BRIDGING ENGLISH INSTRUCTION AND CRITICAL THINKING: A NEEDS ANALYSIS AT TWO ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: This study investigates the English teaching material needs of lecturers at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu to enhance students' critical thinking skills. Grounded in Bloom's Taxonomy for higher-order thinking and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) principles, the research employed a mixed-methods design, utilizing quantitative and qualitative strategies. Data were collected from 2 English lecturers via questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, alongside document analysis of 10 teaching materials. Findings indicate a strong reliance on authentic materials but reveal a lack of explicit critical thinking integration and contextual relevance, especially concerning Islamic values. Lecturers reported students limited critical thinking, attributing it to language barriers, insufficient scaffolding, and inadequate pedagogical support. The study concludes that systematically redesigning English teaching materials to incorporate higher-order thinking tasks, cultural/religious alignment, and clear guidance is crucial. These findings underscore the essential need for both material development and professional training to foster critical thinking in Indonesian Islamic higher education.
Keywords: *english teaching materials; critical thinking skills; need analysis; EAP.*

INTRODUCTION

English proficiency is increasingly vital, serving not only as a gateway to higher education but also as a crucial asset for employment in our interconnected global economy. As stated by Renandya et al. (2018), the ability to read, write, and communicate effectively in English provides access to vast knowledge and active participation in international discourse across fields like science, technology, and business. Beyond its communicative function, English language competence is linked to higher-order cognitive processes, including critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are indispensable for 21st-century academic achievement and societal contribution (Almulla, 2023; Renandya et al., 2018). Recognizing this, the Indonesian government has promoted English language instruction across all educational levels, with many universities adopting English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) to support internationalization efforts (Emilia et al., 2025; Luckyardi et al., 2024; Shao & Rose, 2024; Zheng & Choi, 2024).

The importance of critical thinking highlights the central role of the quality and design of teaching materials in instructional success. Content that is deliberately designed can guide students to question assumptions, analyze information, and engage in reflective thinking. When applied in active learning strategies, such teaching materials not only transfer knowledge but also encourage dialogue, inquiry, and critical engagement with complex ideas. Therefore, effective teaching resources must align with broader educational goals to produce graduates who are analytical, open-minded, and ready to navigate and interpret diverse realities. Innovative educators now support teaching materials that stimulate student autonomy (Sweet, 2023), encourage exploration, and support differentiated instruction. Learner-centered pedagogy, supported by well-designed content, enables students to actively construct knowledge and develop the

metacognitive awareness necessary for ongoing critical inquiry. Bachtiar et al. (2024), Liu et al. (2023), and Moghadam et al. (2023) argue that critical thinking is very important in language learning, emphasizing the need for students to analyze and evaluate information. Although Darwin et al. (2024) agree with this view, their study does not discuss the role of cultural context in shaping critical thinking skills.

In this context, it is important to distinguish between critical thinking and critical literacy, as these two concepts often overlap but have different emphases. Critical thinking refers to the cognitive ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information objectively, often involving deductive and inductive reasoning to reach well-founded conclusions. This is a broader mental process that can be applied to various disciplines (Anderson et al., 2015; DeWaelsche, 2015; Manalo, 2016; Vendrell-Morancho & Moya, 2025; Y. Yang, 2013). On the other hand, critical literacy, particularly in language learning, focuses on the ability to read 'between the lines' and 'beyond the lines'—that is, analyzing how texts (whether written, spoken, or visual) shape meaning, build power, and represent certain ideologies. Although critical thinking is a prerequisite for critical literacy, critical literacy specifically highlights the understanding of the social, cultural, and political contexts behind the text, as well as how readers can challenge and reshape that meaning. Often, the confusion between these two concepts can hinder pedagogical practices among English instructors in Indonesia (Brown & Alford, 2023; Hasnah, 2024; Knight et al., 2023; Weninger, 2023; Zhang, 2023) .

Furthermore, Tang (2016) also states that the cultivation of critical reading—reading beyond literal interpretation to interrogate the structure and assumptions within texts—is indispensable for language learners. Critical thinking must be nurtured progressively across all levels of language proficiency, not exclusively at the advanced stage. Theoretical underpinnings that support this integration include Bloom's Taxonomy, discourse analysis, pragmatic theory, and task-based learning, each of which provides pedagogical strategies aligned with critical language engagement (Gilabert, 2023; Hossain, 2024; Yusuf et al., 2024).

Needs analysis, a foundational process in ELT, ensures that teaching resources are relevant and responsive to learners' academic and professional objectives. It involves identifying both target needs, what learners must accomplish with English in their future roles, and learning needs, how learners prefer to acquire language and what difficulties they may face (Al-Ismail et al., 2023; Chiu et al., 2023; Damayanti et al., 2024; Dewi et al., 2023; Mohammed, 2024). Techniques such as questionnaires, interviews, material reviews, and classroom observations support a robust needs analysis framework. However, challenges such as overcrowded classrooms or differing teacher proficiencies are often encountered in Indonesia as stated by (Indrayadi, 2024).

Previous needs analysis studies at STIT Tanggamus, for instance, have revealed that students prefer materials incorporating real-life communication and creative elements like music (Pradana, 2022a). Similarly, research indicates a significant need for foundational English skills among first-year students. These insights affirm the need to further investigate the lecturers' perspectives at both STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu regarding teaching materials that specifically aim to develop students' critical thinking abilities.

This research adopts Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised Taxonomy) as a framework for understanding and categorizing higher-order thinking skills (Krathwohl, 2002). Specifically, we use this framework to ensure that our teaching materials systematically develop skills from lower levels (remembering, understanding) to higher levels (analyzing, evaluating, creating). Table 1 (see Results and Discussion) maps specific tasks in our teaching materials to different levels of taxonomy. Additionally, we incorporate the principles of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) (Swales & Feak, 2023) to ensure alignment with academic discourse conventions. In the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, this means adapting EAP principles to reflect Islamic values and perspectives, as demonstrated by research from (Damayanti et al., 2024; Darmayenti et al., 2021; Pratiwi et al., 2023).

The present study is conducted at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu, two private Islamic higher education institutions located in Lampung Province, Indonesia. STIT Tanggamus emphasizes an "Edu-preneurship" ethos, which underscores the cultivation of entrepreneurial and analytical capacities among its graduates. In contrast, STIT Pringsewu prioritizes character-based education and aims to produce morally upright teachers who are intellectually competent. Despite differences in their institutional missions, both colleges prepare students to participate

meaningfully in the broader educational and social landscape, where English proficiency and critical thinking are increasingly valued.

These observations support national-level findings by Ilyas (2017) and Wilson (2024) that critical thinking competencies among Indonesian students continue to lag behind international standards, despite being formally mandated in the national curriculum. This insight aligns with research suggesting that language competence significantly mediates students' capacity to express critical thinking effectively in both oral and written.

However, significant challenges persist in realizing these educational goals. Although critical thinking is emphasized in national policy documents, its integration into the English curriculum is still limited. English lecturers report difficulties in operationalizing critical thinking in their teaching due to a lack of conceptual clarity and practical resources. Some educators are hindered by traditional lecture-based methods that prioritize memorization over analytical engagement, thereby impeding students' cognitive development (Khusniyah & PD, 2023; Loyens et al., 2023). This challenge is exacerbated by the gap in how lecturers perceive the importance of critical thinking and their ability to cultivate it effectively. Furthermore, as has been discussed, the concept of critical literacy is often confused with critical thinking, which further complicates pedagogical practices among English instructors in Indonesia (Floris et al., 2024; Sudarwati et al., 2023; Syarifudin et al., 2025).

Given this backdrop, the present research seeks to identify the specific English teaching material needs perceived by lecturers at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu for the purpose of enhancing their students' critical thinking skills. The study pursues three main objectives: (1) to determine the English teaching materials currently used by lecturers; (2) to explore lecturers' perceptions of students' critical thinking competencies; and (3) to analyse the extent to which existing materials align with the pedagogical demands of critical thinking development.

To achieve these aims, the following research questions are posed: (1) What English teaching materials are currently employed by lecturers at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu?; (2) How do these lecturers perceive their students' critical thinking abilities within English language learning?; (3) What types of materials do lecturers

believe are necessary to foster these skills effectively?.

Considering the challenges identified in the integration of critical thinking in Indonesian Islamic higher education institutions, this research anticipates that there will be a significant gap between the available teaching materials and the real need to develop high-level critical thinking skills among students. We also anticipate that lecturers' perceptions of students' critical thinking abilities will tend to be low, especially in the context of application and evaluation, in line with previous research findings in Indonesia. Furthermore, we expect to find a clear demand from the lecturers for more structured, culturally relevant materials, supported by explicit scaffolding to facilitate the development of these skills.

METHOD

This study used a mixed methods approach, employing both quantitative and qualitative strategies to explore the teaching material needs of English lecturers at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu in relation to the promotion of critical thinking skills (Creswell, 1999; S. A. Li et al., 2024; Matović & Ovesni, 2023; Oranga, 2025; Takona, 2024). The qualitative component followed a descriptive design, enabling an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences and pedagogical requirements. Participants consisted of English lecturers actively teaching at both institutions. This study primarily examines the viewpoint of lecturers, as they are the principal agents in the selection, adaption, and implementation of instructional materials in the classroom. A comprehensive grasp of their requirements and challenges within the material situation is crucial for pertinent curriculum development recommendations. While direct feedback from students is essential for a thorough comprehension of learning requirements, previous study at STIT Tanggamus has initiated an examination of student preferences for resources (Pradana, 2022b). Consequently, the present research enhances prior endeavours by focusing specifically on the viewpoint of the key users of instructional resources, primarily lecturers, concerning the cultivation of critical thinking skills. Purposive sampling ensured the inclusion of educators with varied teaching responsibilities and levels of professional experience (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024; Campbell et al., 2020; Robinson, 2014). This sampling strategy supported the capture of a wide range of perspectives relevant to the research objectives.

The researcher used three primary instruments to guide data collection. There were a questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Ethical approval sought from institutional authorities. The questionnaire was distributed in digital format, followed by interviews and material submissions for analysis. Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended questionnaire responses were examined using thematic analysis. Quantitative data were processed using descriptive statistics to highlight prevalent trends and identify patterns. To analyze documents, the researcher applied qualitative content analysis as described by Selvi (2019), using an established critical thinking rubric to evaluate materials' alignment with cognitive skill development objectives. This rubric specifically assesses the extent to which the material facilitates skills such as interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation, explanation, and self-regulation, in line with the dimensions of critical thinking outlined by Facione (2011). To ensure trustworthiness, triangulation was implemented for qualitative data. The questionnaire underwent expert validation and pilot testing to enhance content validity and reliability (Almanasreh et al., 2019; Bujang et al., 2024; Newman et al., 2013; Rusticus, 2023). This rigorous methodological framework was designed to ensure both credibility and relevance of findings to the broader context of English language instruction and critical thinking development in Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia. Details of the research process, including the stages of data collection and analysis, are illustrated in the flowchart below.
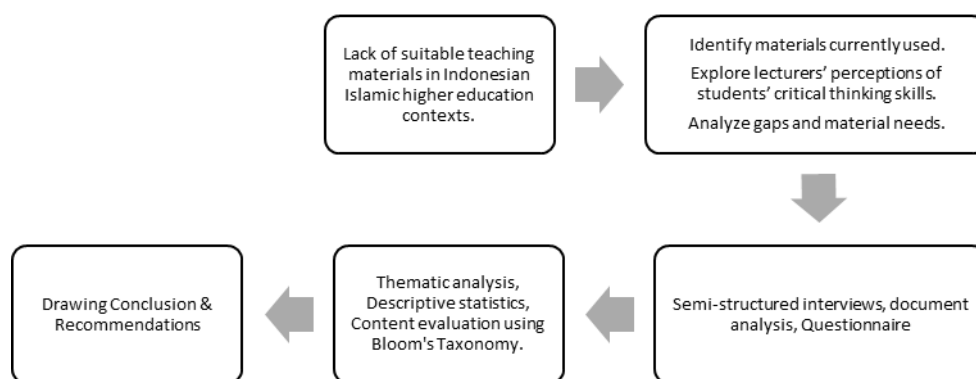

Figure 1. *Research flow*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Current teaching materials in use

Table 1 outlines different levels of critical thinking skills and corresponding activities that can be implemented in educational settings. It highlights the importance of structured group tasks, Socratic seminars, and portfolio tasks in developing students' critical thinking abilities. These activities encourage students to analyze, evaluate, and create new ideas while also fostering collaboration and consensus-building within the classroom. By incorporating these strategies, educators can better assess and promote critical thinking skills among their students.

The analysis of English teaching materials currently employed by lecturers at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu indicates a dominant reliance on both authentic and non-authentic sources, with a discernible preference for authentic materials originating from native English-speaking contexts. These include online articles, English-language magazines, audiovisual materials, and digital media. Such preferences mirror the findings of prior studies observed that many Indonesian educators favor authentic materials due to perceived deficiencies in local resources, difficulties in aligning materials with student proficiency levels, and the belief that authentic texts better support intercultural competence and exposure to natural language use (Al-khresheh, 2024; Hasnah et al., 2024; Marzuki et al., 2025; Ratri et al., 2025).
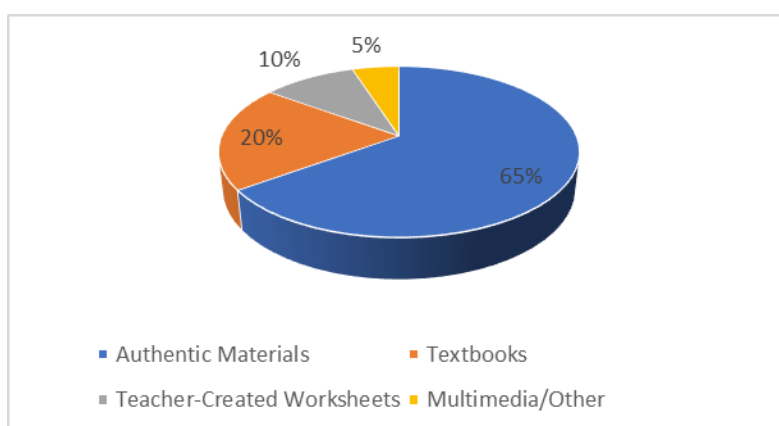
Figure 2. *Current teaching materials in use*

Figure 2, depicting the current teaching materials in use based on data collected from this study, presents a strong emphasis on incorporating authentic materials into the curriculum, aligning with the preferences of Indonesian educators. The reliance on authentic materials may also be attributed to their ability to engage students and provide real-world context for language learning. By utilizing a variety of resources, educators are able to create a dynamic and comprehensive learning environment that caters to the diverse needs of their students.

Table 1. *Identified needs and suggested material features to enhance critical thinking*

Identified Needs	Suggested Material Features	Example Text/Task/Activity	Alignment with HOTs (Bloom's Taxonomy)
Lack of explicit critical thinking frameworks	Integrate step-by-step HOTs progression (such as, analysis → evaluation → creation)	Argument analysis of editorials with guided questions such as "Identify the author's assumptions and evidence strength"	Analyze (Level 4), Evaluate (Level 5)
Cultural mismatch in materials	Use context-sensitive texts blending local Islamic values, Indonesian contexts, and global perspectives	Comparative analysis of Indonesian and international articles on environmental ethics, followed by debate	Evaluate (Level 5), Create (Level 6)
Insufficient scaffolding for critical tasks	Provide tiered tasks with language and cognitive support like graphic organizers and glossaries	Case study on social issues with guided reflection prompts such as "Propose solutions balancing religious and modern perspectives"	Apply (Level 3), Create (Level 6)
Limited collaborative critical activities	Design structured group tasks requiring consensus-building and reasoning	Socratic seminars on ethical dilemmas (such as, "Should AI replace teachers?") with role-specific discussion guides	Analyze (Level 4), Evaluate (Level 5)
Inadequate assessment of critical thinking	Use rubrics with criteria for reasoning, evidence use, and originality	Portfolio tasks where students revise arguments based on peer/instructor feedback using a critical thinking rubric	Evaluate (Level 5), Create (Level 6)

Despite the inclusion of critical thinking as an educational goal within Indonesian policy, the examination revealed a general lack of intentional integration of critical thinking tasks within these materials. Critical thinking components, where present, were incidental and lacked a structured

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pedagogical approach to skills such as analysis, evaluation, or synthesis. This limited presence of critical thinking activities is consistent with historical critiques of ELT in Indonesia, which point to a longstanding tendency to prioritize knowledge transmission over reflective or analytical engagement (Ilyas, 2017; Wilson & Defianty, 2024).

Lecturers expressed mixed levels of satisfaction with their current teaching materials. While some appreciated the cultural richness and linguistic authenticity of foreign sources, many highlighted practical challenges such as linguistic complexity, cultural misalignment, and the time required to adapt these materials for pedagogical purposes. These sentiments reinforce earlier research indicating that while authentic materials are widely appreciated, their effective use demands substantial instructional scaffolding (Bai et al., 2025; Gabdullina et al., 2024; Gutiérrez-Braojos et al., 2024; Z. Li et al., 2024).

Lecturers' perceptions of students' critical thinking skills

Lecturers consistently characterized their students' critical thinking skills as underdeveloped, especially in areas such as argument evaluation, inference-making, and creative reasoning. These observations support national-level findings by Ilyas (2017) and Wilson (2024)that critical thinking competencies among Indonesian students continue to lag behind international standards, despite being formally mandated in the national curriculum.
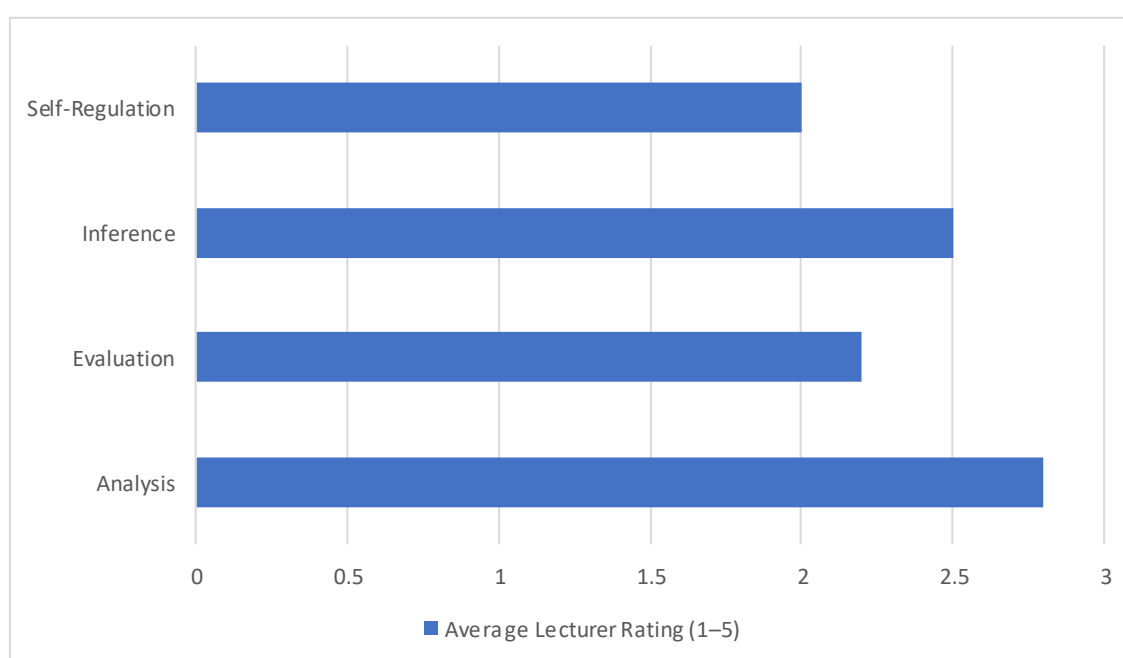

Figure 3. *Lecturers' perceptions of students' critical thinking skills*

Figure 3 makes clear that lecturers perceive critical thinking as an area needing urgent attention, especially in higher-order domains, echoing research that students' skill in these area lag behind international benchmarks. Several contributing factors were identified, most notably students limited English proficiency, which was seen as a barrier to expressing complex thoughts and arguments. This insight aligns with research suggesting that language competence significantly mediates students' capacity to express critical thinking effectively in both oral and written forms (Ilyas, 2017; Wilson & Defianty, 2024). Additional barriers included prior educational experiences characterized by rote memorization, limited exposure to dialogic pedagogy, and socio-cultural factors that may discourage open critique or questioning of authority.

Remarkably, there was variation in lecturers' own conceptualizations of critical thinking. Some equated it with problem identification, while others adopted broader definitions encompassing metacognitive elements such as reflection and self-regulation. This inconsistency is significant, as educators' understanding of critical thinking substantially influences how they model, teach, and assess it in the classroom.

Identified materials' needs and gaps

Table 2 shows that while interpretation is commonly addressed, synthesis and evaluation are underrepresented, confirming the need for more

comprehensive material design. Lecturers articulated several critical gaps in the materials currently in use. Chief among these was the absence of structured frameworks to develop critical thinking skills progressively. Existing materials lacked deliberate sequencing of cognitive tasks and did not systematically guide students from lower-order to higher-order thinking. This omission reflects a wider historical pattern in Indonesian ELT where the cultivation of analytical thinking has not been central to curricular or material development.

Table 2. *Identified needs and gaps in teaching materials*

Critical Thinking Indicator	Current Integration	Desired Integration
Interpretation	High	High
Analysis	Moderate	High
Synthesis	Low	High
Evaluation	Low	High

Cultural and contextual disconnects were also highlighted. Many authentic materials were perceived to lack relevance for students in Islamic higher education institutions, either because of cultural dissonance or their failure to address local realities. Lecturers emphasized the importance of culturally responsive materials that integrate global perspectives without compromising Islamic values—a position supported by research findings showing that Indonesian students generally express favourable attitudes toward materials incorporating both local and global cultural elements (Hasnah et al., 2024; Raihani, 2018; Suprapto et al., 2021).

Technical problems were also pointed out, such as not enough scaffolding, not enough tools to help teachers, not enough assessment rubrics for critical thinking, and not enough use of digital tools to get students interested and improve their higher-order thinking skills. While research shows that communicative activities like role plays and small group discussions are among the most effective for cultivating critical thinking, these were rarely embedded systematically within current teaching materials (Imaniar & Rakhmawati, 2024; Innes & Booher, 1999; Qian & Clark, 2016; Tsui, 2002; Y. T. C. Yang & Gamble, 2013)

Suggested material features to enhance critical thinking
To address these deficiencies, lecturers proposed incorporating explicit critical thinking frameworks within English teaching materials. These should include clearly defined learning outcomes, modeled examples of reasoning processes, and reflective prompts to promote metacognitive awareness. Such design aligns with established pedagogical principles advocating the integration of analyzing, evaluating, and creating tasks in ELT materials.
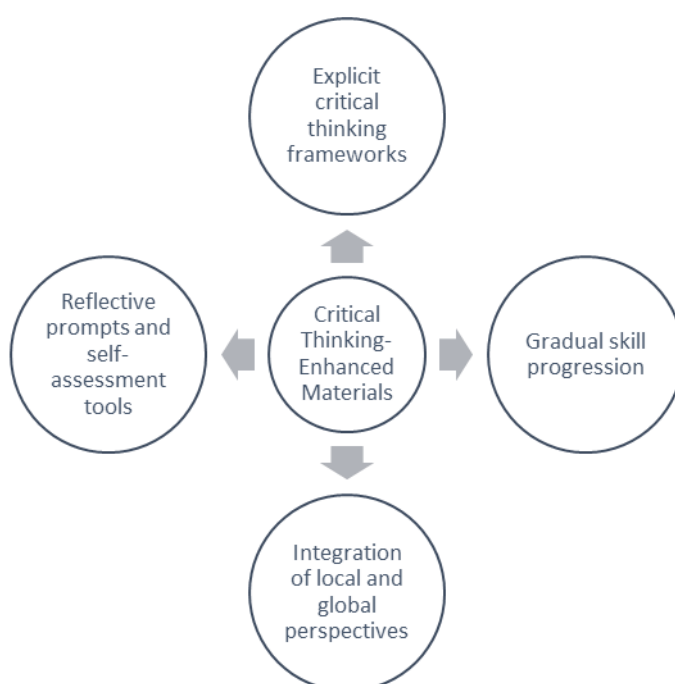

Figure 4 *Suggested material features*

Stakeholders can easily understand the complex requirements for successful material development by using the summary shown in Figure 4, which supports the integration of environmental and cognitive factors. Materials should thus strike a balance between cognitive rigor and linguistic accessibility. In order to do this, tasks must be flexible enough to accommodate different skill levels while still emphasizing higher-order thinking. Instructors recommended using multilayered texts and differentiated questioning strategies that link grammar, vocabulary, and discourse features to cognitive functions such as justification and argument construction (Ilyas, 2017; Wilson & Defianty, 2024).

Culturally responsive content was also deemed essential. Lecturers advocated for the inclusion of texts from Islamic scholars and Indonesian intellectual traditions, alongside international sources, to situate critical thinking within culturally meaningful frames. This strategy is supported by research result from (Hasnah et al., 2024; Raihani, 2018; Suprapto et al., 2021) indicating that students respond positively to culturally blended reading materials).

Types of Texts, Tasks, and Activities
Lecturers suggested a broad array of texts for inclusion, including news reports, opinion articles, academic abstracts, case studies, and literary narratives; each chosen for its potential to present complex, debatable issues. Emphasis was placed on texts offering conflicting viewpoints to stimulate evaluation and synthesis.

Table 3. *Types of texts, tasks, and activities*

Text/Activity Type	Effectiveness for Critical Thinking (1–5)
News Articles	4.5
Case Studies	4.2
Debates	4.7
Role Plays	3.5
Diaries	2.5

According to the above table, activities that are genuine and involve discussion are thought to be the most effective, whereas tasks that are more routine or passive are thought to have less of an impact. For tasks, lecturers recommended guided exercises focused on identifying biases, comparing perspectives, evaluating arguments, and constructing counterarguments. Such tasks have been shown to foster deeper engagement with content and promote analytical reasoning.

Interactive and collaborative activities such as structured debates, problem-based learning scenarios, and case analysis were highlighted as particularly effective. Conversely, low-impact activities such as diary writing or jigsaw tasks were considered less suitable for developing critical thinking as stated in previous research by Imaniar & Rakhmawati (2024).

Integration of Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTs)
Lecturers proposed a systematic instructional approach that begins with foundational tasks and gradually builds toward complex analytical work. Instructional scaffolding and linguistic support structures such as "thinking stems" and structured questioning were identified as essential components.
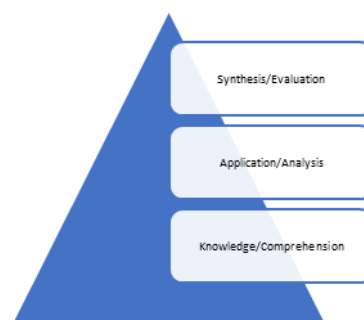

Figure 5. *Bloom's Taxonomy pyramid chart*

In order to achieve educational objectives, the above Bloom's Taxonomy pyramid chart emphasizes the necessity of moving the material focus upward and incorporating more HOTs. The design of questions was also a focal point. Previous studies suggest that the materials should include examples of varied question types, clearly linking them to corresponding cognitive levels (such as, comprehension vs. evaluation). Importantly, students should be trained to generate their own higher-order question (Imaniar & Rakhmawati, 2024; Innes & Booher, 1999; Qian & Clark, 2016; Tsui, 2002).

Reflective activities were recommended to develop self-regulation and metacognitive insight. Lecturers also called for the inclusion of rubrics that clearly articulate expectations for critical thinking performance and help monitor student progress.

Discussion with theoretical and empirical comparison
In the context of Indonesian Islamic higher education, Figure 6 illustrates the intersection of theory and practice, highlighting the necessity of

materials that are both contextually relevant and cognitively demanding. The findings reinforce cognitive skill-based frameworks of critical thinking, particularly those proposed by Facione (2011), while simultaneously recognizing the importance of sociocultural context. (Gay, 2015) acknowledged that culturally responsive teaching is relevant for international contexts. It also could be concluded that there are numerous principles for implementing education given in the Al Qur'an. The first component of the educational principle is reasoning which is promoted in the Al-Qur'an, particularly inferential, autonomous reasoning and aided reasoning. The second principle of implementing education is that implementing education is focused towards developing moral character through various learning process activities or what is termed orthopractic theology (Manurung et al., 2024).

The emphasis on religious and cultural relevance underscores the need for a contextualized approach to critical thinking in Islamic educational settings.
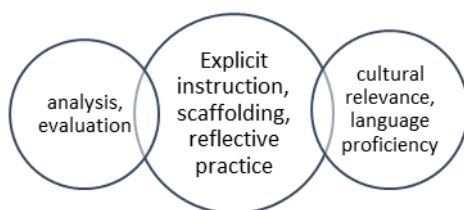

Figure 6. *Theoretical and empirical comparison*

Empirically, this study supports previous work documenting insufficient integration of critical thinking in Indonesian ELT and highlights the persistent influence of language proficiency on students' ability to engage critically. It further contributes novel insights by examining how Islamic values intersect with critical thinking instruction—an area underexplored in current research.

This dual theoretical and empirical perspective points to practical implications for teacher education, curriculum design, and national educational policy. Clarifying critical thinking concepts through professional development, embedding context-sensitive materials, and aligning classroom practices with policy aspirations emerge as essential next steps for meaningful reform.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals a significant reliance on authentic English-language materials among lecturers at STIT Tanggamus and STIT Pringsewu, driven by the belief that such resources better reflect natural language use and cultural authenticity. However, these materials often fall short in systematically embedding critical thinking elements, limiting opportunities for students to engage in higher-order cognitive tasks. Lecturers perceive their students as struggling particularly with evaluative and generative thinking, a challenge compounded by language barriers, didactic teaching traditions, and underdeveloped instructional resources. The disconnect between educational policy and actual practice underscores the urgent need for materials that are both cognitively demanding and contextually attuned to the sociocultural and religious values of Indonesian Islamic higher education.

There is a clear gap between current teaching practices and the instructional support necessary to effectively nurture students' critical thinking. Lecturers express a need for materials that incorporate structured critical thinking models, facilitate discussion, and offer relevant content aligned with students lived experiences. They emphasize the importance of balancing linguistic accessibility with cognitive depth and integrating perspectives that reflect both local and global realities. The findings also expose inconsistencies in how lecturers understand and interpret the concept of critical thinking, which in turn influences their instructional choices and expectations—suggesting that lecturer development is as essential as material reform in actualizing critical thinking objectives in the classroom.

In response, English teaching in Islamic higher education institutions must move toward a more intentional, integrated approach to critical thinking. Teaching resources should be designed with explicit cognitive goals, offering varied, scaffolded tasks that challenge students to analyze, reflect, and synthesize. The usage of validated critical thinking frameworks is strongly advised for instructional material writers. Models like the Analytic Rubric for Critical Thinking (Facione, 2011) and the Framework for Critical Thinking (Paul & Elder, 2008) offer sequential guidance for creating tasks and questions that progressively enhance critical thinking skills from fundamental to advanced levels. This framework provides precise criteria for detecting, analyzing, and evaluating arguments, which must be incorporated into teaching materials. These resources must be inclusive of cultural and religious dimensions relevant to learners, ensuring engagement without compromising academic

rigor. Equally important, professional development initiatives must equip lecturers with pedagogical tools and frameworks to facilitate critical thinking effectively.

A more systematic and concerted effort by education policymakers is required to reconcile policy and practice. This includes updating the national curriculum policy to clearly mandate the incorporation of a clear critical thinking model into the English course, not just as a general aim. Additionally, policy support for the production of localized teaching materials that are culturally appropriate and specifically geared to promote HOTs becomes vital. Policies should also support funding for continual professional development programs for lecturers, concentrating on pedagogical practices to facilitate critical thinking and critical literacy. Through coordinated efforts among educators, curriculum developers, and institutional leaders, critical thinking can be embedded as a core component of English language instruction, bridging the gap between policy and meaningful classroom practice.

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