

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Results

In this section, the researcher presented the research findings based on the collected data regarding the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the reading exercises, according to the cognitive levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in the "*English for Nusantara*" textbook. The reading exercises were analyzed using a Checklist Table to determine the distribution of cognitive levels in each exercise. Additionally, the researcher reported the number of occurrences of each cognitive level in Bloom's Taxonomy found in the exercises of each chapter and presented the percentage of each level.

4.1.1 The Results Distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Reading Exercises

Table 4.1 The Distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the Reading Exercises

Chp	Page	No	Reading Exercises	HOTS Levels		
				C4	C5	C6
1	50	6	Can you identify the time connectives in the text? Highlight them.	✓		
	51	7	In a costume competition, what are the possible criteria for scoring the contestants? Explain your reason.		✓	
		10	What do you think the elephant felt at the end of the story?		✓	
2	125	1	What is the best possible title for the story? Why?			✓
		4	What kind of man do you think the man is? Tell the reason/s.		✓	
		6	Which moral lesson can you take from the story?	✓		
		7	If you were the man, what would you do?	✓		
3	153	5	In your opinion, what makes some people like the post?	✓		
3	160	6	Which comments are not related to the content?	✓		
		7	Which idea do you recommend to a content sender?	✓		
3	167	6	Do you like the poster?	✓		
		7	Do you think people will be interested in the poster? Why? Why not?		✓	
4	211	1	What is the best title for this story?			✓

Chp	Page	No	Reading Exercises	HOTS Levels		
				C4	C5	C6
4	217	5	Do you think the Don't be a Tosser! posters in Picture 4.10 were effective? Why/Why not?		✓	
		6	What is the best title for this story?			✓
5	258	6	What do you think would happen to Mirza?	✓		
5	259	3	Draw Mirza's plastic soccer ball.			✓
		4	Can you guess why Mirza wished his dad was with him?	✓		
5	262	1	Draw a picture of the setting in each part of the story.			✓
	264	4	Each part of the story has been summarized below. Put the summaries in order by writing 1-7 in the boxes on the left.	✓		
		5	What do you learn from the story?	✓		
		6	What is the best title for the story?			✓
5	269	9	Draw a picture where Radit held his handphone.			✓
Total				11	5	7
Percentage = $\frac{\text{Total}}{116} \times 100\%$				9.4%	4.3%	6.0%

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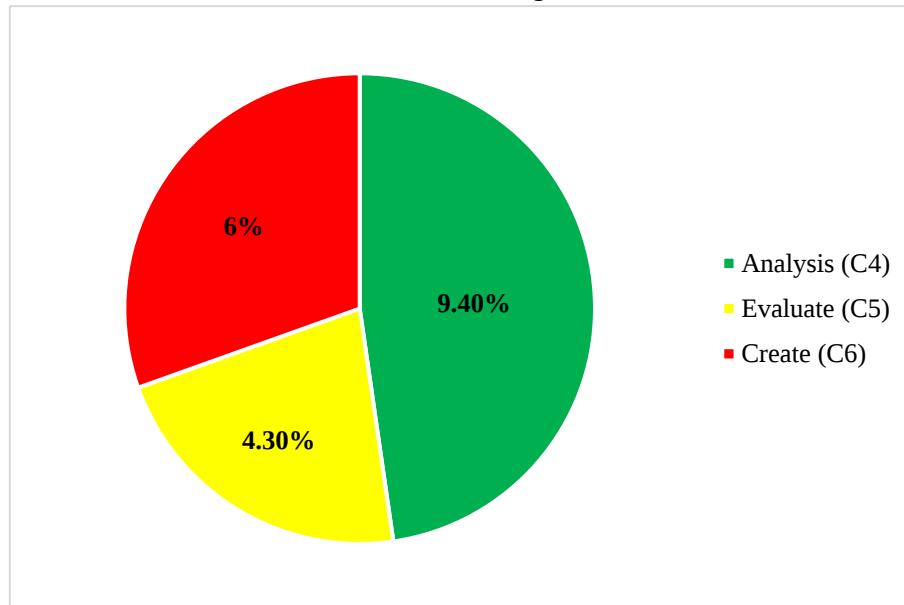
C4: Analyze

C5: Evaluate

C6: Create

From the table above, it was found that the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), which consist of analyze, evaluate, and create, was only present in 23 reading exercises out of a total of 116 reading exercises in all chapters of the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school. The analyze category included 11 reading exercises, the evaluate category included 5 reading exercises, and the create category included 7 reading exercises. This distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) accounted for 23 reading exercises, representing 19.6%. The following figure illustrates the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the reading exercises of the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skill (HOTS)
in the Reading Exercises



From the figure above, it can be seen that among the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) found in the reading exercises of the textbook “*English for Nusantara*,” the most frequently appearing cognitive level was Analyze (C4), which accounted for 9.4% of the total exercises. This was followed by Create (C6) with 6%, and Evaluate (C5) with 4.3%. Although these HOTS elements are present, their overall proportion remains limited when compared to the total number of reading exercises. The following table presents the detailed distribution of each Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) level across the chapters of the textbook.

Table 4.2 Distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Each Chapter of the Reading Exercises

Chapter	Title	HOTS in Reading Exercises			Total Score
		C4	C5	C6	
1	Celebrating Independence Day	1	1	0	$\frac{2}{116} \times 100\% = 1.7\%$
2	Kindness Begins with Me	2	2	1	$\frac{5}{116} \times 100\% = 4.3\%$
3	Love Our World	4	1	0	$\frac{5}{116} \times 100\% = 4.3\%$
4	No Littering	0	1	2	$\frac{3}{116} \times 100\% = 2.5\%$
5	Embrace Yourself	4	0	4	$\frac{8}{116} \times 100\% = 6.8\%$
Total Score		11	5	7	$\frac{23}{116} \times 100\% = 19.6\%$
		3.4%	9.4%	6.8%	

From the table above, it could be seen that out of a total of 116 reading exercises in the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school, the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 was found in 23 reading exercises, with a total percentage of 19.6%. The analyze category included 11 reading exercises, representing 9.4%, the evaluate category included 5 reading exercises, representing 4.3%, and the create category included 7 reading exercises, representing 6.0%. The following figure will illustrate more clearly the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in each chapter of the reading exercises in the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school.

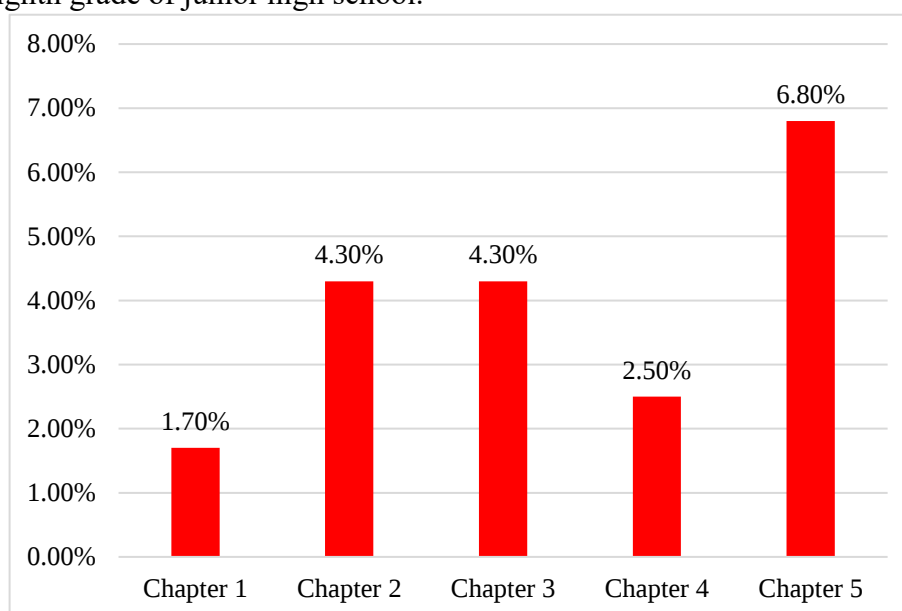


Figure 4.2 Distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Each Chapter

From the figure above, it could be seen that the highest distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) was found in Chapter 5, with a percentage of 6.8%, followed by Chapters 2 and 3, each with a percentage of 4.3%. Next was Chapter 4, with a percentage of 2.5%, and lastly, Chapter 1 had the lowest distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), with a percentage of 1.7%.

4.1.2 The Mostly Used Skill of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Reading Exercises

From the previous discussion, it could be seen that the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the reading exercises of the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school consisted of 23

reading exercises, representing 19.6%. The analyze category included 11 exercises, accounting for 9.4%, the evaluate category included 5 reading exercises, accounting for 4.3%, and the create category included 7 reading exercises, accounting for 6.0%. For further clarification, the following three tables present the list of reading exercises categorized according to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). The first table below shows the list of reading exercises in the analyze category.

Table 4.3 List of Reading Exercises in the Analyze Category

Chapter	Page	No.	List of Reading Exercises in the Analyze Category
1	50	6	Can you identify the time connectives in the text? Highlight them.
2	125	6	Which moral lesson can you take from the story?
2	125	7	If you were the man, what would you do?
3	152	5	In your opinion, what makes some people like the post?
3	160	6	Which comments are not related to the content?
3	160	7	Which idea do you recommend related to the content?
3	167	6	Do you like the poster?
5	258	6	What do you think would happen to Mirza?
5	259	4	Can you guess why Mirza wished his dad was with him?
5	264	4	Each part of the story has been summarized below. Put the summaries in order by writing 1-7 in the boxes on the left.
5	264	5	What do you learn from the story?

The table above presents a list of 11 reading exercises categorized under analyze, which are found in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 5. The following second table shows the list of reading exercises categorized under evaluate.

Table 4.4 List of Reading Exercises in the Evaluate Category

Chapter	Page	No.	List of Reading Exercises in the Evaluate Category
1	51	7	In a costume competition, what are the possible criteria for scoring the contestants? Explain your reason.
2	111	10	What do you think the elephant felt at the end of the story?
2	125	4	What kind of man do you think the man is? Tell the reason/s.
3	167	7	Do you think people will be interested in the poster? Why? Why not?
4	217	5	Do you think the Don't be a Tosser! posters in Picture 4.10 were effective? Why/Why not?

The table above presents a list of 5 reading exercises categorized under evaluate, which are found in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4. The following third table shows the list of reading exercises categorized under create.

Table 4.5 List of Reading Exercises in the Create Category

Chapter	Page	No.	List of Reading Exercises in the Create Category
2	125	1	What is the best possible title for the story? Why?
4	211	1	What is the best title for this story?
4	217	6	What is the best title for this story?
5	259	3	Draw Mirza's plastic soccer ball.
5	262	1	Draw a picture of the setting in each part of the story.
5	264	6	What is the best title for the story?
5	269	9	Draw a picture where Radit held his handphone.

The table above presents a list of 8 reading exercises categorized under create, which are found in Chapters 2, 4, and 5.

Based on the three tables above, it could be seen that the most frequently used Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) category was analyze, with a total of 11 reading exercises. These 11 reading exercises categorized under analyze were distributed as follows: Chapter 1 contained 1 reading exercise, Chapter 2 contained 2 reading exercises, Chapter 3 contained 4 reading exercises, and Chapter 5 contained 4 reading exercises. The create category ranked second in frequency, with a total of 7 reading exercises. These were distributed as follows: Chapter 2 contained 1 reading exercises, Chapter 4 contained 2 reading exercises, and Chapter 5 contained 4 reading exercises. Meanwhile, the least frequently used category was evaluate, with only 5 reading exercises. These were found in Chapter 1 with 1 reading exercise, Chapter 2 with 2 reading exercise, Chapter 3 with 1 reading exercises, and Chapter 5 with 1 reading exercises.

4.2 Discussion

In this section, the researcher discussed the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) and the most frequently used skill of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the reading exercises of the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school.

4.2.1 The Distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the Reading Exercises

Based on the findings regarding the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the reading exercises of the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school, it was found that Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), which includes analyze (C4), evaluate (C5), and create (C6), appeared in only 23 out of the total 116 reading exercises in the textbook. The analyze (C4) category contained 11 reading exercises, accounting for 9.4%, the evaluate (C5) category contained 5 reading exercises, accounting for 4.3%, and the create (C6) category contained 7 reading exercises, accounting for 6.0%. Based on these data, the total percentage of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) distribution in the reading exercises was 19.6%.

Furthermore, the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) across different chapters in the textbook varied significantly. Chapter 5 (Embrace Yourself) had the highest number of reading exercises incorporating Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), with a percentage of 6.8%, while Chapter 1 (Celebrating Independence Day) had the lowest, with only 1.7%. This suggests that certain chapters encouraged students to engage in critical and creative thinking, whereas others still emphasized memorization and comprehension.

The relatively high number of reading exercises categorized under Analyze (C4), totaling 11 items, indicated that the textbook provided students with several opportunities to break down information, recognize patterns, and examine relationships between ideas, thereby fostering deeper understanding of the text. In contrast, the Evaluate (C5) category appeared less frequently, with only 5 exercises, showing that students were less frequently required to assess, judge, or form reasoned opinions about the content. Meanwhile, the Create (C6) category, with 7 exercises, ranked second in the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) distribution. This suggests that while the textbook made some efforts to encourage students to develop original ideas or creative outputs based on the reading materials, such opportunities remained somewhat limited.

From this explanation, it can be concluded that the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school has not yet fully accommodated Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) optimally in its reading exercises. To support more challenging and relevant learning in today’s context, an increase in both the quantity and variety of exercises oriented toward Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is necessary.

4.2.2 The Mostly Used Skill of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in Reading Exercises

Based on the findings on the distribution of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in the reading exercises, the most frequently used Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) skill was analyze (C4), which appeared in 11 reading exercises, accounting for 9.4% of the total reading exercises in the textbook “*English for Nusantara*” for the eighth grade of junior high school. The analyze (C4) skill

reflects students' ability to break down information into its components, identify relationships among ideas, and understand textual structures more thoroughly. In reading exercises, this often involves recognizing patterns, distinguishing cause and effect, or identifying organizational frameworks within the text.

The Create (C6) skill ranked second, appearing in 7 reading exercises, representing 6% of the total. Exercises in this category often encouraged students to develop original ideas, suggest new titles for stories, or illustrate key parts of the reading based on their understanding and imagination. Although not dominant, the presence of create skill (C6) exercises indicates a moderate effort to foster students' creativity and synthesis abilities.

Meanwhile, the Evaluate (C5) skill was the least frequently used among the three Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) categories, appearing in only 5 reading exercises, or 4.3% of the total. Evaluate-type questions typically asked students to form judgments, express reasoned opinions, assess characters' actions, or weigh different viewpoints within the text. The limited use of evaluate (C5) suggests that students were given fewer opportunities to engage in reflective, critical thinking during reading activities.

4.2.3 The Research Findings Versus the Latest Related Research

This research showed that only 23 out of 116 reading exercises in the “*English for Nusantara*” textbook contained Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) elements, amounting to 19.8% of the total items. These Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) components were distributed as follows: Analyze (9.4%), Evaluate (4.3%), and Create (6.0%). When compared with several recent related studies, a consistent pattern of underrepresentation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) emerged.

Atiullah et al. (2019: 435) conducted an analysis of reading comprehension questions in English textbooks for tenth-grade students and discovered that only 24 out of 158 questions were categorized as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). This percentage (15.2%) was slightly lower than that found in this research (19.8%). Both researches indicated that a large portion of reading exercises focused primarily

on Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS), thereby limiting students' exposure to critical and creative cognitive activities.

Similarly, Laila and Fitriyah (2022: 80) examined 142 reading comprehension questions in a twelfth-grade English textbook published by the Ministry of Education and Culture and found that only 25 items qualified as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). This constituted 17.6% of the total questions, which was again below the percentage identified in this research. Their findings, like those in this research, suggested that textbooks still relied heavily on factual and comprehension-based questions, without sufficient incorporation of analysis, evaluation, or creative tasks.

Astuti (2023: 78), in her research on the “*English in Mind*” textbook for seventh-grade students, revealed that 21 out of 97 reading questions were Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-oriented, representing 21.6% of the total. This figure was marginally higher than this research. However, both researches shared a similar conclusion, while some efforts had been made to include Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), the quantity remained insufficient to meet the objectives of higher-level cognitive development as emphasized in current curriculum standards.

In contrast, Febrina et al. (2019: 13) reported a different result in their analysis of an eleventh-grade English textbook. They found that 66.8% of the reading comprehension questions were categorized as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). This significantly higher percentage suggested a stronger alignment with Bloom’s Taxonomy in that particular textbook. Compared to this research, the findings by Febrina et al. indicated that some textbooks had begun integrating Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) more robustly, though such instances appeared to be exceptions rather than the norm.

Taken together, these comparisons affirmed that this research findings were consistent with the majority of recent studies, which indicated a general underrepresentation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in reading exercises across English textbooks. While some textbooks demonstrated higher integration of higher-order cognitive questions, most, including “*English for Nusantara*” still lacked a balanced distribution that would adequately promote students’ critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

4.2.4 The Research Findings Versus Theory

Theoretically, Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) plays a fundamental role in shaping students' cognitive development, particularly in fostering analytical, evaluative, and creative capacities. Bloom's Revised Taxonomy, as formulated by Anderson et al. (2001: 31), categorize Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) into three upper levels of cognitive processing: analyzing (C4), evaluating (C5), and creating (C6). These levels are designed to move learners beyond basic recall and comprehension, encouraging them to engage with content more critically and innovatively.

The emphasis on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is not only theoretical but also supported by educational policies and curriculum frameworks in Indonesia. As Jannah et al. (2024: 2442) explain, the Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that emphasizes the importance of developing 21st-century skills, which are closely related to Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). These skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity are central to preparing students for future academic and professional challenges. Accordingly, instructional materials, particularly textbooks, are expected to integrate Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-oriented activities and questions that stimulate deep thinking and meaningful learning.

Moreover, Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is not limited to advanced academic levels but is applicable across all stages of formal education. As state by Febrianti et al. (2021: 44), Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions can be applied at all educational levels, including elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school, to enhance students' critical thinking skills. Similarly, Fitriyani & Ghani (2024: 70) reinforce that Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) questions in junior high school aim to improve students' understanding and encourage more critical and creative engagement with learning materials. This perspective is supported by Cahyawati & Sholeh (2020: 101), who affirm that Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) can be implemented across all subjects with the goal of developing students' higher-order cognitive processes.

Despite the theoretical and curricular advocacy for Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), the findings of this research revealed a significant gap between

theory and practice. The analysis of the “*English for Nusantara*” textbook for eighth-grade students showed that only 23 out of 116 reading exercise questions (19.8%) were aligned with Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) criteria. These were distributed across the analyzing (9.4%), evaluating (4.3%), and creating (6.0%) levels.

This disproportionate distribution indicated that the textbook did not adequately support the theoretical expectations and curriculum mandates that called for the inclusion of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in educational materials. The absence of a balanced representation of all cognitive levels, particularly the minimal integration of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), suggested that the textbook may not have fully contributed to the cultivation of students’ critical and creative thinking abilities as envisioned by Bloom’s Taxonomy and the Merdeka Curriculum.

In conclusion, while theoretical frameworks and national policies underscore the necessity of implementing Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) at all educational levels to promote 21st-century skills, the actual practice as observed in the “*English for Nusantara*” textbook fell short of these expectations. This discrepancy highlighted the need for more intentional efforts in textbook development and instructional design to ensure that students were provided with meaningful opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking processes.

4.2.5 The Research Findings Implication

The findings of this research yielded several implications for educational stakeholders. First, for English language teachers, the minimal presence of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-based questions in the “*English for Nusantara*” textbook necessitated the use of supplementary materials or teacher-generated questions to ensure students were regularly exposed to analytical, evaluative, and creative thinking tasks. Teachers needed to play a proactive role in bridging the gap between curriculum goals and textbook content.

Second, for students, the limited exposure to higher-order thinking questions may have impeded the development of critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. These competencies were essential for academic success

and lifelong learning, particularly in a rapidly evolving global context that demanded adaptability and innovation.

Third, for textbook authors and curriculum developers, the findings underscored the need to integrate Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) more deliberately and systematically into textbook design. The inclusion of higher-level cognitive tasks could have enhanced the quality and effectiveness of learning materials, better aligning them with the national education goals outlined in the Merdeka Curriculum.

Finally, for policymakers, especially within the Ministry of Education and Culture, this research highlighted the necessity of implementing more rigorous evaluation criteria for textbook approval. Ensuring that textbooks met both theoretical and curricular standards would have supported more holistic student development and promoted meaningful learning experiences.

4.2.6 The Research Findings Limitations

While this research contributed valuable insights into the analysis of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in reading exercises, it was not without limitations. First, the scope of the research was confined to a single textbook “*English for Nusantara*” used in one grade level (eighth grade) at a specific school. Therefore, the findings could not be generalized to other textbooks, grade levels, or schools without further investigation.

Second, the research employed a descriptive qualitative design, focusing solely on content analysis. As such, it did not examine the impact of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-based questions on actual student performance or learning outcomes. Including experimental or correlational designs in future research may have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) integration.

Lastly, the absence of triangulated data sources, such as interviews with teachers or classroom observations, limited the interpretive depth of the research. Incorporating stakeholder perspectives could have offered richer contextual insights into how the textbook was used and perceived in real teaching scenarios.