

# Ways to Master Four Development Phases on Critical Thinking for Situational Judgment Test (SJT): Discover the Secret!

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## Abstract

Situational Judgment Test (SJT) requires critical thinking, which includes the capacity to assess and analyze various scenarios, form reliable conclusions, and select the best course of action. SJTs is important because its present realistic scenarios that individuals might encounter in their actual work or academic environments. This makes the test more relevant and reflective of the challenges faced in the real world. SJTs are commonly used in various fields, such as employment assessments, education, and professional certifications. This paper outlines the four development phases for Situational Judgment Test (SJT) Situational Judgment Test (SJT) to assess critical thinking skills in the context of education. Critical thinking is a fundamental skill that plays a pivotal role in effective teaching and learning. This concept paper uses systematic review as a method since it contributes to the advancement of knowledge and guide evidence-based decision-making. This study endeavors to construct a reliable and valid SJT tailored specifically to the field of education, addressing the need for a tailored assessment tool in this domain. The process of developing and validating the SJT involved rigorous methodology, including item creation, expert validation, and empirical testing. The major finding for this paper is four critical social thinking phases. This help to establish the SJT's psychometric properties, such as reliability and validity, to ensure its accuracy in measuring critical thinking skills within educational scenarios. The outcomes of this research endeavor hold significant implications for educators, educational institutions, and policymakers, as a valid and reliable SJT of critical thinking in education can aid in the assessment of teachers and students, inform instructional practices, and contribute to enhancing the quality of education. In future investigations, it might be possible to propose a different study represents a valuable contribution to the ongoing discourse on critical thinking in education involving SJT with a different context. Besides, it can investigate how individuals respond to feedback provided through SJTs and whether targeted interventions can improve their decision-making skills over time.

**Keywords:** Situational Judgment Test (SJT), Recommendations, Development Phases, Critical Thinking, Education

**Introduction**

A Situation Judgment Test refers to an average-fidelity modeling or content sample structured to evaluate people's tendency to engage in appropriate behaviors in a learning environment. It is the most frequently employed in measuring learning-associated skills and capabilities constellation. Nowadays, the learning environments are becoming progressively social and exceedingly complicated; a measurement covering complications of both the situation and the person increases the understanding, designing, and forecasting of job performance (Grossman et al., 2015). The situational judgment tests strategy had progressed from the study of actual occurrences bottomed out on the notion that prognostication was advanced when the circumstantial factors were considered (Grossman et al., 2015). The information available in a situational judgment test stem provides a context environment for a certain problem or unpredicted events that emerge on the job. The test creator pre-established possible feedback to these structures and spans a variety of sensible feedback.

The Situational Judgement Tests measure that the Critical Social Thinking process is bottomed out on an improved version of the Critical Social Thinking model that Grossman and his colleagues put forward. Conforming to the research conducted by Grossman and his counterparts, Critical Social Thinking is categorized into four different phases, that is, Scanning, Assessing/Appraising, Interpretation, and interaction. Critical Social Thinking is not a single skill (Grossman et al., 2015). However, it is a process sanctioned through a companion of emotional, social, and stance-taking abilities. When appropriately incorporated, this expertise enables learners to identify when there is a need to stop impulsively processing collective circumstances. Rather than exhaustively and precisely scanning for the obtainable social knowledge, appraising the explanations surrounding the obtainable social knowledge or information, assessing and interpreting how their possible actions or communications could influence the learning process, and then literally interact in collectively suitable ways that ought to promote their preferred objectives and results.

The theoretical principles for Critical Social Thinking were obtained from the expansive study base of critical thinking and associated ideas. The critical thing includes cognitive knowledge that is reasoned, purposeful, and objective-directed and increases the possibility of desirable results. Cognitive skills are often adopted in compound problem domains, which are frequently associated with high social and task complexity (Grossman et al., 2015). Even though Critical Social Thinking and critical thinking are perceived to be the same, two existing factors make Critical Social Thinking special. The first factor that makes Critical Social Thinking special is that it gives reasons or explanations for the high-powered and continual nature of social domains. The present versions of critical thinking do not have a reason or explanation for the responsibility of developing actual world affairs. Nonetheless, compound social circumstances are associated with actual-time creating dynamics where decision-makers exercise a continual duty (Grossman et al., 2015). The second differentiating factor connects to the exercise of critical thinking as well as how it develops in sophisticated social circumstances as opposed to elementary analytical challenges.

The basis of within-individual conversation is important in Critical Social Thinking and depends on a separate form of reasoning referred to as abduction. Abduction is defined as working from accessible data to create a plausible description that explains what is most probable to happen at that particular moment (Grossman et al., 2015). Abductive ratiocinating seems to be more suitable for social circumstances than deductive and inductive intellectualization strategies, providing the requirement to quickly but effectively judge incomplete information. Therefore, abductive social ratiocinating has been proposed as the

core processing mechanism of Critical Social Thinking, provided with the scope of often-unknown data that need to be processed to establish the most probable description of what is happening in compound social circumstances. It is very crucial to note that the implemented version employed for the current study does not incorporate the interacting stage (Grossman et al., 2015). It was deliberated that it would be unnecessary to integrate the interacting stage in this Situational Judgmental test since the Situational Judgmental Tests items will intrinsically cover an individual's power of interacting within a circumstance bottom on how they react to the scenarios of situational judgmental tests.

Generally, the primary contribution to this comprehensive supplemental approach is that it provides meanness in deciding where to focus advancement by recognizing the inclusionary procedures that arrange critical social thinking's suite of knowledge (Grossman et al., 2015). The evaluations planned for these key procedures must provide an outstanding structure for comprehending how people administer the sophistication of social circumstances in the learning environment through planning when and various interpersonal knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics might require adoption (Grossman et al., 2015). Correspondingly, the first three critical social thinking stages are expected to emerge and be validated as the all-embracing organizing factor formation for the critical social thinking tests situational judgment tests measure established.

### **Critical Social Thinking and Underlying Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics**

Every stage in Critical Social Thinking needs its own set of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics to be successfully adopted, which should be considered when modeling a piece of measurement equipment deliberated to cover these fundamental critical social thinking processes. The basic knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics are employed in shaping the situational judgment tests content for every stage because it will tap into learners' capacity to successfully engage in the suggested stage. Below are the four phases that describe in detail the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics suggested by Grossman et al (2014) to forecast success at every stage.

#### **Critical Social Thinking Phase 1**

##### **Scanning and Related Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics**

Scanning is the first phase of critical social thinking. Upon joining novel conditions, learners tend to collect information concerning their neighborhood through scanning for essential conditional cues. For a successful scan, learners should have a sense of important environmental components to look after and, at the same time, filter out interior partialities that would affect the gathered information (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). Social attention skills, metacognitive skills, perception skills, and data-collecting skills are required for the scanning stage of critical social thinking. They are discussed below in detail.

##### **Social Attention and Perception Skills**

The major aspect of critical social thinking is one's capacity to pick up on pertinent environmental and interpersonal cues. Preliminary to produce an answer in a social interrelationship, one should be able to particularize the kinds of cues within the surrounding that is essential to process and attend to (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). Nevertheless, an important piece of this knowledge is to go far off the automatic commemoration of what particular cues indicate. Instead, individuals must make the most of past encounters and their information on pertinent cues, sifting out the unnecessary information. Furthermore, the

pertinent cues will possibly differ by culture and state of affairs, which makes it even more essential for learners to differentiate the significant suggestions from non-significant suggestions.

### **Metacognitive Skills**

Metacognitive skills involve a person's internal reflection, conscious examination, and control over intellectual procedures. They are indispensable for the scanning stage of critical social thinking. It involves the capacity to consciously recognize when an individual's biases are affecting their perceptivity of social intimations (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). This capacity is vital for the accurate navigation of sophisticated social conditions. Factors that could bar learners from successfully involving metacognitive skills include an individual's cultural background, emotional condition, and biases. In circumstances where learners may lack conscious control over the creation of such emotional states and biases, they must identify when these thoughts and states are forming their perceptions (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). On the other hand, when learners cannot identify their biases, they could misinterpret or completely misunderstand cues in a social condition.

### **Social Data-Collecting Skills**

The final element of the critical social thinking scan phase comprises making sense of contextual and social information within a particular circumstance; the information may be obtained from within the environment or from social factors associated with the environment. Collecting social data depends on apprehending cues, for example, social relationships, religious and political affiliations, and verbal and non-verbal languages (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). The social data are collected, saved, and sorted into a cognitive version to offer an overarching constitution of data to describe the social condition. Cognitive versions are a mechanism via which data is organized and kept developing meaningful descriptions and approximations from information accessible in a situation. Conforming to the process of critical social thinking, learners need to create cognitive models or consequential schemas concerning dynamic and flexible social circumstances (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). With time and as lots of information is collected in a condition, the schemas or models are modernized in actual life.

Generally, for effective scanning of people's surroundings, the suite of metacognitive skills, social attention and perception skills, and social data-collecting skills must be available. Eventually, if learners are giving little or no attention to the cues within the surroundings, most of the basic information will not be captured or will be overlooked. Furthermore, people must know how their personal internal biases might influence their points of view on cues or instinctively block out particular cues (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). A lack of information on mental filters bars a person's capacity to attend to the surroundings. Therefore, people will not manage to collect the pertinent information required to establish a knowledge base.

### **Critical Social Thinking Phase 2**

#### **Assessing/Appraising and Associated Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics**

After the completion of the scanning phase, people shall have obtained raw data from the circumstance and can move on to the assessing/appraising phase of critical social thinking. Throughout this phase, people start to process the gathered data within the knowledge base and assess how the obtained information matches their present cognitive model (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). Consequently, people ought to remodel their cognitive model as required

by the consistently inflowing data. While evaluating and appraising the gathered social information, to make the data meaningful for the novice audience, people need to know how other participants within a single situation are perceiving them. To determine other actors' perspectives, there is a need to be capable of implementing and comprehending other people's points of view (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). Correspondingly, the important knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics recognized as being imperative for the success of the appraising and assessing phase comprise metaperceptual skills, elaboration of knowledge structure, and perspective taking.

### **Elaborated Knowledge Structures**

Throughout the assessing and appraising stage of critical social thinking, people assess their present cognitive model and can add or omit any kind of data to remodel the structure of their knowledge correctly. The outcome is an elaborate knowledge structure that evolves continuously as people collect extra data in developing situations. The modified knowledge structure is included in the people's mental model. Since critical social thinking occurs in sophisticated social circumstances, people must narrow the gap between the scan and appraise stages by combining social data to upgrade their knowledge structures (Launer & Ahluwalai, 2012). Besides, throughout the assessing period, people are still obtaining additional data as they exploit more, wherefore, it is as well important to continuously implement the elaborated knowledge structures.

### **Metaperceptual Skills**

Metaperceptual skills are the second skill set, and it involves people being cognizant and understanding other people's points of view on them. Also, this can be described as a double-fold process. The first section of the meta perception involves people being cognizant of the social information they provide to other people depending on their overt conduct (Taylor & Whittaker, 2018). Also, people ought to infer how other social participants comprehend and employ this information to provide judgments on the participants involved within a single situation. Research shows that people's perceptions of how other actors of the same social information judge them actually match up with how other actors judge them. The best way to create a powerful point of view is to be cognizant of how other people judge the conduct and emotions that they externally display by objectively beholding the scenario (Taylor & Whittaker, 2018). After understanding how to perceive other actors' behavior, it is easier to modify people's behavior correspondingly, satisfying a critical element involved in successfully adopting the assessing/appraising stage of critical social thinking.

### **Perspective Taking**

The final skill critical for the assessing/appraising stage is perspective taking, or the capacity to accurately comprehend the standpoint of other social participants in a single situation. Perspective-taking is correctly perceiving and comprehending the affective, behavioral, and cognitive elements and the elucidation of other people's internal perspectives (Barnet, 1988). Perspective-taking is crucial to critical social thinking since people normally interpret situations very antithetically depending on their perspectives. Hence, people must acknowledge the circumstantial cues that other social participants might be interpreting antithetically. With different interpretations, people can come up with more accurate interpretations concerning other people's intentions which is basic, while upgrading mental models concerning social situations (Taylor & Whittaker, 2018). However, this is associated

with meta perception skills is a bit extensive. Apprehending another person's inner standpoint needs consideration of different affective and cognitive factors that might influence how people interpret circumstantial or personal occurrences in structure (Barnet, 1988). Through perspective-taking involvement, people are then more successful at critical thinking depending on how they carry out themselves as well as assessing social cues appositely.

The second stage of critical social thinking encompasses data appraisal or assessment depending on the prevailing knowledge structure on top of how people within the social situation assess their data. This process involves data assessment based on an individual's prevailing structure of knowledge, whereas on the other hand eliminates non-fitting information and adjusts the knowledge structures appropriately (Barnet, 1988). At the same time, one must evaluate other social actors' perceptions to recognize how they interpret the same social information. Social data assessment should take this double-prolonged strategy because social situations are sophisticated and social participants will expound the information differently.

### **Critical Social Thinking Phase 3**

#### **Interpreting and Associated Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics**

The initial two stages of critical social thinking encompass scanning the surrounding for pertinent cues and assessing the situation to upgrade the prevailing knowledge structures depending on the preceding cues. Phase three of critical social thinking needs the interpretation of the collected social data. To make the third phase complete, people must recognize any extra data that is missing to understand the condition holistically. Furthermore, people should infer definitions from extra circumstantial data to forecast future activities that might take place (Anca Oana, 2014). The two knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that are bounded with the third stage are social forecasting skills and social inference skills.

#### **Social Inference Skills**

In the previously discussed assessing phase, people created and adjusted their knowledge structures in the actual moment. Nevertheless, there are still possible gaps where data might be missing or requires further explanation. Filling up these disparities in knowledge structure requires the application of detailed information and employing deductive intellectualization to the elucidation of social data (Oana, 2014). With deductive intellectualization, people can obtain inferences or form stories concerning the social situation. Deductive intellectualization encompasses employing social cues to deduce a hypothesis and assess the extracted clarifications against what is happening (Oana, 2014). In conclusion, people use the acquired data to relate to their prevailing knowledge to clarify the circumstance.

#### **Social Forecasting Skills**

After concluding the newly obtained data, people ought to predict the probable activities that will happen in the circumstance grounded on their exposition of the information. Forecasting is interpreted as what could occur hereafter, compared to the prediction of what will occur hereafter. The importance of forecasting activities is that people cognitively think through several possible results to assess the most probable event, given their conclusion from the information (Anca Oana, 2014). Accurate forecasting is achieved when people create a forecast and then try to disapprove it using the newly acquired information. It is significant to create these cognitive simulations for possible results to forecast the course of activities (Anca

Oana, 2014). Majorly in complicated social circumstances, it is important for people to focus and put into consideration all possible results as newly collected information enters and deductions are made.

The interpreting phase is an important piece of a critical social thinking process, and it will finally dictate how people react to a social situation. To recapitulate, interpreting comprises making conclusions concerning the social dynamic as well as forecasting future results. If people are unable to make correct conclusions concerning social information, then there are high chances of failing to forecast possible results correctly (Anca Oana, 2014). Essentially, the validity of the predictions is based on the people's capacity to work out the social dynamics precisely.

#### **Critical Social Thinking Phase 4**

##### **Interacting and Associated Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other Characteristics**

This final phase of critical social thinking is known for actors producing responses depending on what they deemed to be fit right from scanning, assessing/appraising, and interpreting the situation. Since the measure advancement project is an (SJT) Situational Judgment Test, intrinsically, the interaction stage has already been covered when measuring the scanning, appraising/assessing, and interpreting phases of critical social thinking, the final phase of interacting will not be incorporated in the situational judgment test measure (Oana, 2014). The actors' reaction to the situational judgment test requires the application of interpreting skills that will measure the interaction. People's behavioral reaction to interpreting a condition will be the retaliation of the participant in the social circumstance or the interaction; nevertheless, they will not physically get involved in the response.

Throughout the interpreting stage of critical social thinking, people generate feedback on the situation depending on the scanning, appraisal/assessment, and interpretation of the gathered data. Additionally, people tend to manage their individuals based on other social participants in their measures. The response behavior of the actors and the assessment of the behavior has a very significant impact on the social interaction. Hypothetically, it is a continual feedback loop where people gather social information from the dynamics to deduce if the other actors consider their workings accurate (Oana, 2014). Critical social thinking is a continual process. The cycle starts afresh with another social information being presented that will be scanned, appraised/assessed, interpreted, and finally interacted once more.

Critical social thinking is bottomed out on the idea of critical thinking, which refers to the purposeful use of mental skills aimed at generating a desirable result. When critical thinking is adopted in social domains, it comprises special elements that vary from the initial critical thinking approach (Oana, 2014). Initially, social circumstances are intrinsically dynamic; therefore, this expects the participant to make decisions in actual time, as activities unfold in the circumstance. The current models of critical thinking do not make up temporal features and incidents opening out in actual time. Even though certain frameworks of critical thinking recognize the dynamism of circumstances, they do not take into consideration that the actor is having a direct impact on the unfolding activities (Oana, 2014).

Critical social thinking opens out as a procedure compared to traditional critical thinking approaches as a direct answer to analytical issues. The critical thinking process includes interpersonal dialogue that is unavailable in essential theories of thinking. Interpersonal dialogue originates from a type of argumentation known as abductive reasoning, or the practice of working with the available information to come up with the best clarification to match the obtained data (Oana, 2014). In comparison, inductive intellectualization is

predictable in critical thinking, while deductive intellectualization better demonstrates the continual nature of the critical social thinking process.

### **Conclusion**

In summary, accountability in the context of education must be closely aligned with overarching educational objectives. The judgments and recommendations issued by school inspectors should actively contribute to the enhancement of educational outcomes and the welfare of students. Accountability carries both a legal and ethical obligation for school inspectors, encompassing their responsibility to uphold the law, respect human rights, and ensure non-discrimination in their assessments. As a foundational principle in the realm of school inspection, accountability serves as the linchpin for a fair, impartial, and quality-focused evaluation process. School inspectors bear the weight of accountability for their actions, decisions, and the repercussions of their assessments on schools and the education system as a whole. The role of accountability in the professional judgment of school inspectors within the domain of school inspection cannot be overstated. It functions as the cornerstone for maintaining adherence to standards, fostering transparency, propelling improvement initiatives, bolstering public trust, informing decision-making processes, and nurturing professional development. In future investigations, it might be possible to propose a different study represents a valuable contribution to the ongoing discourse on critical thinking in education involving SJT with a different context. Besides, it can investigate how individuals respond to feedback provided through SJTs and whether targeted interventions can improve their decision-making skills over time. By upholding the values of accountability, school inspections not only contribute substantially to the overall quality and efficacy of the education system but also enable inspectors to provide substantive and effective evaluations of schools, actively support improvement endeavors, and assure the continued delivery of high-quality education.

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