some pressure on teachers and sometimes push them to make a quick decision. In such a situation applying a test and answering some crucial questions about the textbook, including, for example, is the textbook communicative? What are its aims? What is the teacher's first impression? and is it well organized and easy to use and some others are required? The second stage of the process is the *detailed evaluation*. After deciding that the textbook is suitable according to the above-mentioned test, there is a need to decide how well it will do. The third and final stage is the *in-use evaluation* which is a continuous process because it is only by constant evaluation that one can ensure that the teacher is the master, and not the slave of the textbook.

AbdelWahab (2013) prescribes three basic methods for evaluating textbooks. The first is called *the impressionistic method* and it involves analysing a textbook on the basis of a general impression. The general impression would be gained by reading the blurb and the contents page and then skimming through the book to get a sense of organization, topics, layout and visuals. This method is not adequate in itself but could be combined with, for example, the second method which is called *the checklist method*. This method is systematic in the way that the criteria on the list are checked off in a certain order. It is also very easy to compare different materials and it is not very time-consuming compared to other methods. The third method, the *in-depth method*, suggests a careful examination of representative features such as the design of one particular unit or exercise, or the treatment of particular language elements. An obvious disadvantage in this method is that the selected section might not be representative of the book as a whole. In this study, the checklist method will be adopted. Besides these methods to textbook evaluation, there are approaches to consider.

Ellis (1997) distinguished *two types of materials evaluation*, namely, *predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation*. A predictive evaluation is designed to make a decision regarding what materials to use. Those who are required to carry out a predictive evaluation determine which materials are best suited to the determined purposes. This type of evaluation can be conducted in two ways. One way is to resort to evaluations already done by 'expert' reviewers. Another way is for teachers to carry out the predictive evaluations by themselves. In this case, teachers can consult available checklists and guidelines to make the task easier. Examples are Cunningsworth (1984), Breen and Candlin (1987), Skierso (1991), McDonough and Shaw (1993). One caution could be issued against the predictive evaluations. This has to do with whether or not such evaluations can be 'scientific'. As Sheldon (1988, p. 245) observes, 'it is clear that coursebook assessment is fundamentally a subjective, rule-of-thumb activity, and that no neat formula, grid or system will ever provide a definite yardstick'.

Once the materials have been used, further evaluation may be conducted to find out whether the materials have worked out for the purposes determined and this type of evaluation is called *retrospective evaluation*. Such an evaluation provides the teacher with information which can be used to determine whether it is worthwhile using the materials again, which activities 'work' and which do not, and how to modify the materials to make them more effective for future use. A retrospective evaluation also serves as a means of 'testing' the validity of a predictive evaluation, and may point to ways in which the predictive instruments can be improved for future use. In contrast with the first approach to materials evaluation, namely the predictive approach, there are very few published accounts of retrospective evaluations of course materials, and very little information about how to conduct them (Ellis, 1997).

Textbook Evaluation in Morocco

Few textbook evaluation studies have been carried out in Morocco, and even fewer are published. For example, Jebbour (2016) used two instruments, namely content analysis and questionnaire to analyze a second year baccalaureate textbook of English to see the extent to which it includes elements of CT. A further purpose was to assess the extent to which the teachers' teaching practices help students develop some degree of CT**.** The researcher concluded that the textbooks of English include elements of CT, and the teachers' teaching practices do help the students develop some degree of CT. Yet, the textbooks do not include problem-solving activities and media analysis, and 86% of the teacher-respondents tended to skip some activities in the textbooks, mainly the units dealing with Project Work and Study Skills which are necessary for enhancing CT among the students. Therefore, the textbooks need to be designed around additional activities and the teachers are required to cover the units skipped so as to make the teaching of CT effective. Moreover, Elboubekeri (2013), investigated the issue of English education and identity in Morocco. His study showed that promoting CT strategies in high school English textbooks is an intercultural competence besides enhancing English language skills, appreciation of local cultural identity and openness and respect of other cultures. In higher education level, Elfatihi (2010) confirms that while "significant research has been carried out in North America, and to a lesser extent in Britain, the Moroccan universities have remained unconcerned about this issue" (p. 23)

Abdallaoui (2012) stresses the fact that the implementation of CT in the Moroccan educational system is encountered by many challenges based on different national and international reports. The first challenge is the lack of relevant contents and effective methods to improve the learning quality despite the introduction of new textbooks and some ideas for respecting human rights principles in 1999's educational reform. Second,

most teachers are not well-equipped with the mandatory educational competencies as a result of the absence of ongoing teacher professional development. Third, the linguistic policy in Morocco is a problematic one. Students show a low proficiency in languages, either in Arabic or in French. The Moroccan public schools have not managed to provide students with adequate language learning because of previous hasty and inadequately formulated language policy's decisions. Finally, the Moroccan school climate is discouraging. This originates from the neglect of the emotional security, trust, and sound human relationships among all stakeholders including parents, learners, teachers and authorities. All these challenges demonstrate the extent to which it is difficult to implement CT in the Moroccan context because the implementation of such an approach necessitates an educational policy which cultivates open-mindedness and reflective thought, the ongoing renewal of teacher's training, an encouraging school environment, and a basic mastery of linguistic ability and relevant learning contents.

METHOD

The current study adopts a mixed method approach. It combines an evaluation and a survey, and three instruments are used to collect data, namely documents analysis, a content analysis card and a questionnaire. The items included in the content analysis card and questionnaire are based on Bloom's taxonomy. The use of multiple instruments is an essential condition for the process of *triangulation*. In social sciences research, triangulation is "synonymous with combining data sources to study the same social phenomenon" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 43). The instruments used ensure the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Document analysis can be defined as 'a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic material' (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). This method of data analysis is mainly used in qualitative research. It involves the examination and interpretation so as to extract meaning, achieve understanding, and develop empirical knowledge. The analytic procedure of documents requires 'finding, selecting, appraising, and synthesising data contained in documents' (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). The rationale for analysing documents in this study is to triangulate data, and make the results of the study more credible and valid. As it was stated before, the documents that have been analysed in this study are the National Charter for Education and Training, the White Book and the English language teaching guidelines for secondary schools: Common core, first year, and second year baccalaureate.

The content analysis card and questionnaire used in this study are based on Bloom's taxonomy and the related literature. The content analysis card consists of four major components: skills, items and activities, units of the textbook, total of items and activities targeting each skill. Concerning the questionnaire, it is composed of two major sections The first one entitled 'information about the teacher and his/her experience' includes 'factual questions' about the demographic characteristics of the respondents and teaching experience. Those items in this section are multiple-choice questions that respondents are asked to tick. As for the second section, it includes attitudinal questions which aim to generate the respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards CT and its inclusion in GTE2 textbook. Likert scale is used to elicit very precise degrees of attitude, especially for the first eleven questions. The characteristic statement is provided first, then respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree by marking or circling one of the responses ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. These close-ended items are followed by open-ended questions in which respondents are required to either provide personal information, explain or give examples. The reason for including both types of items is to elicit rich productive data and quantitative as well as qualitative data.

To collect data, three official documents were analysed, namely the National Charter for Education and Training, the White Book and the upper secondary ELT Guidelines. Then a content analysis card based on Bloom's taxonomy of 1956 is used to investigate GTE2 textbook. The information gathered is organised into categories related to the first research question. In other words, the information is organised according to the six cognitive skills following Bloom's taxonomy. Document analysis involves processes of skimming or surface examination of documents, reading or thorough examination, and interpretation. Two types of analysis can be applied. The first type is *content analysis* which involves the organisation of information into categories related to the central research questions (Bowen, 2009). The second type is *thematic analysis* which is 'a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Both types of analysis are adopted in the current study. First, the three documents are read with the six CTS in mind, besides other high thinking skills like problem-solving, system-thinking, inductive and deductive reasoning. Whenever words or expressions referring to the target skills are found either explicitly or implicitly, they are jotted down. Then these words and expressions are classified under the different skill categories. After this first investigation was carried out, description and interpretation of the categories and patterns which emerged are provided.

The data collected through the content card analysis and questionnaires is analysed quantitatively by the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics made it possible to describe and summarise the data collected in a meaningful way through the use of a table and graphical representations, namely pie charts. As

for the inferential statistics, they enable the researcher to use the data from the study sample, i.e., the ELT teachers using GTE2 , to make generalizations about the target population, which is Moroccan ELT in high school. The quantitative analysis was carried out by the use of 'Google forms'. In addition to the information gathered online, the information collected by means of hard copies was also analysed by Google Forms. The descriptive and inferential statistical processing of the data provided graphic representations, namely pie-charts. This is applied to multiple choice items in the first section of the questionnaire and for Likert scale or closed-ended items. Concerning the open-ended items, their responses were analysed qualitatively by describing and interpreting the significance of responses in relevance to the topic of the study and research questions.

RESULTS

Question One: To what extent does GTE2 cultivate CT in the Moroccan high school students?

To begin with, the analysis of the three official documents revealed significant information. First, in the National Charter for Education and Training, some emphasis is put on knowledge construction by the learners through skills like CT. However, the concept of CT is not explicitly stated in the document. Phrases and expressions such as 'intellectual development', 'conscientious side' and 'reasoning skills' and 'systematic research' are used as indications to the concept and the related skills. Second, the analysis of the White Book made it obvious that there is a tendency to develop CT and intellectual development in Moroccan learners at the completion of the upper secondary education curricula. However, such tendency is insufficient because more focus is still put on contents. Even the skills targeted are the basic ones or lower order skills of knowledge, comprehension, and to a less extent application. The higher thinking skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation do not receive the same focus. Finally, despite the fact that the English Language Guidelines refer to CT and the related skills either implicitly or explicitly, and the authors of these guidelines' expressed intentions to promote the students' intellectual development through CT, the main focus is still on content knowledge. A thorough analysis of the different syllabi included in the guidelines proves this observation. Therefore, the students will develop only the low order skills of knowledge, comprehension and to a less extent application. However, the development or promotion of the high thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation is still unsatisfactory.

The analysis of the data collected from GTE2 by the use of a content card analysis, and use of statistical procedure is displayed in the following pie.

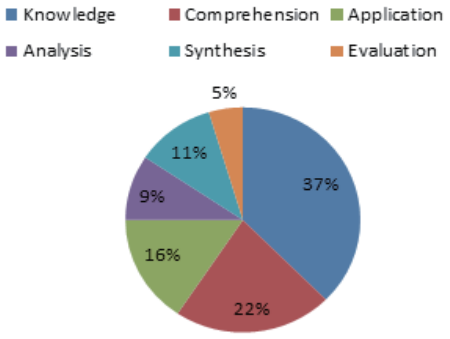

Figure 1
Representation of bloom's taxonomy based thinking skills in GTE2 textbook

The findings in Figure 1 above show high frequency of the three first skills of knowledge, comprehension, and application. On the contrary, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills are less frequent. In terms of activities, Figure 2 below shows the same dominance of the three first skills of knowledge, comprehension, and application According to the frequencies observed, we conclude that lower thinking skills are the most dominant while the higher thinking skills, which represent CT are the least dominant.

Table 1
CT activities in *GTE2*

Skills	Number of times each skill targeted in the textbook	Number of activities targeting each skill in the textbook	Total
Knowledge	48	108	156
Comprehension	28	66	94
Application	20	12	117
Analysis	12	21	33
Synthesis	14	14	28
Evaluation	6	11	17

Question two: what are the perceptions and attitudes of Moroccan high school teachers of English towards CTS and its manifestation in GTE2 textbook?

After collecting the data needed to answer the second question related to the teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the inclusion of CT elements in GTE2 by the use of a questionnaire, statistical procedures were used, namely descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the data.

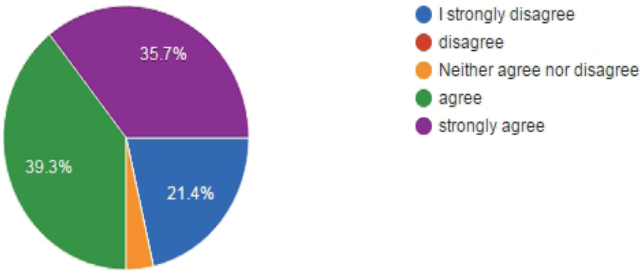

Figure 2
Definition of CT

Figure 2 shows that more participants (39.3 %) agree with the definition proposed, less participants (35.7 %) strongly agree, 21.4 % strongly disagree, and only 3.6 % neither agree nor disagree.

Some respondents suggested other definitions of CT. One is 'CT involves different skills such as conceptualising, applying, analysing, synthesising, and/or evaluating information.' Another respondent viewed CT as a "lifelong process," without providing any more details. A third respondent stated that CT is "the disposition to provide evidence in support of one's conclusions and to request evidence from others before accepting their conclusions." Additionally, another definition refers to CT as "an active process which requires "applying reason in the determination of whether a claim is true" Moore and Parker (2009). Moreover, "CT is mostly the result of a course in formal and modern logic. It all comes as a skill by itself when it is a part of social life (family bringing-school)," added another respondent. Furthermore, in another definition, CT "has to do with acquired capacity students learn to use in problem-solving, decision-making, etc." Finally, one respondent regarded CT as "a mental process of actively and skilfully conceptualising, analysing, synthesising and evaluating information". These definitions prove that many respondents have a clear understanding of the concept of CT.

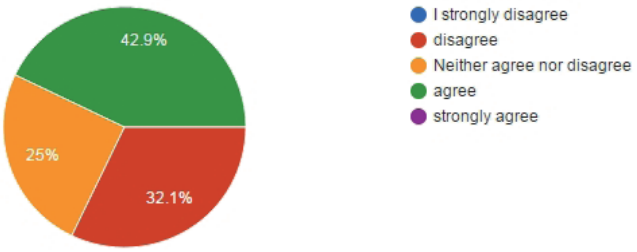

Figure 3
Representation of knowledge skills in GTE2

In Figure 3, almost half of the respondents (42.9 %) agree that students are able to remember linguistic patterns and structures from the textbook at the end of the school year; a third of them (32.1%) disagree, but 25 % neither agree nor disagree. After choosing one item from the five options given, some respondents provided more answers. One of them, for instance, stated that "not all students are able to remember linguistic patterns and structures from the textbook at the end of the schooling year." Another suggested that "it varies from student to student". A third respondent added that "some students are able to use knowledge skills in a variety of ways, especially through communication and in writing, not just remembering, but applying what they learn in real life". Besides, according to another respondent, "this remembering takes place only after much formative testing. Rules are forgotten easily, and by the end only very few use/remember rules/structures." For another respondent, "the majority of students remember the patterns and structures by contextualising or using them as grammar. The respondents' answers suggest that the ability to remember linguistic patterns and structures from the textbook differs from one student to another.

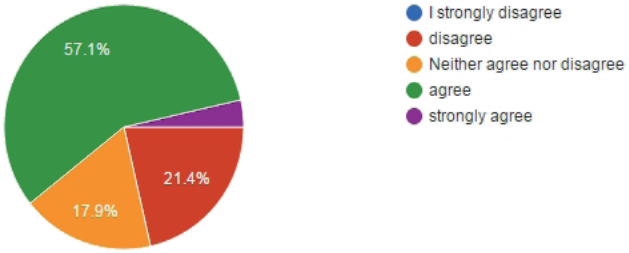

Figure 4
Representation of comprehension skill in GTE2

More than half of the participants (57.1%) agree that the activities in the textbook enable students to develop their comprehension skills, 17.9 % of them neither agree nor disagree, 21.4% disagree, and 3.6 % strongly agree. Different explanations were suggested to how the textbook enables students to develop their comprehension skills. For example, one respondent thinks that GTE2 develops the students' comprehension skills which are related to retrieval of information. Another confirms that comprehension skills can be developed only when students have sufficient background knowledge and basic vocabulary about the topic studied. One view shared by most participants is that reading and listening lessons in GTE2 do enable students, though not all of them, to improve their comprehension skills.

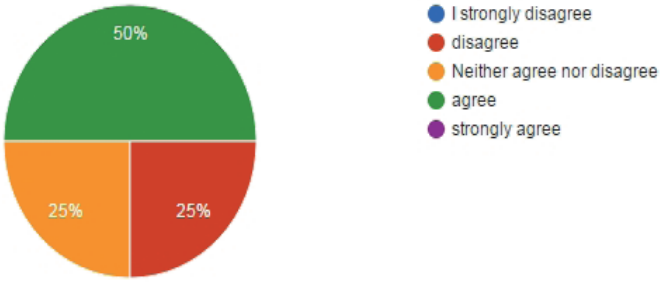

Figure 5
Representation of the application skill in GTE2

Figure 5 shows that 50 % of the respondents agree that students can apply what they have learned from the textbook to other situations, 25 % of them neither agree nor disagree, while 25 % of them disagree. In response to how the teachers know that students can apply what they have learned from the textbook to other situations, many of them reacted differently. First, one respondent said that when students speak in real situations, they use the grammatical structures and communicative functions they learned from the textbook. A second respondent suggested that students can write paragraphs/essays at the end of the year by using the linking words and cohesive devices taught at the beginning of the year. One more respondent believed that learner training, study skills activities and

tasks on learning how to learn can be used outside the classroom, and more than this, they can exploit these strategies while learning other school subjects. However, some respondents do not think that students can apply what they learn from GTE2 to other situations. For them, the activities and tasks in the textbook lack authenticity and relevance to real life. Besides, another respondent concedes that textbooks relate students to their immediate social life on rare occasions because reality and texts do not match.

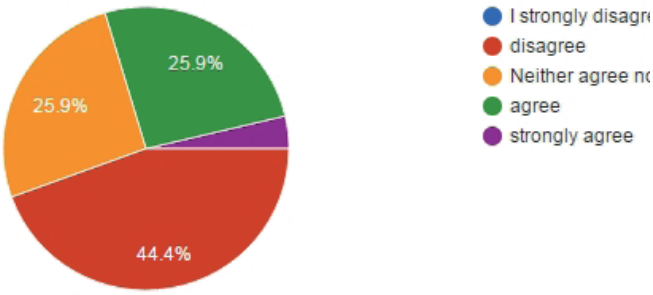

Figure 6
Representation of analysis skills in GTE2

Figure 6 indicates that 44.4% of respondents disagree that GTE2 helps students to develop the analysis skills, 25.9 % agree that it does, 25.9% neither agree nor disagree, and 3.7 % of them strongly agree. Most of the respondents who provided further explanations confirmed that GTE2 cannot enable students to develop their analysis skills. For instance, one claimed that the textbook lacks the main tasks/activities for students to enhance their analysis skills. Another stated that the textbook was probably compiled in a very short time. CTS such as analysis are not clearly targeted in the EFL curriculum let alone in the textbooks. Another view was that students fail to develop the analysis skill even though all the texts presented aim at achieving this goal. There is a consensus among the respondents that the textbook cannot help students develop their analysis skills. For them, the activities or tasks which lead to the development of such skills are missing in the textbook altogether.

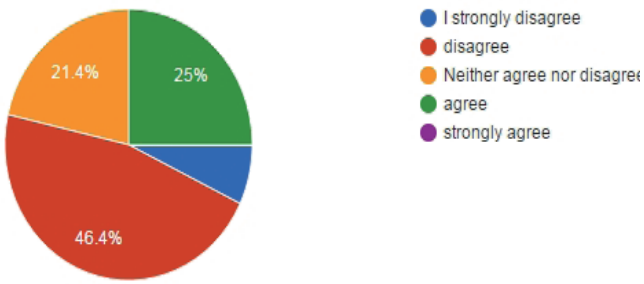

Figure 7
Synthesis skills in GTE2

This figure proves that 46.4% of participants disagree that the textbook promotes the students' synthesis skill, 25 % agree, 21.4% neither agree nor disagree, and 7.1% strongly disagree. Those who agreed provided four explanations and examples. The first example was to "give students different parts or simple lines of a song and ask them to put them in order." The second example was "the students write ideas while looking at pictures. Then, they put the pictures in a logical way. Next, they fill in chart with the given information related to the theme of the unit (GTE2, p103)." One explanation was that "only classroom observation allows us to find out whether synthesising takes place. It all again depends on the teacher's plan. I feel my students are able to combine and arrange data at times. Other times, they do not." A fourth example was that "in some lessons, like writing argumentative essays, students are encouraged to synthesise."

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study showed that lower order thinking skills, namely comprehension, knowledge and application, are the most targeted in GTE2. Although, the authors of official documents have referred to other high thinking skills like problem solving, informed decision-making, logical reasoning, analysis, conceptualising, system thinking, evaluating. Their presence in GTE2 is very limited or almost absent. It is insufficient to express intention to promote the learners' critical spirit, as it is stated in the National Charter for Education and Training, or to develop the students' ability to think critically through problem-solving, informed decision-making, system thinking, CT, analytical thinking, and hypothesis testing as the case with the Guidelines. The careful investigation and examination of the textbook has revealed the opposite. Additionally, we notice that most of the respondents think that the textbook targets mainly the development of the students' lower order skills of knowledge, comprehension and application. When it comes to the development of high CTS of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, most respondents do not think that the textbook meets this goal. This could be attributed to the idea that some language educators and textbook designers are not fully convinced that CTS could not be implemented in a foreign language class, or these skills are not a high priority compared to language skills. Another possible explanation could be the belief that these skills require advanced language proficiency from the part of students, which obviously many Moroccan high schoolers lack.

As for the knowledge skill, it requires the recollection of information. In other words, the students are asked to retrieve the knowledge stored in their memories. The activities that enable students to do so are matching, listing, completing, selecting and stating the items. For example, students are given activities and tasks in which they have to fill in the blanks with the right items or to match items with each other. In GTE2, these two types of activities are available throughout the ten units and in different lessons, from language lessons

and functions to the four skills. However, they are used more in unit introduction sections, and in vocabulary and grammar lessons. Besides, the comprehension skill, which is a slightly higher thinking skill in comparison with knowledge, incorporates a set of skills such as understanding, paraphrasing and translating the given concepts. This skill is dealt with by the use of comprehension questions related to reading and listening lessons and tasks. Components such as reading comprehension and listening comprehension make it possible to implement this skill in the textbook, and since the baccalaureate exam includes a reading comprehension, this guarantees that teachers give due importance to teaching this skill. Listening comprehension, on the other hand is often neglected because it is not included in the baccalaureate exam.

Students need to apply what they learn from the textbook. That is why the application skill, as a CT skill, necessitates the materialisation of the learned items in the mind. Moreover, it requires students to extend their learning experiences in the classroom to other authentic situations. In GTE2 textbook, the application skill is not satisfactorily emphasized. The activities and tasks used to develop this skill are mostly the ones included in the language and communication lessons and activities. Analysis and synthesis skills have also been evaluated in GTE2. Analysis refers to breaking down material or concepts into component parts in order to detect the relationship among the parts, or the parts and the whole. Moreover, analysis incorporates comparing, contrasting, discriminating, and distinguishing the ideas. As for synthesis, it has been defined by Bloom (1956) as putting parts together to form a whole. This skill is intended to construct or connect separate pieces of information to form a larger, more coherent pattern. The study showed that both analysis and synthesis, which are regarded as higher order skills, are not sufficiently tapped in GTE2 to English. This might be due to lack of knowledge about these skills from the part of textbook designers or to the lack of necessary skills to implement these skills in the textbook.

Learners need to be able to question the knowledge and ideas they receive at school. The skill leading to that ability is evaluation. Bloom (1956) considers evaluation as a skill for making judgements about or appraising critically the value of concepts and data. The results of data analysis proved that evaluation is not sufficiently targeted in GTE2 although it is very important for developing CT. It is the least frequent skill in comparison to other skills, especially analysis and synthesis.

The findings discussed above confirm the results of previous studies carried out in Morocco and elsewhere. The study carried out by the Moroccan researcher Jebbouri (2016) corroborates the findings achieved in this study. After evaluating a second year baccalaureate textbook, namely Ticket 2 to English, the researcher concluded that Moroccan ELT textbooks do not include high thinking skills like problem-solving and media analysis. Elsewhere, Birjandi and Alizadeh (2013) found out that ELT textbooks employed by Iranian language institutes focus mainly on knowledge, comprehension, and application skills while they fail to target skills that are more important to students' academic success. Similarly, Zamani and Rezvani (2015), who have evaluated three TEFL university textbooks, noticed that lower order thinking skills were as frequently targeted and represented as higher order thinking skills.

CONCLUSION

The main finding of this study is that GTE2 does not foster the CTS of learners adequately, especially higher order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Much emphasis is put on lower order skills like knowledge and comprehension skills instead. A number of suggestions could be made in this regard. To begin with, the enrichment of GTE2 in the application skills requires the use of various activities and tasks. For example, textbook designers and developers can include tasks, activities and questions that enable students to relate what they learn in the classroom to other authentic situations and put their learning experiences into practice. The activities and tasks that can help students do so are lifelike role-plays and simulations, journal writing, diary writing, and students' portfolios.

As far as analysis and synthesis are concerned, they can be accentuated in the textbook in various ways. Concerning analysis, students can be asked questions requiring them to find out the implicit sources or causes of an issue. Second, activities requiring students to highlight the key ideas and concepts in speaking, reading, or listening passages can be introduced. Moreover, students can develop the analysis skills by doing activities that can enable them to contrast and compare different concepts and ideas in the textbook. As to synthesis skills, tasks and activities different from those employed for improving analysis skills can be used. For instance, jigsaw puzzles and concept mapping tasks are some alternatives. Jigsaw tasks involve rearranging, reorganising or reintegrating pieces of information so as to achieve an adequate comprehension of the discussed ideas.

Finally, improving the teaching of the evaluation skill in GTE2 is also possible. It can be carried out by the use of tasks that require students to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a certain reasoning or argument. As a point in case, learning materials in the textbook can incorporate questions which compel students to evaluate the topic sentence or the concluding sentence of a given reading passage, and the extent to which they are sufficiently supported. Additionally, pictures can be used to improve

the evaluation skill. This can be done by asking students to evaluate pictures and see whether they match the messages they purport to be conveying. Finally, problem solving task is also an effective means to improve evaluation skills. In this kind of tasks, the students are given problems to which they should propose solutions, evaluate those solutions, and suggest alternatives if needed.

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