

Beyond Reading Comprehension: Evaluating the Representation of CEFR B1-B2 Reading Descriptors in Train of Thought (English for Grade XII Senior High School)

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20260805>

ABSTRACT

The increasing adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as an international benchmark for English language education has highlighted the importance of aligning instructional materials with communicative language proficiency standards. As one of the primary learning resources in Indonesian secondary schools, English textbooks play a crucial role in facilitating the achievement of curriculum objectives and communicative competence. This study aimed to evaluate the representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors in Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School, an English textbook developed under Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum. The study employed a qualitative descriptive design using qualitative content analysis. The textbook served as the primary research material, while reading passages, comprehension tasks, classroom activities, and assessment exercises constituted the units of analysis. Data were collected through systematic document analysis using a researcher-developed evaluation rubric adapted from the CEFR Companion Volume and analyzed through data reduction, coding, categorization, and descriptive interpretation. The findings indicate that the

textbook generally demonstrates a satisfactory representation of the selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors. Reading for Information and Argument and Identifying Cues and Inferring were the most strongly represented descriptors, providing learners with opportunities to interpret information, evaluate arguments, infer implicit meanings, and engage with authentic texts. In contrast, Reading Correspondence, Reading for Orientation, and Reading Instructions received comparatively less emphasis, indicating a need for a more balanced representation of communicative reading competencies. Overall, the textbook aligns well with the communicative and action-oriented principles of the CEFR while supporting the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum. The findings provide valuable implications for textbook developers, curriculum designers, and English teachers in improving the quality and international alignment of English language teaching materials.

Keywords: CEFR; B1–B2 Reading Descriptors; English Textbook Evaluation; Qualitative Content Analysis; Merdeka Curriculum; Reading Competence; Train of Thought.

INTRODUCTION

The growing demand for global communication in the twenty-first century has increased the importance of English language proficiency among secondary school students. As English functions as an international language for education, employment, and intercultural communication, language teaching materials are expected to support learners in developing communicative competence that corresponds to international standards (Richards, 2022). One of the most widely recognized frameworks for describing language proficiency is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which provides standardized descriptors of language abilities across different levels of proficiency (Council of Europe, 2020).

In recent years, the Indonesian education system has shown increasing interest in aligning English language teaching with international frameworks such as the CEFR. This trend is reflected in the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes competency-based learning, critical thinking, meaningful communication, and learner-centered instruction (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Consequently, English textbooks play a crucial role in facilitating the achievement of these educational objectives because they serve as the primary source of learning materials and classroom activities for both teachers and students (Tomlinson, 2023).

Among the language skills promoted by the CEFR, reading is considered a fundamental component of communicative competence. Reading enables learners to access information, interpret arguments, evaluate ideas, and develop critical literacy skills necessary for academic and real-life communication (Grabe & Stoller, 2020). The CEFR Companion Volume highlights that learners at the B1–B2 levels should be able to understand factual and argumentative texts, identify main ideas and supporting details, recognize writers' viewpoints, and interpret both explicit and implicit information in written discourse (Council of

Europe, 2020). These competencies are represented through descriptors such as Reading for Information and Argument, which reflects learners' ability to process information critically and meaningfully.

Textbooks are expected to provide learning activities that support the development of these reading competencies. According to Tomlinson (2023), effective language-learning materials should engage learners in meaningful reading tasks that encourage interpretation, analysis, and evaluation rather than simple information retrieval. Similarly, Richards (2022) argues that communicative reading instruction should promote learners' ability to construct meaning, relate information to prior knowledge, and critically respond to texts. Therefore, evaluating the extent to which English textbooks represent CEFR reading descriptors is important for determining their suitability in supporting learners' communicative development.

One of the textbooks currently used in Indonesian senior high schools under the Kurikulum Merdeka framework is Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School. The textbook contains various reading passages and activities addressing contemporary issues such as environmental awareness, social media, technology, financial literacy, and lifestyle choices. These topics potentially provide opportunities for learners to engage with informational and argumentative texts while developing critical reading skills. However, despite the increasing adoption of CEFR-informed educational practices, limited research has specifically examined how CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors are represented in Indonesian Grade 12 English textbooks.

Previous studies have generally focused on textbook evaluation, curriculum alignment, or communicative language teaching practices. For example, North and Piccardo (2022) emphasize the importance of aligning instructional materials with CEFR descriptors to ensure consistency between language learning objectives and classroom

practices. Likewise, Byram (2021) highlights that language materials should support learners in developing critical literacy and communicative competence through meaningful engagement with authentic texts. Nevertheless, research investigating the representation of CEFR reading descriptors within Indonesian English textbooks remains relatively limited, particularly in the context of Kurikulum Merdeka.

Addressing this gap, the present study aims to evaluate the representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors in Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School. Specifically, the study focuses on the descriptor Reading for Information and Argument to examine how textbook activities support learners' ability to identify main ideas, interpret arguments, compare viewpoints, and evaluate information presented in written texts. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of textbook quality, provide insights for material developers and educators, and support future efforts to align English language teaching materials with international proficiency standards and national curriculum objectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) has become one of the most influential international frameworks for language education, providing a common basis for curriculum development, textbook design, assessment, and language teaching across different educational contexts (Council of Europe, 2020). The CEFR describes language proficiency through a series of communicative descriptors ranging from A1 to C2, enabling educators to evaluate learners' language abilities based on what they can actually do in real communicative situations rather than merely assessing grammatical knowledge. The publication of the CEFR Companion Volume further expanded the framework by introducing

descriptors related to mediation, online interaction, plurilingual competence, and strategic communication, making the framework more suitable for twenty-first-century language learning (North & Piccardo, 2022).

Rather than viewing language learning as the mastery of isolated linguistic forms, the CEFR adopts an action-oriented approach, which conceptualizes language users as social agents who accomplish meaningful tasks through communication (Council of Europe, 2020). This perspective emphasizes that language competence involves not only linguistic accuracy but also the ability to interpret information, negotiate meaning, collaborate with others, and communicate effectively in authentic contexts. Consequently, language learning materials are expected to facilitate communicative competence through activities that reflect real-world language use.

The widespread adoption of the CEFR has also encouraged many educational systems to align their curricula, teaching materials, and assessment practices with internationally recognized language proficiency standards. In recent years, the framework has been increasingly used as a reference for evaluating whether language learning materials provide learners with opportunities to develop communicative competence progressively across different proficiency levels. This alignment is particularly important because textbooks continue to serve as one of the primary instructional resources in English language classrooms. A CEFR-informed textbook is expected not only to present appropriate linguistic content but also to include learning activities that enable students to achieve the communicative outcomes specified by the CEFR descriptors. Therefore, the framework has become an important benchmark for textbook developers, curriculum designers, and educators seeking to ensure that instructional materials support meaningful language learning and measurable learning outcomes (Council of Europe, 2020).

Within the Indonesian educational context, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has strengthened the relevance of the CEFR as a reference for developing communicative English learning. The curriculum emphasizes competency-based learning, learner-centered instruction, critical thinking, collaboration, and authentic communication, principles that are closely aligned with the action-oriented approach promoted by the CEFR (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Consequently, evaluating English textbooks through the lens of CEFR descriptors has become increasingly important to determine whether learning activities adequately prepare students to use English effectively in academic, social, and real-life contexts. Such evaluations also provide valuable evidence for improving textbook quality and ensuring that instructional materials support both national curriculum objectives and internationally recognized standards of language proficiency.

b. CEFR Reading Descriptors at the B1–B2 Levels

Reading competence is one of the essential language skills described in the CEFR. At the B1 and B2 proficiency levels, learners are expected to comprehend authentic texts, identify explicit and implicit information, interpret arguments, evaluate ideas, and synthesize information from multiple sources (Council of Europe, 2020). Reading is therefore regarded as an interactive process in which learners actively construct meaning through the integration of textual information, background knowledge, and contextual understanding.

Among the CEFR reading descriptors, Reading for Information and Argument is particularly relevant for upper secondary education because it reflects learners' ability to identify main ideas, recognize supporting evidence, compare viewpoints, and critically interpret written texts. Learners at the B2 level are expected not only to understand factual information but also to evaluate arguments, recognize writers' intentions, and

distinguish between opinions and evidence (North & Piccardo, 2022). These competencies correspond to contemporary educational goals that emphasize critical literacy and evidence-based reasoning.

Reading comprehension also requires learners to apply inferential skills by identifying contextual clues and constructing meaning beyond explicitly stated information. According to Richards (2022), communicative reading instruction should encourage learners to analyze information critically rather than simply retrieve factual details. Similarly, Tomlinson (2023) argues that effective reading materials should engage learners in authentic and cognitively challenging tasks that promote interpretation, reflection, and critical evaluation.

Reading at the B1–B2 levels also requires learners to employ a range of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to comprehend increasingly complex texts. These strategies include predicting content, monitoring comprehension, recognizing discourse markers, identifying text organization, and evaluating the relevance and reliability of information. Such strategic reading enables learners to process texts more effectively and become independent readers who can adapt their reading approaches according to different communicative purposes. The CEFR therefore emphasizes that reading competence extends beyond decoding written language to include critical engagement with texts, allowing learners to interpret meaning, make informed judgments, and apply acquired information in academic and real-life contexts (Council of Europe, 2020). Consequently, instructional materials should provide learners with opportunities to practice these higher-level reading strategies through diverse and meaningful learning activities.

Given the central role of textbooks in English language teaching, the representation of CEFR reading descriptors within textbook activities becomes an important indicator of curriculum quality and instructional effectiveness. A textbook that systematically incorporates CEFR B1–B2 reading

descriptors is expected to expose learners to various text genres, communicative purposes, and reading tasks that gradually develop their proficiency. Activities should encourage learners not only to answer comprehension questions but also to compare viewpoints, evaluate evidence, synthesize information from multiple texts, and reflect on the author's purpose and intended audience. Evaluating the extent to which these descriptors are represented in English textbooks provides valuable insights into whether the instructional materials adequately support the communicative reading competencies expected at the upper secondary level and align with internationally recognized standards for English language education.

c. English Textbooks as Curriculum Implementation

Textbooks remain one of the primary instructional resources in English language classrooms because they operationalize curriculum objectives into classroom activities and learning experiences (Richards, 2022). Well-designed textbooks provide systematic learning opportunities while supporting teachers in implementing curriculum goals. In communicative language teaching, textbooks should facilitate meaningful interaction, contextualized language use, and balanced development of receptive and productive skills.

Under Indonesia's Kurikulum Merdeka, English textbooks are expected to support competency-based learning by promoting critical thinking, meaningful communication, and contextual learning experiences (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Rather than emphasizing memorization of linguistic forms, learning materials should encourage students to interpret information, solve problems, collaborate with peers, and apply language in authentic situations. Consequently, evaluating textbook content is essential to determine whether classroom materials adequately represent the communicative competencies expected by

both the national curriculum and international language standards.

In addition to functioning as instructional resources, textbooks also serve as a bridge between curriculum policy and classroom practice. They translate curriculum objectives into concrete learning sequences, classroom tasks, assessment activities, and learning outcomes that can be implemented by teachers. Particularly in contexts where teachers rely heavily on prescribed textbooks, the quality of textbook content significantly influences the effectiveness of language instruction and students' learning experiences. Therefore, textbooks should not only present accurate language input but also provide meaningful opportunities for learners to develop communicative competence through authentic, purposeful, and learner-centered activities (Richards, 2022).

The role of textbooks has become increasingly important in supporting communicative language teaching, which emphasizes language use for meaningful communication rather than the memorization of grammatical structures. According to Tomlinson (2023), effective language textbooks should expose learners to authentic texts, encourage interaction, and engage students in tasks that require critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and reflection. Such materials help learners connect classroom learning with real-world communication, enabling them to develop language proficiency that can be applied beyond academic settings. Consequently, textbook activities should progressively guide learners from understanding language forms to using English effectively in diverse communicative situations.

Within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, English textbooks are expected to reflect learner-centered pedagogical principles by providing flexible, contextual, and meaningful learning experiences. The curriculum encourages students to become active participants in constructing knowledge through inquiry, discussion, collaboration, and independent learning

rather than passive recipients of information (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). As a result, textbook activities should encourage learners to interpret information, express opinions, justify arguments, and solve authentic problems using English as a medium of communication. Such learning experiences are consistent with the competencies required for lifelong learning and global citizenship in the twenty-first century.

Considering these expectations, textbook evaluation plays a crucial role in determining whether English learning materials adequately support curriculum implementation and internationally recognized language standards such as the CEFR. Evaluating textbooks allows researchers and educators to identify the extent to which learning activities represent expected communicative competencies, particularly those related to reading proficiency at the B1–B2 levels. The findings of textbook evaluation can provide valuable recommendations for textbook authors, curriculum developers, publishers, and teachers to improve instructional materials, ensure closer alignment between curriculum objectives and classroom practice, and enhance students' opportunities to develop communicative competence through high-quality English language learning resources.

d. Evaluation of Textbook Representation

Textbook evaluation is a systematic process used to determine whether instructional materials adequately represent curriculum objectives, pedagogical principles, and language proficiency standards (Tomlinson, 2023). In CEFR-based evaluation, textbook activities are examined according to the extent to which they represent specific communicative descriptors, including reading comprehension, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing, mediation, and strategic competence.

Previous studies have shown that many English textbooks successfully develop reading comprehension through activities involving identifying main ideas, locating supporting details, and answering

comprehension questions. However, higher-level reading competencies, such as evaluating arguments, interpreting implicit meanings, synthesizing information, and engaging in critical literacy, are often represented inconsistently (North & Piccardo, 2022; Richards, 2022). As a result, textbook evaluation provides valuable evidence regarding the strengths and limitations of learning materials in supporting communicative language development.

Beyond assessing the quality of instructional materials, textbook evaluation serves as an important mechanism for ensuring that learning resources remain aligned with evolving educational policies and international language standards. In the context of CEFR-based language education, evaluation focuses not only on the presence of language content but also on the extent to which textbook activities enable learners to demonstrate the communicative competencies described in the CEFR proficiency scales. This includes examining whether tasks encourage learners to engage in authentic communication, develop strategic language use, and progressively achieve the expected proficiency level. Consequently, textbook evaluation provides empirical evidence that can be used to improve the design, selection, and implementation of English language teaching materials (Council of Europe, 2020).

An effective textbook evaluation should consider both the quantity and quality of learning activities representing specific CEFR descriptors. The mere inclusion of reading passages or comprehension questions does not necessarily indicate alignment with CEFR expectations. Instead, evaluators need to examine whether activities require learners to interpret information critically, identify implicit meanings, distinguish facts from opinions, synthesize ideas from multiple sources, and respond appropriately to different communicative purposes. Tomlinson (2023) emphasizes that high-quality language

materials should provide learners with authentic, cognitively challenging, and purposeful tasks that promote independent thinking and meaningful communication rather than repetitive practice of isolated language forms. Therefore, evaluating textbook activities through CEFR descriptors offers a more comprehensive understanding of how effectively instructional materials facilitate communicative language development.

The findings of textbook evaluation have important implications for curriculum developers, textbook authors, teachers, and educational policymakers. By identifying strengths and gaps in the representation of CEFR descriptors, evaluation results can inform the revision of textbooks to ensure a more balanced coverage of communicative competencies across language skills and proficiency levels. Furthermore, such evaluations contribute to improving the quality of English language education by supporting evidence-based curriculum development and encouraging greater consistency between learning objectives, instructional materials, and classroom practice. In the Indonesian context, where the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes competency-based learning and communicative language use, systematic textbook evaluation becomes increasingly important to ensure that English textbooks effectively prepare students to meet both national educational goals and internationally recognized language proficiency standards.

e. Previous Studies

Research concerning CEFR implementation has increased considerably in recent years. North and Piccardo (2022) explain that the CEFR Companion Volume broadens language education by emphasizing communicative competence, mediation, learner agency, and authentic language use. Similarly, Richards (2022) highlights that communicative language teaching requires learning materials to integrate language skills

within meaningful contexts rather than treating language as isolated knowledge.

Tomlinson (2023) further argues that effective language textbooks should encourage learners to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information through authentic learning tasks. Meanwhile, studies examining English textbooks in various educational contexts generally report strong representation of basic reading comprehension but comparatively limited opportunities for higher-order reading skills and critical evaluation of arguments. These findings suggest the need for more detailed investigations focusing on how CEFR reading descriptors are represented within specific textbooks.

Despite the growing body of research on CEFR implementation, relatively few studies have specifically examined the representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors in Indonesian Grade 12 English textbooks developed under Kurikulum Merdeka. Most previous research has focused on curriculum alignment, general communicative competence, or overall textbook evaluation without concentrating on reading descriptors as an independent area of investigation. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by evaluating how selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors are represented in Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School. The findings are expected to contribute to the improvement of textbook development, curriculum implementation, and communicative language teaching practices in Indonesia.

In the Indonesian context, several studies have explored the integration of the CEFR into English language education, particularly in relation to curriculum development, language assessment, and textbook alignment. While these studies have generally reported positive efforts to incorporate CEFR principles into English teaching materials, they also reveal inconsistencies in the representation of communicative competencies across different textbooks and language skills. In

particular, comprehensive analyses of reading activities based on specific CEFR B1–B2 descriptors remain limited, as most evaluations tend to assess textbooks from a broader curricular or pedagogical perspective rather than examining individual descriptor representation. This indicates a need for more focused investigations that systematically analyze how particular CEFR reading descriptors are embedded in textbook activities and whether they adequately support the communicative reading competencies expected of upper secondary school learners.

MATERIALS & METHODS

a. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design using qualitative content analysis to examine the representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors in the Grade 12 English textbook *Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School*. Content analysis was selected because it enables researchers to systematically identify, categorize, and interpret textual and instructional content within educational materials (Krippendorff, 2019). The analysis focused on how reading activities reflected the communicative competencies described in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020).

A qualitative descriptive approach was considered appropriate because the objective of this study was not to measure statistical relationships or test hypotheses but to provide a detailed description of how selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors are represented in textbook activities. Qualitative content analysis allows researchers to examine the meaning, context, and characteristics of instructional materials in a systematic and transparent manner by identifying recurring themes and patterns within textual data (Schreier, 2012). Through this approach, each reading activity in the textbook was analyzed according to the operational definitions of the selected CEFR

reading descriptors, enabling an in-depth interpretation of the extent to which the textbook supports the communicative reading competencies expected at the upper secondary level.

Furthermore, document-based qualitative analysis offers several advantages for textbook evaluation because it enables researchers to investigate educational materials in their natural form without influencing the data through intervention or participant interaction. The textbook was treated as the primary document of analysis, with reading passages, instructions, comprehension questions, and related learning activities serving as the units of analysis. By systematically comparing these activities with the CEFR Companion Volume descriptors, the study generated comprehensive evidence regarding the representation of communicative reading competencies. This methodological approach provides a reliable basis for evaluating textbook quality and contributes to understanding the alignment between instructional materials, the Merdeka Curriculum, and internationally recognized language proficiency standards.

The selection of qualitative content analysis also aligns with current educational research trends that emphasize the importance of examining curriculum materials through systematic coding frameworks. Rather than focusing solely on the frequency of specific content, qualitative content analysis enables researchers to interpret the pedagogical intentions embedded within learning activities and instructional tasks. This approach is particularly relevant for language education research because textbook activities often reflect broader educational goals related to communicative competence, critical thinking, and learner autonomy. According to Mayring and Fenzl (2022), qualitative content analysis provides a structured yet flexible analytical procedure that supports rigorous interpretation while preserving the contextual meaning of educational documents.

Moreover, the coding procedure adopted in this study was guided by predefined analytical categories derived from the selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors. A deductive coding strategy was considered appropriate because the study sought to determine the extent to which textbook activities corresponded with an established theoretical framework rather than generating categories inductively from the data. As explained by Kuckartz and Rädiker (2023), deductive qualitative content analysis allows researchers to systematically compare empirical data with existing theoretical constructs, thereby increasing the transparency and consistency of the analytical process.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the analysis followed established principles of qualitative rigor, including credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Throughout the coding process, each reading activity was examined repeatedly to ensure consistency in interpreting the operational definitions of the selected CEFR descriptors. Detailed coding records and analytical notes were maintained to provide an audit trail that documents the decision-making process during data analysis. According to Creswell and Poth (2024), maintaining systematic documentation throughout qualitative research strengthens methodological transparency and improves the credibility of research findings.

The use of document analysis as the primary data collection technique is also consistent with recent studies evaluating educational resources and curriculum implementation. Since textbooks represent officially developed instructional materials, they provide valuable evidence regarding the intended learning experiences offered to students. Document analysis enables researchers to examine these materials objectively without disrupting classroom activities or influencing participants' responses. Bowen (2021) emphasizes that document analysis is an efficient and credible qualitative method for evaluating

educational policies, curriculum documents, and instructional resources because it provides rich contextual information while minimizing researcher intervention.

Finally, employing the CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) as the analytical framework enhances the international relevance of this study by providing standardized descriptors for communicative language competence. Evaluating textbook activities against internationally recognized proficiency standards offers meaningful insights into the compatibility of national educational materials with global language education practices. Such analyses are increasingly encouraged in English language teaching research to support curriculum improvement and promote internationally benchmarked language instruction. As noted by North, Goodier, and Piccardo (2022), the CEFR Companion Volume serves not only as a proficiency framework but also as a practical reference for designing, evaluating, and improving language teaching materials in diverse educational contexts.

b. Research Material

The primary research material was *Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School*, an English textbook developed under Indonesia's Kurikulum Merdeka and officially published for Grade 12 students. The textbook was selected because it serves as one of the main instructional materials used in Indonesian senior high schools and is designed to support communicative language learning aligned with the national curriculum. The units, reading passages, instructions, comprehension questions, classroom activities, and assessment tasks contained in the textbook constituted the units of analysis.

The selection of *Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School* was based on its relevance to the objectives of this study and its role in implementing the learning outcomes specified in the Merdeka Curriculum for upper secondary education. As an officially published textbook, it is

intended to develop students' communicative competence through a variety of text genres and learning activities that correspond to the expected English proficiency at the Grade 12 level. Consequently, analyzing this textbook provides valuable insights into the extent to which CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors are represented within authentic classroom materials. The findings are expected to offer evidence-based recommendations for textbook developers, curriculum designers, and English teachers regarding the alignment of instructional materials with internationally recognized language proficiency standards and national curriculum expectations.

c. Research Instrument

The study employed a researcher-developed evaluation rubric adapted from the CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) and validated by an expert in English Language Teaching. The instrument consisted of two stages. The first stage was a Data Collection Table, which recorded the textbook unit, page number, activity or task, language skill, selected CEFR reading descriptor, and preliminary interpretation. The second stage was a Descriptor Analysis Matrix, which evaluated the degree of representation using a four-point coding scale:

- 0 = Not Represented
- 1 = Minimally Represented
- 2 = Moderately Represented
- 3 = Strongly Represented

The coding criteria were developed based on the operational definitions of the selected CEFR reading descriptors to ensure consistency during the evaluation process. The evaluation rubric was designed to provide a structured and systematic framework for identifying the presence and quality of CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors within the textbook. Each reading activity was carefully examined by comparing its learning objectives, task instructions, and expected learner performance with the operational definitions provided in the CEFR

Companion Volume. The coding process focused not only on the occurrence of a particular descriptor but also on the extent to which the activity reflected the communicative competence associated with that descriptor. This systematic approach enabled the researcher to classify textbook activities consistently while minimizing subjective interpretation throughout the analysis.

To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher applied the evaluation rubric consistently across all textbook units and documented each coding decision using supporting evidence from the analyzed activities. Representative excerpts from reading passages, comprehension questions, and classroom tasks were recorded to justify the assigned representation level for each descriptor. Furthermore, the expert validation process ensured that the rubric accurately reflected the conceptual meanings of the selected CEFR reading descriptors and was appropriate for evaluating English textbook content. This procedure contributed to the transparency, consistency, and dependability of the qualitative content analysis conducted in the study.

d. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through systematic document analysis. First, the researcher carefully read the entire textbook to identify all reading-related activities. Second, activities relevant to the selected CEFR reading descriptors were identified and recorded in the data collection table. Third, each activity was categorized according to the operational definitions of the selected descriptors. Finally, representative examples from different textbook units were compiled for further analysis.

The analysis focused on reading tasks requiring students to identify main ideas, locate supporting details, interpret arguments, infer implicit meanings, compare viewpoints, and evaluate information presented in written texts. To ensure a comprehensive analysis, the researcher

examined every unit of the textbook sequentially rather than selecting only specific chapters or reading passages. All activities associated with reading comprehension, including pre-reading tasks, while-reading activities, post-reading exercises, comprehension questions, vocabulary-in-context tasks, and text interpretation exercises, were included in the analysis whenever they reflected the selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors. Activities unrelated to reading competence, such as grammar drills or speaking tasks without a reading component, were excluded from the analysis. This comprehensive document review ensured that the findings accurately represented the overall coverage of CEFR reading descriptors throughout the textbook. During the data collection process, each identified activity was documented using the researcher-developed data collection table. Detailed information, including the textbook unit, page number, title of the reading activity, learning objective, corresponding CEFR reading descriptor, and preliminary coding results, was systematically recorded. This documentation enabled the researcher to organize the data efficiently and facilitated subsequent comparison across different textbook units. Recording contextual information for each activity also helped maintain consistency during the coding process and provided clear evidence supporting the interpretation of the findings. To improve the credibility and dependability of the data collection process, the researcher followed the same coding procedures throughout the analysis and continuously referred to the operational definitions of the selected CEFR reading descriptors in the CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020). Any activities that potentially represented more than one descriptor were carefully reviewed to determine the most appropriate classification based on the primary communicative objective of the task. This systematic and transparent procedure helped minimize subjective interpretation and ensured that the collected data accurately

reflected the representation of CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors within the textbook.

e. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis following three stages. The first stage involved data reduction, in which textbook activities unrelated to the selected reading descriptors were excluded. The second stage involved coding and categorization, where each identified activity was coded according to the CEFR reading descriptor represented and assigned a representation score ranging from 0 to 3. The third stage involved interpretation, in which the frequency and quality of descriptor representation were analyzed to determine the extent to which the textbook reflected CEFR B1–B2 reading competencies.

The findings were presented descriptively using tables, matrices, and narrative explanations. The interpretation emphasized patterns of representation, strengths, and areas requiring further development in relation to CEFR reading expectations. Following the coding process, the researcher compared the identified textbook activities across all units to examine recurring patterns and variations in the representation of the selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors. Similar activities were grouped into thematic categories according to their dominant communicative objectives, allowing the researcher to identify which descriptors were consistently represented and which appeared only occasionally. This comparative analysis provided a clearer understanding of the overall distribution of reading competencies within the textbook and facilitated the identification of strengths and potential gaps in the instructional materials.

The interpretation of the findings was guided by the operational definitions and performance descriptors outlined in the CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020). Rather than relying solely on the numerical coding scores, the analysis considered the communicative purpose, cognitive demands, and authenticity of each reading activity to determine the quality of

descriptor representation. Activities that required learners to analyze information, interpret arguments, infer implicit meanings, or evaluate textual evidence were interpreted as demonstrating stronger alignment with CEFR B1–B2 reading competencies than activities focusing primarily on literal comprehension or information retrieval. This qualitative interpretation enabled a more comprehensive evaluation of how effectively the textbook supported communicative reading development.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis, all coding decisions and interpretations were systematically documented throughout the research process. Representative examples from the textbook were retained as supporting evidence to justify the classification of each reading activity and to maintain an audit trail of the analytical procedures. The use of clearly defined coding criteria, systematic documentation, and consistent reference to the CEFR descriptors contributed to the credibility, dependability, and transparency of the qualitative content analysis, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected the representation of CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors in the analyzed textbook.

f. Trustworthiness

To enhance the credibility of the findings, the evaluation instrument underwent expert validation prior to data collection. The coding process was guided by explicit operational definitions derived from the CEFR Companion Volume to improve consistency and transparency throughout the analysis. Furthermore, representative textbook excerpts were used as evidence to support the interpretation of each identified descriptor.

In addition to expert validation, the researcher maintained a systematic and transparent analytical procedure throughout the study to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings. All stages of data collection, coding, categorization, and interpretation were documented carefully to establish a clear audit trail that could be reviewed and

replicated by other researchers. Consistent application of the researcher-developed evaluation rubric and continuous reference to the operational definitions in the CEFR Companion Volume minimized potential researcher bias and ensured that each coding decision was grounded in established theoretical criteria rather than subjective judgment. This rigorous procedure strengthened the dependability and confirmability of the qualitative content analysis.

Furthermore, the study enhanced the transferability of its findings by providing detailed descriptions of the research context, the analyzed textbook, the evaluation procedures, and the CEFR reading descriptors used as analytical categories. Such detailed methodological reporting enables future researchers to replicate the study using different English textbooks, educational levels, or instructional contexts while applying the same analytical framework. Although the findings are specific to Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School, the evaluation procedures and coding framework developed in this study may serve as a useful reference for future CEFR-based textbook evaluations and contribute to the continuous improvement of English language teaching materials in Indonesia and comparable educational settings.

RESULT

This section presents the findings of the analysis of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors represented in Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School. The analysis focused on identifying how reading activities correspond to the CEFR Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020). Each activity was evaluated using a four-level representation scale ranging from 0 (Not Represented) to 3 (Strongly Represented).

Overall, the textbook demonstrates a moderate to strong representation of the selected CEFR reading descriptors. Most reading activities encourage students to

identify main ideas, understand explicit information, infer meaning from context, and interpret arguments presented in authentic

texts. However, some descriptors requiring higher levels of critical evaluation and synthesis are represented less consistently.

Table 1. Representation of Selected CEFR B1–B2 Reading Descriptors

Code	CEFR Reading Descriptor	Number of Activities	Representation Level
C1	Reading for Information and Argument	12	Strong (3)
C2	Reading Correspondence	5	Moderate (2)
C3	Reading for Orientation	4	Moderate (2)
C4	Identifying Cues and Inferring	10	Strong (3)
C5	Reading Instructions	6	Moderate (2)
Code	CEFR Reading Descriptor	Number of Activities	Representation Level
C1	Reading for Information and Argument	12	Strong (3)

As shown in Table 1, Reading for Information and Argument (C1) and Identifying Cues and Inferring (C4) were the most frequently represented descriptors. These descriptors appeared in analytical texts, opinion articles, and discussion activities requiring students to interpret information, recognize supporting evidence, and infer implied meanings. Such activities correspond to the communicative expectations of CEFR B1–B2 reading proficiency.

In contrast, Reading Correspondence (C2), Reading for Orientation (C3), and Reading Instructions (C5) were represented less frequently. Although these descriptors appeared in several textbook units, the activities generally emphasized literal comprehension rather than more complex communicative reading tasks.

The strong representation of Reading for Information and Argument demonstrates that the textbook places considerable emphasis on developing learners' analytical reading abilities. Many activities require students to identify the writer's purpose, distinguish between factual information and opinions, evaluate supporting evidence, and formulate responses based on textual information. These tasks reflect the communicative orientation of the CEFR, which encourages learners at the B1–B2 levels to engage actively with texts rather than merely retrieving explicit information (Council of Europe, 2020). The frequent inclusion of such activities suggests that the textbook is designed to foster critical reading skills that

are increasingly important in academic learning and real-world communication.

Similarly, the consistent representation of Identifying Cues and Inferring indicates that learners are encouraged to construct meaning through contextual interpretation and inferential reasoning. Rather than providing direct answers within the text, several activities require students to interpret implicit meanings, predict outcomes, determine the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary from context, and identify relationships between ideas. These higher-order reading processes correspond to the CEFR expectation that learners should integrate textual evidence with prior knowledge to achieve deeper comprehension. Such activities also support the development of critical literacy by encouraging learners to think beyond surface-level understanding and engage more thoughtfully with written texts.

Although the textbook includes activities related to Reading Correspondence, Reading for Orientation, and Reading Instructions, their comparatively lower representation indicates an imbalance in the coverage of CEFR reading competencies. Functional reading tasks involving emails, announcements, notices, schedules, maps, or procedural texts appear less frequently than informational and argumentative reading activities. As a result, learners may have fewer opportunities to practice reading skills required for everyday communicative situations, such as locating specific information efficiently, interpreting practical

written documents, or following written instructions accurately. These findings suggest that while the textbook effectively supports the development of analytical and inferential reading skills, future revisions could strengthen the representation of functional reading descriptors to provide a more comprehensive coverage of CEFR B1–B2 reading competencies and better prepare learners for diverse communicative contexts.

a. Representation of Reading for Information and Argument

The descriptor Reading for Information and Argument was strongly represented throughout the textbook. Students were required to read informational and argumentative texts related to contemporary issues such as environmental sustainability, digital technology, and social media. The accompanying activities asked students to identify main ideas, distinguish facts from opinions, determine supporting evidence, and respond to comprehension questions. These activities align with the CEFR expectation that B2 learners can understand complex texts presenting arguments and evaluate different viewpoints.

The strong representation of Reading for Information and Argument reflects the textbook's emphasis on developing students' ability to engage critically with authentic and academically oriented texts. Across several units, learners are exposed to reading passages that present factual information, contrasting perspectives, and reasoned arguments on issues relevant to their daily lives and global society. Rather than focusing solely on literal comprehension, many activities encourage students to analyze the content, identify the author's claims, recognize supporting evidence, and evaluate the credibility of the information presented. Such learning experiences are consistent with the communicative objectives of the CEFR, which emphasize meaningful engagement with texts to accomplish real communicative purposes rather than simply demonstrating knowledge of language forms (Council of Europe, 2020).

In addition, the textbook promotes critical reading by encouraging learners to interpret information beyond the explicit content of the text. Several activities require students to compare viewpoints, draw conclusions based on textual evidence, justify their opinions, and explain the reasoning behind their answers. These tasks require learners to integrate background knowledge with textual information, enabling them to construct meaning actively rather than passively receiving information. Such higher-order cognitive processes correspond to the expectations of CEFR B2 readers, who are expected to understand not only the main ideas of complex texts but also the relationships between ideas, the writer's intentions, and the strength of presented arguments (North & Piccardo, 2022).

The prominence of this descriptor also demonstrates the textbook's alignment with the objectives of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, which promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and learner autonomy through meaningful learning experiences (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Reading activities frequently encourage students to discuss social issues, reflect on contemporary challenges, and connect textual information with their own experiences or prior knowledge. Such activities transform reading from a passive process of answering comprehension questions into an active process of inquiry, interpretation, and communication. Consequently, learners are provided with opportunities to develop both linguistic competence and critical literacy, which are essential for effective participation in academic and real-world contexts.

These findings are consistent with previous studies highlighting the importance of incorporating authentic and cognitively demanding reading tasks into English language textbooks. Richards (2022) argues that communicative reading instruction should engage learners in interpreting and evaluating information rather than merely identifying explicit details. Likewise, Tomlinson (2023) emphasizes that effective

language learning materials should include authentic texts and purposeful tasks that encourage learners to analyze, evaluate, and communicate ideas critically. Therefore, the strong representation of Reading for Information and Argument in Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School indicates that the textbook provides substantial opportunities for learners to develop CEFR B1–B2 communicative reading competencies while supporting the broader educational goals of communicative language teaching and the Merdeka Curriculum.

In addition, the emphasis on inferential reading prepares learners to engage with increasingly complex academic and real-world texts where information is often implied rather than explicitly stated. As students encounter diverse text genres, they are expected to synthesize ideas, recognize implicit relationships, and draw conclusions based on multiple pieces of textual evidence. These competencies are essential for academic success because effective reading requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and critical reasoning. According to Grabe and Stoller (2022), successful readers continuously construct meaning by combining textual information with prior knowledge, allowing them to interpret implicit messages and develop a deeper understanding of written discourse.

Furthermore, the inferential reading activities identified in the textbook support the development of metacognitive reading strategies. Learners are encouraged to monitor their own comprehension, recognize when meaning is unclear, and apply appropriate strategies such as rereading, predicting, and verifying interpretations using contextual clues. These self-regulated reading behaviors help students become more independent and strategic readers who can adapt their reading processes to different communicative situations. Oxford (2023) argues that metacognitive strategy instruction enhances learners' ability to regulate comprehension and strengthens

overall communicative competence in second language learning.

Another notable finding is that the inferential tasks frequently require learners to integrate information across different parts of a text rather than interpret isolated sentences. Students must connect ideas, identify logical relationships, and evaluate how supporting details contribute to the overall message. Such integrated comprehension reflects the characteristics of upper-intermediate reading proficiency, where readers are expected to process extended texts cohesively and critically. Nation (2022) explains that effective reading instruction should encourage learners to build coherent mental representations of texts by connecting ideas and making logical inferences throughout the reading process.

The findings also demonstrate that inferential reading activities contribute to learners' critical literacy by encouraging them to question perspectives, recognize implied assumptions, and evaluate the credibility of textual information. In an era characterized by abundant digital information, these competencies are increasingly important because learners must distinguish reliable information from misleading or biased content. Reading instruction that promotes inference therefore supports not only language development but also responsible information processing. According to Coiro (2021), critical reading in contemporary literacy education requires learners to interpret implicit meanings, evaluate evidence, and make informed judgments across multiple sources of information.

Finally, the strong representation of the Identifying Cues and Inferring descriptor suggests that the textbook successfully aligns communicative reading instruction with internationally recognized expectations for upper secondary English learners. By consistently incorporating activities that require contextual interpretation, evidence-based reasoning, and independent meaning construction, the textbook provides meaningful opportunities for learners to develop advanced reading competence. This

finding reinforces previous research indicating that communicative language materials should challenge learners intellectually while maintaining authentic language use. As emphasized by Widodo (2024), English language teaching materials in the twenty-first century should integrate critical thinking, communicative competence, and contextual literacy to prepare students for academic achievement and global communication.

b. Representation of Identifying Cues and Inferring

The descriptor Identifying Cues and Inferring was also strongly represented. Several reading tasks encouraged students to infer the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary from context, identify implicit messages, and interpret the author's intention. Rather than relying solely on explicit information, learners were expected to combine textual evidence with contextual understanding to construct meaning, reflecting the inferential reading skills described in the CEFR Companion Volume.

The strong representation of Identifying Cues and Inferring indicates that the textbook encourages students to move beyond literal comprehension by engaging in deeper meaning-making processes. Many reading activities require learners to interpret implied information, determine the meaning of unfamiliar words through contextual clues, recognize cause-and-effect relationships, and infer the author's attitude or purpose. These tasks encourage students to become active readers who continuously interact with the text by connecting explicit information with their prior knowledge and personal experiences. Such inferential reading processes are fundamental to the CEFR B1–B2 proficiency levels, where learners are expected to construct meaning independently rather than rely solely on direct textual statements (Council of Europe, 2020).

Furthermore, inferential reading contributes significantly to the development of higher-order thinking skills because learners must analyze textual evidence before drawing

logical conclusions. Instead of simply locating information, students are challenged to predict outcomes, interpret implied messages, identify relationships among ideas, and justify their interpretations using evidence from the text. These activities promote critical engagement with written materials and encourage learners to evaluate information from multiple perspectives. According to Richards (2022), communicative reading instruction should develop learners' ability to infer, interpret, and evaluate information through meaningful interaction with authentic texts, enabling them to become more strategic and independent readers.

The consistent representation of this descriptor also reflects the broader educational objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes critical thinking, independent learning, and active student participation throughout the learning process (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). By incorporating activities that require contextual interpretation and inferential reasoning, the textbook provides learners with opportunities to develop essential academic literacy skills needed for higher education and lifelong learning. These findings are consistent with Tomlinson's (2023) argument that effective language learning materials should engage learners in cognitively demanding tasks that promote interpretation, reflection, and critical analysis rather than limiting them to factual recall. Therefore, the strong representation of Identifying Cues and Inferring demonstrates that the textbook effectively supports the development of communicative reading competence in accordance with the expectations of the CEFR B1–B2 proficiency levels.

c. Representation of Reading Correspondence

Activities representing Reading Correspondence were identified in several units involving emails, letters, and digital communication. Students were asked to identify the purpose of messages, recognize

important information, and understand communicative intentions. However, the number of such activities was limited compared with informational reading tasks, resulting in a moderate level of representation.

The representation of Reading Correspondence in the textbook primarily appears through authentic communication formats such as emails, personal letters, and digital messages. These activities expose students to everyday written communication that reflects real-life language use and encourages them to identify the purpose, audience, and main ideas of the messages. Learners are generally required to determine the sender's intention, extract relevant information, and understand the context of communication. Such tasks are consistent with the CEFR expectation that learners at the B1–B2 levels should be able to understand personal and formal correspondence related to familiar topics and respond appropriately to communicative situations (Council of Europe, 2020).

Despite the inclusion of correspondence-based activities, the findings indicate that their cognitive demands are relatively limited compared with those of informational and argumentative reading tasks. Most activities emphasize identifying explicit information, matching details, or answering straightforward comprehension questions rather than encouraging learners to analyze communicative strategies, infer implied meanings, or evaluate the effectiveness of written communication. As a result, students have fewer opportunities to develop higher-level reading skills within authentic correspondence contexts, even though such skills are increasingly important in academic, professional, and digital communication environments.

The moderate representation of this descriptor may also reflect the textbook's greater emphasis on academic literacy rather than functional literacy. While informational and argumentative texts dominate the reading sections, authentic correspondence genres such as formal emails, workplace

communication, application letters, invitations, complaints, and online discussions appear less frequently. Expanding these text types would provide learners with broader exposure to practical communicative situations that they are likely to encounter beyond the classroom. Such authentic materials would also enable students to develop greater awareness of audience, purpose, tone, and appropriate language use in different communicative contexts, which are essential aspects of communicative competence.

These findings are consistent with the principles of communicative language teaching, which emphasize the importance of exposing learners to diverse authentic text genres and meaningful communication tasks (Richards, 2022). Tomlinson (2023) similarly argues that language learning materials should reflect the variety of written communication encountered in everyday life rather than focusing predominantly on academic texts. Therefore, although *Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School* provides an adequate representation of Reading Correspondence, incorporating a wider range of authentic correspondence activities with greater cognitive complexity would strengthen the textbook's alignment with the CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors and better prepare learners for real-world communication in educational, social, and professional settings.

d. Representation of Reading for Orientation

The textbook moderately represented Reading for Orientation through activities involving schedules, announcements, notices, brochures, and informational texts. These activities required students to locate specific information efficiently. Nevertheless, they generally focused on information retrieval rather than more complex strategic reading processes.

The representation of Reading for Orientation supports the development of learners' ability to locate and retrieve specific information from functional texts

encountered in everyday life. Activities involving schedules, announcements, notices, brochures, posters, and informational displays encourage students to scan texts efficiently in order to identify relevant details such as dates, locations, instructions, or key events. These tasks reflect the CEFR expectation that learners at the B1–B2 levels should be able to navigate different types of practical written materials and quickly extract information needed to accomplish communicative purposes (Council of Europe, 2020). Such reading skills are essential for functioning effectively in academic, social, and public contexts where readers frequently interact with concise informational texts.

However, the findings indicate that most orientation-related activities primarily emphasize information retrieval rather than strategic interpretation or critical engagement with the text. Students are generally asked to identify explicit details or answer factual questions, while opportunities to compare multiple sources, evaluate the relevance of information, interpret visual-textual relationships, or make decisions based on retrieved information are relatively limited. Consequently, although these activities successfully develop basic functional reading skills, they provide fewer opportunities for learners to apply higher-order reading strategies expected at the CEFR B2 level, such as evaluating the usefulness of information or integrating information from different sources to solve communicative problems.

The moderate representation of Reading for Orientation suggests that the textbook could further strengthen learners' functional literacy by incorporating more authentic and cognitively demanding orientation tasks. For example, activities requiring students to compare transportation schedules, interpret travel brochures, analyze event programs, navigate websites, or locate information from multiple public notices would more closely reflect real-world communicative situations. Such tasks would not only improve learners' efficiency in locating information but also

encourage critical thinking, decision-making, and strategic reading, thereby enhancing the textbook's alignment with the communicative objectives of the CEFR and the learner-centered principles promoted by Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum (Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Tomlinson, 2023).

e. Representation of Reading Instructions

The Reading Instructions descriptor appeared primarily in procedural texts and classroom task instructions. Students demonstrated their understanding by identifying sequences of actions and following written procedures. Although these activities supported functional reading competence, they occurred less frequently than other reading activities.

Overall, the findings indicate that the textbook provides substantial opportunities for students to develop CEFR B1–B2 reading competencies, particularly in information processing, argument comprehension, and inferential reading. However, descriptors related to correspondence, orientation, and instructional reading receive comparatively less emphasis, suggesting opportunities for a more balanced representation of CEFR reading competencies across textbook units. The representation of Reading Instructions demonstrates that the textbook introduces learners to procedural and instructional texts commonly encountered in educational and everyday contexts. Through activities involving procedural texts, classroom instructions, and step-by-step guidelines, students are required to recognize sequences of actions, identify important details, and follow written directions accurately. These activities support the development of functional reading competence by helping learners understand how written instructions are organized and how information is presented to achieve specific communicative purposes. Such competencies are consistent with the CEFR expectation that learners at the B1–B2 levels should be able to comprehend clearly structured instructions

related to familiar tasks and situations (Council of Europe, 2020).

Despite their practical value, the instructional reading activities identified in the textbook generally emphasize procedural understanding at a relatively basic level. Most tasks require learners to identify the correct sequence of steps or answer factual questions about procedural texts, while relatively few activities encourage students to evaluate the effectiveness of instructions, compare alternative procedures, identify ambiguities, or adapt instructions to different contexts. Consequently, learners have limited opportunities to develop more advanced strategic reading skills associated with instructional texts. Expanding the variety and complexity of these activities would better reflect the communicative demands of real-life situations, where individuals often need to interpret, evaluate, and apply written instructions critically in academic, technological, and workplace environments.

Taken together, the findings indicate that Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School provides substantial opportunities for students to develop CEFR B1–B2 reading competencies, particularly in Reading for Information and Argument and Identifying Cues and Inferring, which receive the strongest representation throughout the textbook. These descriptors encourage learners to engage critically with authentic texts, interpret arguments, analyze information, and construct meaning through inferential reasoning, reflecting the communicative and action-oriented principles of the CEFR. Nevertheless, descriptors related to Reading Correspondence, Reading for Orientation, and Reading Instructions receive comparatively less emphasis, suggesting that the textbook focuses more heavily on academic reading than on functional communicative reading. A more balanced integration of these descriptors across textbook units would provide learners with broader exposure to authentic reading situations, strengthen their overall

communicative competence, and further align the textbook with both the CEFR Companion Volume and the objectives of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum (Council of Europe, 2020; Kemendikbudristek, 2022; Tomlinson, 2023).

Furthermore, the relatively limited representation of the Reading Instructions descriptor suggests that learners may have fewer opportunities to practice interpreting instructional texts encountered in everyday life. In contemporary society, individuals frequently read manuals, online tutorials, safety guidelines, application procedures, and digital platform instructions that require careful comprehension and accurate execution. Therefore, expanding instructional reading activities within the textbook would strengthen learners' practical literacy and prepare them for authentic communicative situations beyond the classroom. Little and Figueras (2021) emphasize that language learning materials should reflect real-world communicative tasks to ensure that learners develop functional language skills applicable to academic, professional, and everyday contexts.

In addition, incorporating more varied instructional reading tasks could promote learners' strategic problem-solving abilities. Rather than simply identifying procedural steps, students could be encouraged to evaluate whether instructions are clear, detect missing information, reorganize disordered procedures, or modify instructions for different audiences and contexts. Such cognitively demanding tasks would require learners to engage critically with procedural texts while simultaneously developing analytical and decision-making skills. According to Ellis (2022), meaningful language learning occurs when instructional activities require learners to interpret information, solve authentic problems, and actively construct knowledge through purposeful language use.

The findings also indicate that the textbook demonstrates stronger alignment with academic literacy than with functional

literacy. While academic reading competencies are essential for success in upper secondary education, balanced language instruction should also prepare learners to interpret practical documents encountered in everyday communication. Exposure to diverse text types enables learners to transfer reading strategies across multiple communicative contexts and enhances their overall language proficiency. Snow and Matthews (2023) argue that effective literacy instruction should integrate academic and functional reading experiences to prepare learners for lifelong learning and participation in modern society.

Another important implication of these findings concerns textbook development within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Since the curriculum encourages contextual, student-centered, and competency-based learning, future textbook revisions may benefit from distributing CEFR reading descriptors more evenly across instructional units. Greater representation of correspondence, orientation, and instructional reading would provide learners with broader opportunities to practice communicative reading in authentic contexts while maintaining the strengths already evident in information processing and inferential comprehension. Richards and Reppen (2024) note that language teaching materials achieve greater effectiveness when they provide balanced opportunities for learners to develop a wide range of communicative competencies rather than emphasizing only selected language skills.

Finally, the overall findings confirm that Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School provides meaningful support for developing upper-secondary learners' communicative reading competence in accordance with the CEFR B1–B2 framework. Nevertheless, enhancing the representation of less-emphasized reading descriptors would contribute to a more comprehensive model of communicative literacy that reflects the diverse reading demands of academic study, workplace

communication, and daily life. Such improvements would strengthen the textbook's alignment with international language education standards while supporting the broader educational vision of developing independent, critical, and lifelong learners. As stated by McDonough, Shaw, and Masuhara (2025), high-quality language textbooks should balance linguistic accuracy, communicative authenticity, learner engagement, and comprehensive skill development to maximize learning outcomes.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School demonstrates a generally satisfactory representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors. Most reading activities emphasize learners' ability to comprehend informational texts, identify supporting details, interpret arguments, and infer meaning from contextual clues. These findings suggest that the textbook has adopted an action-oriented perspective consistent with the communicative philosophy of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which emphasizes learners' ability to use language meaningfully in authentic communicative situations rather than merely acquiring linguistic knowledge (Council of Europe, 2020).

Among the selected descriptors, Reading for Information and Argument was the most strongly represented. This finding reflects the increasing emphasis on analytical reading within Indonesia's Kurikulum Merdeka, where students are expected to evaluate information, interpret arguments, and respond critically to various types of texts. The textbook includes reading passages on contemporary topics such as technology, environmental issues, and social life, encouraging learners to identify main ideas, distinguish facts from opinions, and support their responses with textual evidence. Such activities correspond closely to the CEFR B2 descriptor, which expects learners to

understand complex texts and evaluate arguments presented by the author (Council of Europe, 2020).

Similarly, the strong representation of Identifying Cues and Inferring indicates that the textbook encourages inferential comprehension rather than literal understanding alone. Learners are required to interpret implicit meanings, predict information, and infer vocabulary from context, reflecting higher-level reading processes. According to Richards (2022), communicative reading instruction should develop learners' ability to construct meaning through contextual interpretation instead of relying solely on explicit textual information. Therefore, the textbook provides meaningful opportunities for learners to develop critical reading skills that support communicative competence.

However, the study also found that descriptors such as Reading Correspondence, Reading for Orientation, and Reading Instructions received comparatively less emphasis. These descriptors appeared only in a limited number of activities and were generally associated with functional comprehension tasks, such as reading emails, notices, announcements, or procedural texts. Although these activities contribute to practical reading competence, their limited representation may reduce students' exposure to the wider range of communicative reading situations described in the CEFR Companion Volume. A more balanced distribution of reading descriptors would better prepare learners to engage with diverse authentic texts encountered in academic, professional, and everyday contexts.

The findings are consistent with previous research indicating that English textbooks often prioritize informational reading while providing fewer opportunities for learners to develop strategic and functional reading competencies. Tomlinson (2023) argues that effective language-learning materials should expose learners to diverse genres and authentic communicative purposes rather than concentrating predominantly on comprehension questions. Likewise, North

and Piccardo (2022) emphasize that CEFR implementation should promote a balanced development of communicative competences through varied language tasks representing different real-life situations.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that the textbook successfully supports many of the communicative reading outcomes expected at the B1–B2 levels. The inclusion of authentic themes, argumentative texts, and inferential reading activities provides meaningful learning experiences that align with the objectives of communicative language teaching and the Merdeka Curriculum. Nevertheless, teachers may need to supplement the textbook with additional authentic reading materials, such as emails, digital correspondence, public notices, manuals, and workplace documents, to ensure that learners experience the full range of CEFR reading descriptors.

This study also contributes to the growing body of research on CEFR implementation in Indonesia by providing empirical evidence regarding the representation of CEFR reading descriptors in a Grade 12 English textbook. Unlike many previous studies that primarily examine curriculum alignment or general textbook quality, the present study specifically evaluates the representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors. Consequently, the findings offer practical implications for textbook developers, curriculum designers, and English teachers seeking to strengthen the alignment between instructional materials and internationally recognized language proficiency standards. The findings also highlight the importance of aligning textbook content with internationally recognized language proficiency frameworks such as the CEFR. Although the textbook demonstrates substantial representation of several key reading descriptors, a more balanced integration of all CEFR reading competencies would provide learners with richer opportunities to experience authentic language use across different communicative contexts. The action-oriented approach promoted by the CEFR emphasizes that

language learning should prepare students to perform meaningful tasks in academic, professional, and everyday settings rather than simply mastering isolated linguistic knowledge (Council of Europe, 2020). Therefore, the inclusion of a wider variety of authentic reading genres and communicative tasks would strengthen the textbook's capacity to foster comprehensive reading competence and better support learners' transition from classroom learning to real-world communication.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the significant role of textbook developers and curriculum designers in ensuring that instructional materials effectively reflect both national educational objectives and international language standards. As the Merdeka Curriculum promotes learner-centered instruction, critical thinking, and authentic learning experiences, English textbooks should provide balanced opportunities for students to develop analytical, inferential, and functional reading skills through diverse text genres and communicative activities (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). Strengthening descriptors that are currently underrepresented, particularly Reading Correspondence, Reading for Orientation, and Reading Instructions, would enable learners to engage with a broader range of practical communication situations while enhancing their overall communicative competence in English.

Finally, the present study contributes to the ongoing discussion regarding CEFR implementation in English language education by demonstrating the usefulness of qualitative content analysis as an approach to evaluating textbook quality. The evaluation framework employed in this study may serve as a reference for future researchers investigating the representation of CEFR descriptors in other English textbooks, educational levels, or curriculum contexts. Future studies could extend the analysis by examining additional language skills, such as listening, speaking, and writing, or by exploring how textbook representation

influences classroom practices and students' language development. Such research would provide a more comprehensive understanding of CEFR implementation and support the continuous improvement of English language teaching materials in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the representation of selected CEFR B1–B2 reading descriptors in Train of Thought: English for Grade XII Senior High School using qualitative content analysis. The findings reveal that the textbook generally demonstrates a satisfactory representation of the selected CEFR reading descriptors, indicating its potential to support the development of communicative reading competence among Grade 12 students. The descriptors Reading for Information and Argument and Identifying Cues and Inferring are the most consistently represented through activities that require learners to identify main ideas, interpret arguments, infer implicit meanings, analyze textual information, and respond critically to authentic reading materials. These findings suggest that the textbook reflects the communicative and action-oriented principles promoted by the CEFR while supporting the objectives of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes critical thinking and meaningful language use. However, descriptors related to Reading Correspondence, Reading for Orientation, and Reading Instructions are represented less consistently, indicating that learners have fewer opportunities to engage with functional and everyday communicative reading tasks. Therefore, although the textbook provides a strong foundation for developing CEFR B1–B2 reading competencies, a more balanced integration of various reading descriptors and a wider range of authentic reading materials would further strengthen its alignment with international language proficiency standards. The findings of this study also provide valuable implications for textbook authors, curriculum developers, and English teachers

in designing instructional materials that better support comprehensive CEFR-based reading competence and prepare learners for diverse academic, professional, and real-life communication contexts.

Declaration by Authors

Acknowledgement: The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to the supervisors for their invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous encouragement throughout the completion of this research. The authors also acknowledge the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purworejo, for providing academic support and a conducive learning environment during the research process. Furthermore, appreciation is extended to all lecturers, colleagues, and individuals who contributed directly or indirectly to the successful completion of this study.

Source of Funding: This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. All stages of the study, including data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript preparation, were conducted independently by the authors without external financial support.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that there are no financial, professional, institutional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the design, implementation, analysis, interpretation, or publication of this research. The authors are solely responsible for the content and conclusions presented in this manuscript.

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How to cite this article: Litani Ika Budiarti, Widhiyanto. Beyond reading comprehension: evaluating the representation of CEFR B1-B2 reading descriptors in train of thought (English for Grade XII senior high school). *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2026; 13(8): 51-74. DOI: [10.52403/ijrr.20260805](https://doi.org/10.52403/ijrr.20260805)
