# An Evaluative Study of "We Can1" English Textbook

# in Saudi Public Elementary Schools

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## Abstract

This study aimed at analyzing and evaluating the content of We Can1, which is published by Mc Graw Hill, edition 2021 for the first grade as a school curriculum for Saudi public schools. It is conducted in the public elementary schools in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh. We Can1 is chosen for the current study, because it is used in the public elementary schools as an English curriculum. Thus, a deep evaluation of the textbook content is needed. However, the other elementary grades are using other We Can series. The purpose of the current study is to examine the content of We Can1 according to the curriculum layout and design, activities, and English skills. It also seeks to scrutinize the cultural appropriateness of We Can1 in association with the EFL Saudi students' culture. Moreover, the study focuses on We Can1 curriculum to measure the extent in which it meets the students' needs. Besides, the interpretation of the objectives of We Can1 as a curriculum in the learning process somehow. The Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) is used for the current study as a research method to help the researcher in analyzing and evaluating the content. The researcher found that We Can 1 is an effective material in respect to layout and design. Moreover, all the English skills are included except reading skills. The researcher also concluded that We Can1 is culturally appropriate for EFL Saudi students in public elementary schools.

**Keywords:** curriculum evaluation, elementary stage, Saudi EFL students, English textbooks, proficiency, cultural appropriateness

## 1. Introduction and Background of The Study

Globally, the English language plays a very significant role. It is broadly used everywhere in various fields such as trades, professions, and education. Hence, an extensive attention has been devoted by several governments to the English language especially in education. Education is undeniably important for societies. It might reflect the extent in which a country is civilized. The kingdom of Saudi Arabia, for instance, paid more attention to the English language to be taught in both public and private schools. The Saudi government placed education as one of the fundamental cores in Saudi Vision 2030. Along with the Saudi Vision 2030, the Saudi government has allocated a budget for education to provide the valuable and the greatest kind of curricula. The government is also eager to enhance the quality of education in order to have such good outcomes in further. Certainly, the government provides a set of reforms to modernize education, besides enhancing students' learning process as a whole (Moskovsky & Picard, 2018: 4). Currently, the role of teachers, students, schools, and curricula have been remarkably changed as all are involved in the learning process. However, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is the one who is responsible of providing schools with various accredited curricula to be taught. Thus, schools will be evaluated in further upon its outcomes by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission (ETEC). Respectively, it is very essential to evaluate such curriculum to enhance not only the quality of education, but also the school outcomes.

Curriculum is a text-book which is considered as the core of the Saudi Education system. Altalhab pointed out that Saudi English classrooms depend on text-books as a curriculum for the subject which is being taught (2016: 69). Thus, it might play an essential role in the students' learning process. Indeed, it might indicate students' growth in such learning area. Shah, Hassan, and Iqbal (2015: 71) asserted that text-books are considered as a very important part of curriculum. However, Saudi education system might recognize text-books as a curriculum in itself (Altalhab: 2016: 69).

## 2. Aims of the Study

The current study aims to:

(1) Evaluate the text-book of the 1st grade Saudi EFL students at public schools, as a school curriculum.

(2) Focus on the layout and design, activities, and skills.

(3) Investigate the cultural appropriateness along with the Saudi EFL students' culture. Consequently, the results of this research will deliver the extent to which the concept of textbooks evaluation is highly important for further development.

### 2.1 Research Questions

This research is an attempt to tackle an answer to the main questions of the study:

(1) To what extent is We Can textbook effective according to its layout and design?

(2) To what extent is We Can textbook appropriate in accordance to activities and skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking)?

(3) Is the We Can textbook attain cultural appropriateness for Saudi EFL 1st grade students at public schools?

### 2.2. Significance of the Study

This study is very important to decide the extent of We Can1 text-book's effectiveness and appropriateness for the EFL Saudi first grade students in the elementary level, at public Saudi schools. It might be great to mention that We Can1 text-book is approved by the Saudi Ministry of Education. Thus, it has been utilized as a curriculum in such public educational settings.

## 3. Literature Review

Curriculum is the core system that students' learning process relies on. It might be defined as a set of experiences, ides, instructions, and points of views. Bharvad (2010: 74) defined the curriculum as a planned learning guidance. Likewise, Browne and Gordon (2015: 204) defined curriculum as a planned and unplanned process that includes learning activities It exposes teachers' knowledge and experiences to enrich and facilitate the student's learning process (Browne & Gordon, 2015: 204). Indeed, the content of such curriculum is very essential to be analyzed and evaluated to guarantee its level of appropriateness to the learners' level and needs. Bharvad (2010: 74) affirmed that such curriculum has to be evaluated for further development. With no doubt, the educational text-book; the curriculum, might reflect the quality of such educational system. Consequently, it is very essential for the curriculum to be evaluated to enhance not only the educational system, but also the curriculum and the students themselves. Likewise, Bharvad (2010: 74). suggested that any curriculum has to be filtered through an evaluation process to eventually create a good one. In the same vein, Bharvad (2010: 72) pointed out that curriculum evaluation is like a valuable report to reflect not only the learning outcomes, but also the educational system. Moreover, Ahmadi and Derakhshan (2016: 260) concluded that the quality of such material will be elevated once the material is revised.

Curriculum evaluation is an essential process to investigate and identify such gap in the curriculum. Indeed, it is a process that guarantees which curriculum meets the students' needs and such requirements effectively. Al-Jardani (2012: 41) asserted that evaluation is a necessary process that might help in indicating positive and negative issues related to the curriculum itself, such as curriculum objectives and design. In the same vein, evaluation has been defined as a valuable process that aims to determine the quality and the significance of such valuable material (Stufflebeam, 2001, as cited in Özüdoğru, 2018). Thus, it might be concluded that curriculum has to be evaluated and, hence, stakeholders might choose and specify the appropriate teaching method accordingly.

Curriculum is considered as a building block for students in the learning process. The students might feel more secured and comfortable when they have such text-book as a curriculum. Therefore, the text-book might be a valuable tool which might present the students' academic achievement. Likewise, Shah, Hassan, and Iqbal indicated that text-books are considered as the core of the learning process that might revealed the students' academic attainment (2015: 74). It is worth mentioning that Saudi educational context rely on text-books as a curriculum. Besides, the Saudi teachers choose the suitable teaching method that suit the content of such curriculum.

According to Saudi schools, the government paid more attention to teach the English language at different schools.

Evaluation is a tool used to determine the value and the effectiveness of such curriculum besides checking students' learning process as a whole (Bharvad, 2010:72). Thus, an educational curriculum should be evaluated accordingly. (Nadia: 2017, 111) asserted on the importance of evaluation to meet the requirements of such changes of such educational settings. Curriculum evaluation aims at answering all inquiries that are related to pedagogical materials and activities for content purposes (Bharvad, 2010:72). It indeed also aims at identifying the needed development to be implemented on such area of a curriculum (Bharvad, 2010:72). For instance, the necessary development for the content, teaching methodology, and the objectives of the curriculum (Bharvad, 2010:72).

There are different types of curriculum evaluation. Stakeholders might choose the suitable type to evaluate a curriculum. The first type is the summative evaluation (Bharvad, 2010:72). It aims at assessing the emerging curriculum as it is presented to the school system (Bharvad, 2010:72). The second type, however, is the formative evaluation (Bharvad, 2010:72). It seeks to provide a feedback of the curriculum in sequential revisions (Bharvad, 2010:72).

There are some researchers claimed that curriculum evaluation process is not essential. Alrabai, for instance, argued that curriculum might be affected negatively by other factors rather than evaluation (2016: 23). Alrabai claimed that curriculum might be affected by external factors (2016: 23). For instance, teachers' miscommunication with students, misusing the target language, and teachers' lack of confidence might affect students negatively (Alrabai, 2016: 23). Indeed, all of these factors might have a negative impact on students' learning process, achievement, motivation, and attitudes towards the language (Alrabai, 2016: 23). Thus, Saudi EFL competences might be hindered by teachers and restricted by external factors rather than the curriculum itself (Alrabai, 2016: 23). In a similar way, White argued that the evaluation process might not be applicable for such curriculum, due to the type of its objectives (1971: 110). Such curriculum objectives might be behavioral and thus the curriculum cannot be evaluated accordingly (White, 1971: 110). Similarly, Liton proposed that teachers are the main part in the learning process (2012: 134). The curriculum without teachers' involvement and support might not be implemented in such a correct way (Liton, 2012: 134). Hence, it is not about curriculum evaluation as much as training teachers in a professional way (Liton, 2012: 134).

On the other hand, there are numerous researchers who emphasized on the importance of evaluating an EFL curriculum. For instance, Alharbi pointed out that curriculum evaluation is a very essential process (2015:2). Alharbi conducted a study to evaluate Flying High textbook, which is developed by Macmillan publishing house and taught in Saudi high schools (2015: 1). Alharbi sought to evaluate the extent in which the textbook may achieve the pedagogical objectives of the curriculum itself (2015: 1). To evaluate Flying High textbook, the researcher used William (1983) and Keban, Muhtar, and Zen (2012) checklists as a research tool (Alharbi, 2015: 1). Each checklist demonstrated different results (Alharbi, 2015: 1). The researcher pointed out that Williams' checklist signified both the curriculum strengths and weaknesses which indicated a deep evaluation of the material (Alharbi, 2015: 1). While Keban et al.'s checklist is intended to evaluate language textbooks in general (Alharbi, 2015: 1). However, As the study evaluates the textbook from the perspective of high school teachers, the participants (evaluators) are female English language high school teachers who have taught the textbook for one year from Taif city's new High Schools projects for girls (2015: 1). Alharbi found that reading comprehension skills, vocabulary, and technical aspects received positive evaluation, whereas speech, grammar, and writing skills obtained negative evaluation (2015: 1). The researcher concluded that curriculum evaluation is very essential in the learning process to enhance the quality of such textbook as well as the quality of the EFL education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2015: 17).

Many studies paid more attention to the necessity of curriculum evaluation. Almalki, (2014: i) conducted a study to scrutinize 42 Saudi EFL teachers in respect to teachers' perceptions towards Flying High curriculum in such selected secondary schools in the Educational Directorate at Sabia, Saudi Arabia (Almalki, 2014: i). The researcher investigated several EFL teachers' aspects (Almalki, 2014: i). For instance, Saudi EFL teachers' attitudes towards EFL, preparation programs, the quality of such new curriculum, the administrative support, and teachers' practices (Almalki, 2014: i). The researcher implemented the study using a survey (Almalki, 2014: i). The survey includes 50 items with a five-point Likert Scale, from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree, which will expose the participants' perceptions towards the curriculum itself (Almalki, 2014: i). Almalki has shown that Saudi EFL teachers assumed that English is a very essential language for both academically and socially intentions (2014: i). However, the research revealed that Saudi EFL teachers have conflicting feelings in respect to the quality of the curriculum; Flying High (Almalki, 2014: i). In terms of curriculum layout and instructional design, Saudi EFL teachers speculated that the curriculum has a very high-level of quality (Almalki, 2014: i). Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that Saudi EFL teachers show appreciation to the layout and

instructional design of the textbook, yet the research findings revealed that Saudi teachers experienced some issues while implementing Flying High (Almalki, 2014: i). It also indicated that EFL Saudi teachers are confused about implementing the curriculum (Almalki, 2014: i). Consequently, it might be concluded that the process of curriculum evaluation is a necessary process. It is considered as a vital phase to go through before implementing such EFL curriculum. Correspondingly, Al-Alyani asserted on the importance of evaluation to determine the suitable textbook that goes in line with students' needs (121: 2017). Al-Alyani, however, conducted a research to evaluate "Traveler" English textbook series, which is adopted by the Ministry of Education (MOE) and implemented in Saudi high schools in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia from teachers' perspectives (2017: 118). Al-Alyani randomly selected 104 EFL female teachers from various Saudi high schools (2017: 118). The researcher aims at investigating the extent in which the curriculum meets students' needs (Al-Alyani, 2017: 118). To do so, Al-Alyani utilized an 18 statement, five-pointed Likert questionnaire, which was developed by Leitz (2005) as a research tool (2017: 118). The questionnaire discussed three dimensions related to subject matter and content, activity and tasks, besides skills (Al-Alyani, 2017: 118). Al-Alyani found that 59.6% of EFL teachers declared that the subject and the content of the curriculum are not consistent with the EFL Saudi students' level, 46.2% of teachers stated that the textbook has insufficient activities, and 49.2% stated that "Traveler" English textbook series are sufficiently balanced in respect to all the English language skills (2017: 118). The researcher concluded that educational textbooks are in need to be evaluated in further, this indeed asserted on the importance role of evaluation to avoid such obstacles which might hinder the learning process (Al-Alyani, 2017: 118). In the same vein, Al Harbi carried out a study to evaluate EFL textbook for the second grade of Saudi public secondary schools from teachers' perspectives (2017: 27). The study was conducted in Madinah and Dowadmi in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia among 100 EFL male teachers and 73 EFL female teachers (Al Harbi, 2017: 26) Al Harbi sought to cover five dimensions including the curriculum layout and design, objectives, teaching methodologies and activities, the provided activities and teaching methods, language skills, and evaluation (Al Harbi, 2017: 26). Thus, a questionnaire conducted by the researcher was utilized to cover all the dimensions (Al Harbi, 2017: 26). The first part of the questionnaire requires participants' personal information (Al Harbi, 2017: 26). The second part consists of evaluation scale items, including the mentioned dimensions to evaluate the pupils' textbook (Al Harbi, 2017: 26). Al Harbi found that "Traveler" series textbook for the EFL Saudi secondary students require further development to be more effective and successful in teaching and learning (Al Harbi, 2017: 26). To conclude, numerous studies have highlighted on the vital role of curriculum evaluation for a successful implementation. Thus, evaluating pedagogical curricula is a vital process.

## 4. Methodology

In order to provide a response for the research questions, the researcher conducted the current research as a qualitative research method. We Can1 textbook is used as a research tool. As the research aimed at evaluating the textbook, the researcher used the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA). Schreier (2012: 1) defined the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA) as a method that seeks to describe the meaning of a qualitative material in such a comprehensible way as textbooks. The Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA) aims at interpreting and analyzing the textual material as a research data in itself (Schreier, 2012: 3). It allows the researcher to describe the content of the visual and textual material in respect to specific areas such as the layout, design, skills, and activities in such a meaningful way (Schreier, 2012: 3). In this method, the data is referring to the text of the textual material, We Can1 in the current research, to be evaluated and analyzed (Schreier, 2012: 3). Certainly, the Qualitative Content Analysis method (QCA) is conducted as a flexible research method for qualitative researches that pay more attention to content analysis and evaluation (Schreier, 2012: 17).

### 4.1 Validity and Reliability

Drost (2011: 114) defined validity as the crucial part of a research which pertains to the research meaningfulness. While reliability is determined by the extent to which measurements can be repeated (Drost, 2011: 106). For more illustration, validity is achieved when researchers measure what they intended to measure (Drost, 2011: 114). As the data of this research will be based upon the researcher's close reading of the textbook, it is consequently a valid and reliable qualitative research according to (QCA) research method (Schreier, 2012: 27). It is reliable as long as the researcher conducted the research in a systematic and comprehensive way following the (QCA) research method (Schreier, 2012: 27). As mentioned previously, We Can1 has been chosen as it is the only textbook used in the Saudi public schools.

### 4.2 The Context of The Study

Nowadays, Saudi government paid more attention to the education field. Accordingly, the reform in education is growing rapidly. With no doubt, Saudi Vision 2030 plays a vital and essential role in the Saudi society as a

whole, and specifically in education (Saudi Vision, 2030). According to the Saudi vision, the teacher's role is totally changed in the leaning process (Saudi Vision, 2030). For instance, the teacher now is considered as a key of educating students (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020: 30). Their role now is distinct as they aim to facilitate the learning process, as well as enhancing students to be such qualified outcomes with high quality afterwards (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020: 30). In the same manner, Saudi Vision aims at providing professional programs for both, teachers and students (Saudi Vision, 2030). Consequently, students will meet the requirements of labor market to have jobs in future (Saudi Vision, 2030). However, Al-deaij (2020: 1) pointed out that students' learning process might be impacted by teachers' knowledge. Thus, a continuous professional training is highly required. Teachers, however, will be able to be an important figure and the turning point in the student's learning process (Saudi Vision, 2030). Therefore, the main goal of the Saudi Vision in education will inevitably be achieved, which is sharing teachers, students, and their parents in the learning process (Saudi Vision, 2030). Thus, We Can1 is a valuable tool that represents the Saudi education practice somehow obviously through the content and the presented activities in the book.

Previously, Saudi education relies on the curriculum solely (Aldeaij: 2020, 2). Indeed, Teachers' role was restricted accordingly (Aldeaij: 2020, 2). Teachers are asked to deliver the content of such book; curriculum without giving extra information (Altalhab, 2016: 69).. They were unable to exceed the standards which were given by the Ministry of Education (Altalhab, 2016: 69). Obviously, it might be inferred that teachers had a passive role in the learning process (Aldeaij: 2020, 2). In the same vein, Allmnakrah and Evers asserted that Saudi teachers were like agents and not a part of the students' learning process (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020: 30). Consequently, students were recipients. They receive the content of the curricula and instructions from the teacher without explaining their opinions. If the student would like to participate, the participation is under teachers' role of restricting the classroom. Indeed, we totally agree with Allmnakrah and Evers (2020) that teachers were like agents in the old Saudi education system (Allmnakrah & Evers, 2020: 30). Yet, if such education reform would be implemented, teachers' and students' voices are very essential to reform a successful learning process that guarantee teachers' and students' effective roles.

## 5. Findings

*5.1 The Analysis of The Content of We Can1 Textbook*

The content of the textbook, We Can, is interpreted in terms of such aspects as the layout and the design of the book, activities, skills, and the cultural appropriateness. These valuable aspects will be exemplified below.

5.1.1 The Layout and The Design of We Can Textbook

Curriculum design is a valuable tool that allow the elements of a curriculum to meet and integrate to form a valuable content. McKimm (2007: 4) defined Curriculum design as a way that refers to curriculum designers when all curriculum components are taking place. Besides, layout might be defined as a process of designing such material. According to the layout and the design of We Can textbook, it is worth mentioning that the book is very attractive in terms of the colors that are used and the design itself. Both, the book design and layout, are appropriate for students' age and level. Therefore, students' will be inevitably encouraged to receive the content and understand it in a good manner. This indeed will facilitate the students' learning process accordingly.
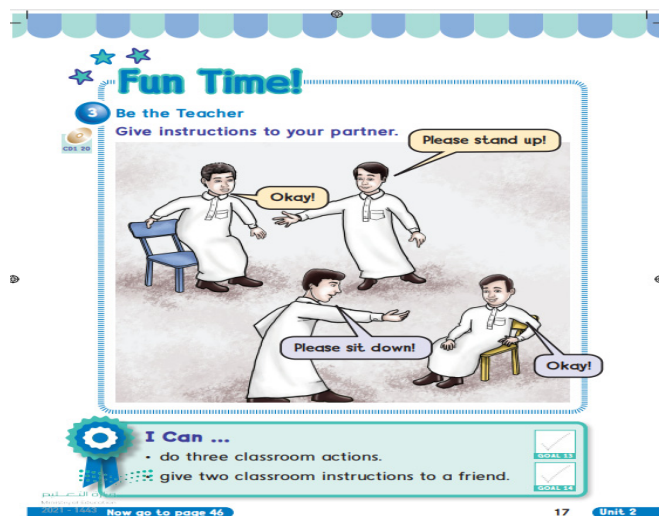


Figure 1. Layout and Design of We Can 1 Textbook (Unit 2)

The figure above demonstrated that the curriculum designer is seeking to draw students' attention to the curriculum content. The designer did so by using specific colors, design, and a picture that may reflect student's daily life at school or students' attitude in the classroom, aligned with students' age. The figure above shows that students are engaged in the learning process remarkably. To illustrate, one of the students is taking the teacher's role in the class by giving other students some instructions related to the content itself. Indeed, this act reflects student-center approach, where students rely on each other to comprehend the content and show their understanding to the teacher. In the picture, there are two students who are giving different requests to their colleagues to achieve such pedagogical purposes in the classroom environment. Other students are intended to reply and act upon such request. In this case, this class is called a Kinesthetic classroom. According to Lengel and Kuczala, a Kinesthetic class is a class that allow students to implement their comprehension of a curriculum content by movement (2010: 17). Indeed, a Kinesthetic approach is implemented in class to enhance both teaching and students' learning process (Lengel & Kuczala, 2010: 17).

5.1.2 The Students' Activities of We Can1 Students' Textbook

There are various types of activities for students in We Can 1 students' textbook. It aims to motivate students' learning. Besides, students might have a positive attitude towards the curriculum generally and the content specifically. The figurs below indicate different types of activities stated in the textbook.



Figure 2. Activity

In the picture above, the activity reflects the students' interaction and engagement in the learning process. Each student is asked by another colleague to provide an answer about their ages (We Can1: 29). Through this type of activity, the students will be able to shape communication among other students in the class. Furthermore, this activity provokes motivation among the students. Gao, Hannon, Newton, and Huang asserted that physical education classes lead students to positive motivation (2011: 536). Thus, this type of activity facilitates students' learning process. Accordingly, students' achievement might be elevated remarkably.

Figure 3. Gestural Activities

Students' speaking skills might be enhanced through the use of gestures. From the picture above (*We Can*1: 33), it can be inferred that deep interaction among students might occur due to gestures. Gestures refer to the act of signing among people for communicative purposes. McNeill identified gestural expressions as linguistic expressions that are involved in speaking (2000: 49). It indeed shows one's cognitive activity (McNeill, 2000:49). In the picture, the two students interchange speaking by using gestures. The picture indicated that both students have a chance to show their comprehension of shapes inside and outside their homes. Consequently, teachers might notice students' cognitive level through the use of gestural activities.



Figure 4. Game-like activity

The above picture indicates that students are practicing a game-like activity. This type of activities allows students to comprehend the content in such a cheerful way. Students might feel more comfortable than a graded activity. Taheri (2014: 548) pointed out that students might be able to learn more in such a greater way when they are not following a direct or explicit instruction. Furthermore, game-like activity might encourage the weak students to participate with their peers (Taheri, 2014: 548). Also, it might help students to cooperate, help, and support each other in the classroom environment. It indeed exposes students to such an authentic communication, where they might interchange speaking in the class (Taheri, 2014: 548). To conclude, curriculum activities might facilitate students' comprehension of a curriculum content. It might help both teachers and students to smooth the learning process.

5.1.3 Skills

(1) Listening and Speaking Skills

Each unit in We Can1 textbook contains a listening practice. Such listening exercise is located either at the beginning of a unit to attract students' attention, or at the middle of a unit to check students' comprehension of the content itself. Also, such track might be at the end of the unit as a sum up to review the unit with the students and to encourage them to do their homework in such a comprehensive way.

In respect to speaking skills, each unit has a speaking part in We Can 1 textbook. The exercises might require students to practice or act out such talk, given by the teacher, to practice speaking either individually, pairs, or as a group. Through speaking skills practice, the vocabulary acquisition might occur. Moreover, students might be more accurate and proficient due to the exposure to other students in the class. For more illustration, when students are practicing speaking skills, they might acquire new vocabulary and correct themselves if they made a mistake in the language through such interaction and practicing among students.
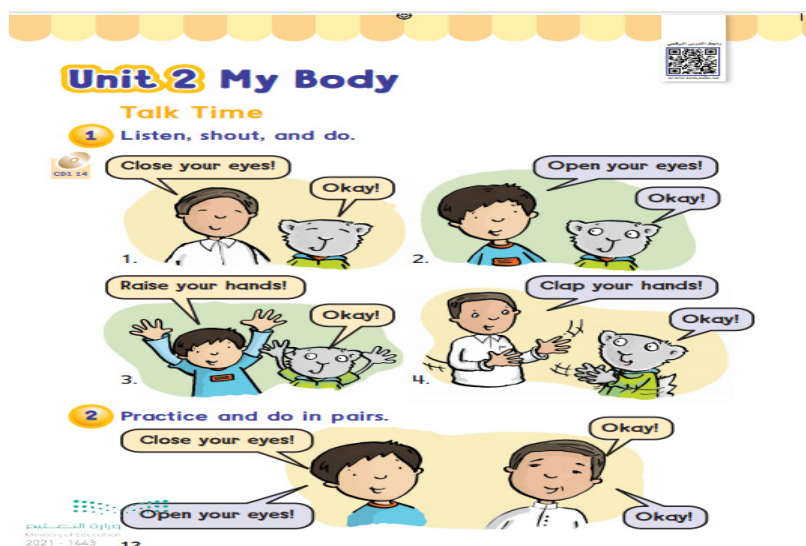


Figure 5. Listening and speaking exercise

From the figure above, it can be inferred that students might be able to show their comprehension of a conversation by interacting with another student in the class; as pairs. Indeed, each student might feel more comfortable to practice the language with another student, in the same level, rather than a teacher. Besides, students might also feel convenient if the exercise is not graded. Furthermore, it is interested that to mention that We can1 textbook attempted to interfere the skills together. For example, in a writing exercise, the students are asked to listen and spell different words as shown in figure 6 below. Also, the students are asked to draw a family where all skills are interfere as presented in figure 7. To conclude, listening and speaking skills appear sufficient and appropriate to the students' level in We Can1 textbook.
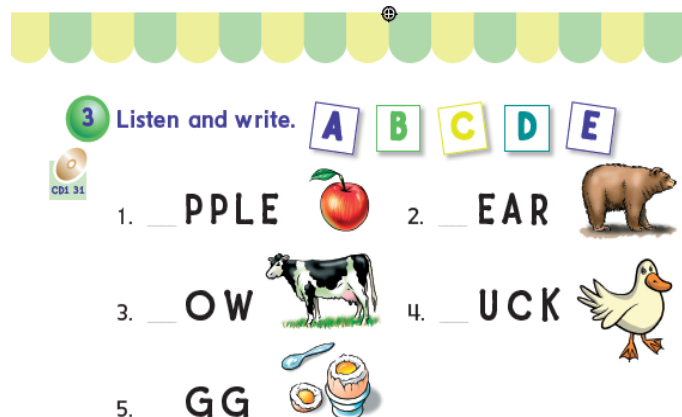


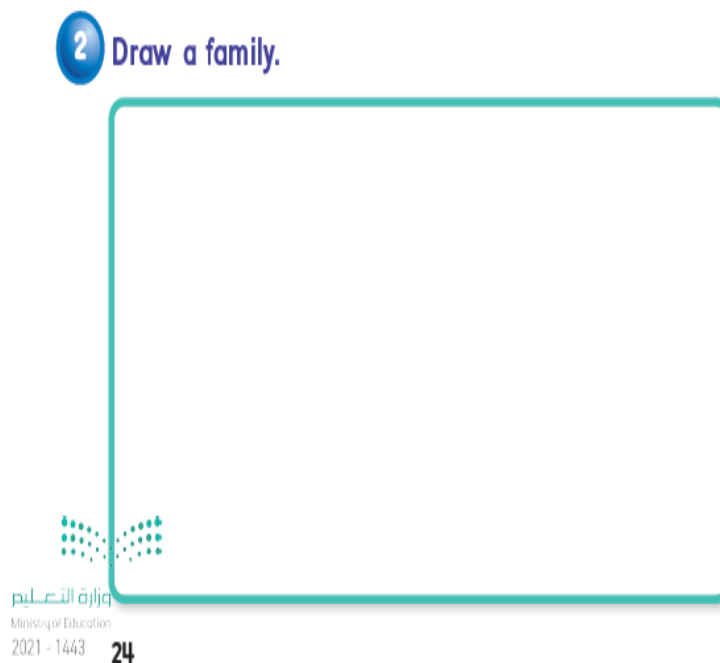Figure 6. Listening and speaking exercise (We Can1 Textbook, Page 27)

Figure 7. Listening and speaking exercise (We Can1 Textbook, Page 24)

It can be noticed that most of the exercises seek to interfere the skills. Indeed, such interference affirmed that language components are like a chain, where one component cannot be excluded. In this exercise, however, writing, speaking, and grammar skills are included, besides expressing one's imagination by drawing.

(2) Writing Skills in We Can1 Textbook

Writing skills is one of most essential components of a language. In We Can1 textbook, the writing exercises are found in different parts in various units. In the figure below, the student will be able to identify the upper and smaller case of such alphabet. Through writing exercises, students' vocabulary of the target language will be enriched.



Figure 8. Writing exercise

From the figure above, it can be inferred that students might be able to guess the meaning of each vocabulary from the presented pictures. Each picture facilitates the process of delivering the meaning of each word.

5.1.4 Cultural Appropriateness of We Can1 Textbook

Browne and Gordon defined cultural appropriateness as a recognition of students' social context and culture (2015: 205). A curriculum can be conducted among students if it meets learners' needs, culture, and social context. In the textbook of We Can1, it is obvious that each unit represents the Saudi culture as shown in the figures below.
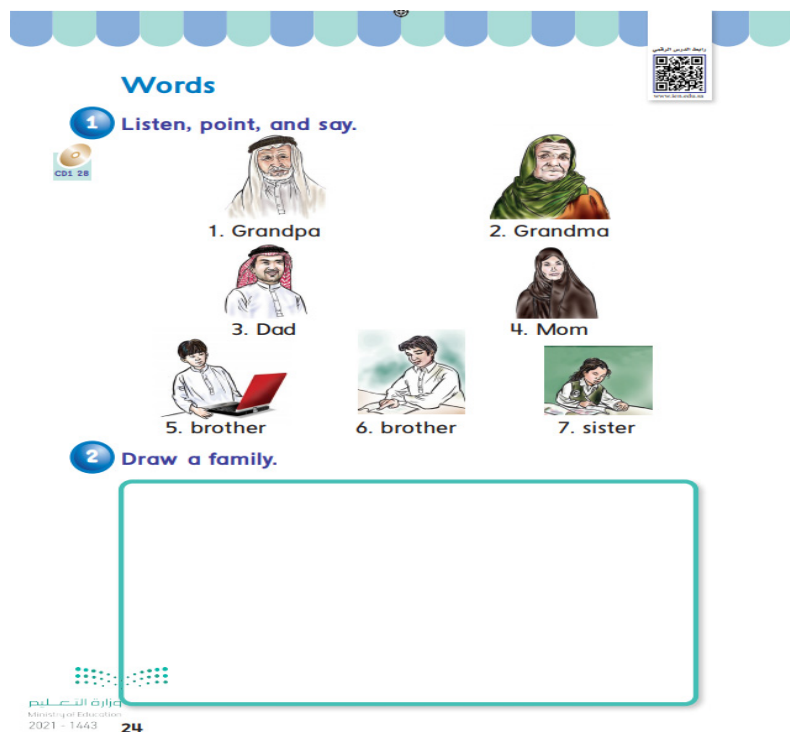


Figure 9. Cultural appropriateness of We Can1 curriculum

In the figure above, the Saudi culture and society values are portrayed as they appear in the real life. The two men, as boys, are wearing the cultural costume for Saudi Arabia which are called Thoub with red Shumagh and white Gutrah. Women, on the other hand, are wearing the cultural costumes for Saudi women which are called Abaya and Hijab. The Abaya is a long black dress to cover the body, while Hijab is used to cover one's head. It might be either black or any other color. However, students will be able to familiarize the family members that are presented in the picture, as it precisely shows students' social context. Thus, students can draw and show their social context through this exercise. To conclude, Ali (2010: 283) asserted that learners' needs, cultural appropriateness, and social context are to be considered when designing such curriculum.

## 6. Discussion

This section will address the main findings of the study related to layout and design, activities, and skills in We Can1 textbook. Through this section, the research findings will be interpreted in further as an endeavor to be explained in details.

*6.1 To What Extent is We Can1 Textbook Effective According to its Layout and Design?*

From the analysis in the previous section, the researchers have noted that We Can1 is an effective material in respect to layout and design.

Curriculum design is a result of creative writing where all ideas are gathered, ordered, reviewed, and edited by the designer to conduct a pedagogical curriculum (Macalister & Nation, 2019: 18).

*6.2 To What Extent is We Can1 Textbook Appropriate in Accordance to Activities and Skills (Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking)?*

6.2.1 Reading Skills in We Can1 Students' Book

Reading and comprehension skills are one of the important skills for the knowledge of a language. Unfortunately, in We Can1 text book, there is no indication to reading and comprehension skills in the activities in either way. With no doubt, it is very essential to consider this language component to guarantee that all language components exist in the curriculum. To confirm, Stothard and Hulme concluded that one's poor reading comprehension skills indicate the limitation of language understanding (1992: 250). Therefore, it might be better if reading comprehension exercises exist in the content of the curriculum in line with students' age. For instance, students are asked to read small conversations either in pairs or individually. Moreover, it might be better if short stories are added too or simple and short passages. Students in this case, will be able to acquire not only reading comprehension skills, but also enriching student's vocabulary. Indeed, the students will be able to recognize the pronunciation of such word, thus, listening skills interfere in this case. Furthermore, it is suggested that students might read their writings when they are doing writing exercises. They might write short sentences including such unit or lesson topic. Handayani asserted that short stories might help students improving their reading comprehension skills (2013: 138). Moreover, Handayani affirmed that reading comprehension skills might increase students' motivation and allow them to practice the language (2013: 138). It is worth mentioning that reading will allow students to learn simple reading skills such as skimming and scanning skills.

6.2.2 Writing Skills in We Can1 Students' Book

Writing skill is a very essential skill in language learning, especially for young learners. We Can1 textbook paid more attention to the writing skills in the content of the curriculum in both students' book and students' workbook. Indeed, learners will be able to recognize the correct use of subjective pronouns through writing. The writing skills will help them to memorize such pronoun in speaking. Thus, this is a very clear hint that language components are interfering with each other. Graves confirmed that children has the desire to write at a young age (2019: 12). Children might use writing as a tool to express their emotions (Graves, 2019: 12). Therefore, it is very essential for stakeholders to pay more attention to writing skills, especially for young children learners (Graves, 2019: 12). In We Can1 textbook, the writing skills are employed gradually in a very well manner that goes in line with the students' level.

6.2.3 Listening and Speaking Skills in We Can1 Students' Book

Listening and Speaking skills are a very important part of a language. As all English language skills rely on each other, Listening and Speaking act as an alternative skill. To illustrate, if a student is listening to something, an action will be followed accordingly. Thus, it might be inferred that listening is calling all other language skills to be practiced at once. Sreena and Ilankumaran claimed that listening is the core of language learning (2018: 670). If the student is unable to interact in the class and unable to comprehend the teacher's speech, for instance, it is a sign for the teacher and an indication to determine the level of the student in the learning process (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2018: 670). The interference of listening and speaking skills is very interesting in a way that makes listening, as a receptive skill, is in need of a productive skill; speaking.

In We Can1 textbook, the most dominant exercises are related to listening. In all listening exercises, the researchers noticed the use of loud music, which might be inappropriate for the students in a pedagogical environment. It might indeed hindered students somehow while listening to such track. Therefore, it might be better if the music is replaced to radio or television program, train or car station, or even people talking about something. Indeed, this way might allow students' exposure to the real life. Besides, the use of such authentic materials or situation is much better to experience different accents. American or British accent, for instance, will provide students a chance to enrich their phonological cognition besides vocabulary. If such accent will be added to the content, the researchers suggested that tracks to be in a slow manner of articulation to be in line with students' level. To conclude, the researchers suggested to minimize or substitute some listening exercises with reading exercises as listening has the dominant part.

*6.3 Is the We Can1 Textbook Attain Cultural Appropriateness for Saudi EFL 1st Grade Students at Public Schools?*

It is very crucial for a curriculum to consider the society values, norms, and cultural appropriateness. In We Can1 textbook, the cultural appropriateness is considered obviously. In the content, the pictures presented for students in all units are depicting the real Saudi society. For instance, the pictures of Saudi families. Moreover, the pictures of all exercises are the same as what people wear in the real life, as shown and explained above.

Also, the content reflects the learning environment as it is. For instance, gender segregation in schools is obvious in the pictures. If the picture is discussing a male class where all students are boys, the students wear the formal uniform which is Thoub, and the teacher is wearing Thoub with Shumagh. Hence, gender segregation is presented in a very good manner in the curriculum. Above all, it can be inferred that We Can1 textbook is culturally appropriate for 1st grade EFL Saudi students.

## 7. Conclusion

Evaluating curriculum content is very essential. It provides the stakeholders a hint to evaluate the learning process accordingly. With no doubt, curriculum design and layout are important parts of curriculum evaluation. Eventually, a good curriculum design and layout will attract students' attention to the content itself and thus students will be motivated to learn. Moreover, curriculum evaluation allows stakeholders to investigate such gaps in the curriculum to be closed in further. It indeed shows the extent in which a curriculum needs to be developed as a whole or in a specific part.

In light of the current research, an essential conclusion has been drawn. The study asserted on the importance of curriculum evaluation as a tool for further development. Such development will be for students, the students' learning process, and the curriculum itself. Apparently, the analyzed content of We Can1 textbook reflects the basic that the curriculum relies on. It is obvious that all English skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking are somehow integrated. Hence, a smart curriculum is a curriculum that represents all language skills as one valuable component of a curriculum, in a way that blends the concept of cultural appropriateness as a central standard that should be followed by all curriculum components and skills.

To sum up, curriculum evaluation is a vital process to promote language learning. With no doubt, Saudi EFL teachers should be engaged in the curriculum evaluation process to elevate students' learning. Once teachers are implemented in the curriculum evaluation process, teachers might determine the gaps of such curriculum remarkably.

## 8. Research Recommendations

(1) It might be better if the Ministry of Education pay more attention to teachers' professional development to be able to choose the right teaching method accordingly.

(2) It might be valuable if the Ministry of education implements an Aptitude Test among Saudi EFL teachers to determine teachers' success and suitability for the job role as an EFL young learners' teachers.

(3) It might be better to add a game-like activities at the end of each unit including all skills presented in the lesson, to implement what has been taught in class. By doing so, the teacher will be able to check students' comprehension respectively.

(4) I might be better if curriculum designers add short stories that are related to reading skills besides vocabulary.

(5) It might be better to add songs that suite young learners' level as a way to repeat what is taught in class.

(6) It might be better to reduce the loudness of the introductory music to be convenient before such exercise, and choosing the type of music for kids carefully.

(7) Young learners' proficiency and accuracy might be affected by an external factor such as the content of the curriculum. Thus, it might be better for stakeholders and policy makers to make the curriculum evaluation as an ongoing process.

(8) The textbook has writing exercises yet it might be better to add more exercises such as short paragraphs and graphs.

(9) It might be better to add vocabulary exercises to enrich students' language knowledge of vocabulary.

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