

Analysis and Evaluation of 21st-Century Skills Integration in a Chapter of Grade IX Arabic Textbook for AFL

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Cite this article:

Said, Uswah Mujahidah Rasuna., Sopian, Asep., Ramadhan, Aji Rizqi., Dienana, Arina, & Haidar, Alfian. (2026). The Integration and Evaluation of 21st-Century Skills in Arabic Textbook for AFL in Indonesia. *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 10(1), 1-14. doi: 10.29240/jba.v10i1.12744

Received: 22-07-2025

Revised: 02-09-2025

Accepted: 29-09-2025

Abstract

This study examines the integration of 21st-century skills in the Grade IX Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) textbook published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia. A qualitative descriptive design with an evaluative orientation was employed, focusing on Chapter 1, which covers texts, grammar, and learning tasks. The analysis was guided by the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21) framework, encompassing creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication, and collaboration. Data were interpreted using a Likert scale. The findings indicate that creativity and innovation, as well as critical thinking and problem-solving, fall within the “sufficient” category (65–74), while communication and collaboration are classified as “outstanding” (85–100). These results reveal the textbook’s strength in promoting interaction and teamwork, while also highlighting gaps in fostering higher-order thinking and creativity. The implications underscore the need for a more balanced development of the four skill domains, suggesting that future textbooks should include more varied and challenging activities to promote creative exploration and critical engagement.

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Keywords: AFL, Arabic Textbook, Textbook Evaluation, 4Cs, 21st Century Skills

Introduction

Textbooks play a central role in the learning process as they guide teachers and students, provide structured sources of information, and help achieve learning competencies and outcomes.¹ They are crucial in building students' knowledge and skills, provided that content is designed contextually to suit learners' characteristics, local needs, and educational goals.² In this regard, what is contained in teaching materials will ultimately be transferred to learners.³ In addition, textbooks are expected to integrate scientific and pedagogical elements that enhance students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills.⁴ In the context of Arabic textbooks, there are challenges related to content difficulty and pedagogical relevance, while regular reviews are necessary to ensure quality and compliance with educational standards.⁵

¹ Yongliang Wang dan Saengchan Hemchua, "Can We Learn about Culture by EFL Textbook Images? A Semiotic Approach Perspective," *Language Related Research* 13, no. 3 (Agustus 2022): 479–99, <https://doi.org/10.52547/LRR.13.3.19>; Barbara Japelj Pavešić dan Gašper Cankar, "Textbooks and Students' Knowledge," *Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal* 12, no. 2 (Juni 2022): 29–65, <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.1283>; Asrowi Asrowi, Aupal Hadaya, dan Muhammad Hanif, "The Impact of Using the Interactive E-Book on Students' Learning Outcomes," *International Journal of Instruction* 12, no. 2 (April 2019): 709–22, <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.12245a>; Elin Biström dan Ragnar Lundström, "Textbooks and Action Competence for Sustainable Development: An Analysis of Swedish Lower Secondary Level Textbooks in Geography and Biology," *Environmental Education Research* 27, no. 2 (Januari 2021): 279–94, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2020.1853063>.

² Muhammad Syaifullah dan Nailul Izzah, "Kajian Teoritis Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Bahasa Arab," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 3, no. 1 (Mei 2019): 127, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v3i1.764>.

³ Noza Aflisia, Ahmad E Q Nurwadjah, and Andewi Suhartini, "Nilai Teologi Islam: Telaah Materi Ajar Bahasa Arab Madrasah Tsanawiyah," *An Nabighoh* 23, no. 1 (June 16, 2021): 17–32, <https://doi.org/10.32332/an-nabighoh.v23i1.2993>.

⁴ Noza Aflisia dan Hazuar Hazuar, "Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Bahasa Arab Berbasis Pendekatan Komunikatif," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 4, no. 1 (Mei 2020): 111, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v4i1.1380>; Thiri Soe, "Investigating Critical Thinking in ELT Textbooks: A Systematic Literature Review of Textbook Evaluation Studies," *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition* 10, no. 1 (Maret 2024): 1–29, <https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.13882>; Ernest Nkosingiphile Mazibe dan Marissa Rollnick, "Examining the Educative Nature of Selected Physical Sciences Textbooks about Electrostatics Using Pedagogical Content Knowledge," *International Journal of Science Education* 46, no. 13 (September 2024): 1360–77, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500693.2023.2288661>.

⁵ Fathi Hisyam Panagara dkk., "Tahlil Kitab al-Lughah al-'Arabiyah li al-Madrasah al-'Aliyah 'ala Mandzur 'Ali Muhammad al-Qasimi," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 7, no. 2 November (November 2023): 565, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v7i2.7129>; ; Evaristo Haulle dan Eliud Kabelege, "Relevance and Quality of Textbooks Used in Primary Education in Tanzania: A Case of Social Studies Textbooks," *Contemporary Education Dialogue* 18, no. 1 (Januari 2021): 12–28, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973184920962702>.

In Indonesia, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has developed Arabic language textbooks to ensure the availability of quality materials aligned with the national curriculum.⁶ These textbooks aim to strengthen students' Arabic proficiency and motivation to learn in line with the government's vision of improving national Arabic literacy and promoting the language as culturally and religiously significant.⁷ Studies across different grade levels show that the materials generally meet national education standards and are suitable for classroom use,⁸ making them a substantial contribution to Arabic education nationally and internationally. However, evaluations also reveal challenges in content complexity and pedagogical relevance,⁹ indicating the need for regular reviews to ensure consistency with educational standards.¹⁰

Nevertheless, textbook evaluation remains necessary because every textbook may have weaknesses in aspects such as language content, instructions, and alignment with student needs.¹¹ Experts emphasize the importance of criteria such as layout, design, structure, methodology, and language features.¹² Two

⁶ Nur Ihsan Halil dkk., "A New Program to Foster Inclusion: Unraveling Language Teachers' Pedagogical Practices to Differentiated Instruction," *International Journal of Language Education* 8, no. 2 (Juni 2024), <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v8i2.64997>; St Kuraedah dkk., "Gender representation in government-endorsed Arabic language textbooks: Insights from Indonesia," *Frontiers in Education* 7 (Januari 2023): 1022998, <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2022.1022998>.

⁷ Fitria Cinta Farida dkk., "Analysis of Arabic Teaching Books of MA Class XI 2013 Curriculum Published 2020 RI Ministry Of Religion," *Lahjah Arabiyah: Jurnal Bahasa Arab Dan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 2 (Juli 2024): 194–210, <https://doi.org/10.35316/lahjah.v5i2.194-210>; Isop Syaifei, Eman Suleman, dan Rohanda Rohanda, "The Development of Student Reading Skills in Arabic for Reading Islamic Classical Books Using the Arabic Learning Model at Indonesian Islamic Boarding Schools," *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 14, no. 5 (Mei 2024): 1381–92, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1405.10>; Toto Edidarmo dan Achmad Fudhaili, "The Power of Spiritual Motivation: A Conceptual and Theoretical Review of Arabic Language Learning," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 7, no. 1 May (Mei 2023): 315, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v7i1.5629>.

⁸ Suarman Halawa, Ying Shao Hsu, dan Wen-Xin Zhang, "Inquiry Activity Design from Singaporean and Indonesian Physics Textbooks," *Science & Education* 33 (2024): 581–607, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11191-022-00396-2>.

⁹ Panagara dkk., "Tahllil Kitab al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah li al-Madrasah al-'Aliyah 'ala Mandzur 'Ali Muhammad al-Qasimi."

¹⁰ Asri, "Telaah Buku Teks Pegangan Guru dan Siswa pada Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Kelas VII Berbasis Kurikulum 2013."; Haulle dan Kabelege, "Relevance and Quality of Textbooks Used in Primary Education in Tanzania."

¹¹ Aji Budi Rinekso, "The Representation of 21st Century Skills in an Indonesian EFL Textbook," *LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching* 24, no. 1 (Maret 2021): 191–211, <https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v24i1.2655>; Mohd Nazim, "Textbook Evaluation: A Case Study of Cutting Edge," *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 12, no. 6 (November 2021): 1021–33, <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1206.18>; Sutri Ramah dan Miftahur Rohman, "Analisis Buku Ajar Bahasa Arab Madrasah Aliyah Kurikulum 2013," *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 2 (Desember 2018): 141, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v2i2.552>.

¹² Brian K. Lynch, *Language Assessment and Programme Evaluation*, Edinburgh Textbooks in Applied Linguistics (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003); Ian McGrath, "Edinburgh

major approaches are often used: impressionistic review, which provides a general overview of strengths and weaknesses, and in-depth evaluation, which examines objectives, content, skills, organization, and methodology.¹³ In addition, with rapid technological developments, regular textbook evaluation is essential to ensure that materials remain relevant and capable of supporting modern learning needs.¹⁴

In line with that, 21st-century skills require everyone to continue to develop their abilities in all areas of life, including in education, especially in textbook that serve as references or guidelines for learning. 21st-century skills are the main focus in education in order to face the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. The four primary skills that need to be developed are critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration (4C).¹⁵ Integrating these skills in learning still needs to be improved, such as a lack of understanding of concepts and support from various parties, so the revitalization of education is needed by involving all relevant parties to implement 21st-century skills effectively. The education sector requires school reform, increased capacity and professionalism of teachers, an adaptive curriculum, adequate facilities, and the latest learning technology as essential aspects that must be considered.¹⁶ In this case, the integration of 21st-century skills can be applied to learning, including in the Arabic language textbook for grade IX published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, to be more in line with the needs of modern education.

Textbooks in Applied Linguistics,” dalam *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*, 2nd Edition (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 1–339.

¹³ Alan Cunningsworth, *Choosing your Coursebook* (Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann, 1995); Azam Ahmadi dan Ali Derakhshan, “EFL Teachers’ Perceptions towards Textbook Evaluation,” *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 6, no. 2 (Februari 2016): 260, <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0602.06>.

¹⁴ O. C. Ferrell dan Linda Ferrell, “TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING MARKETING EDUCATION,” *Marketing Education Review* 30, no. 1 (Januari 2020): 3–14, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10528008.2020.1718510>; Luciane De Fatima Silva dkk., “Digital Transformation in a Brazilian Public Policy: A Case Study of Pedagogical Evaluation within the National Textbook Program,” *Proceedings of the 25th Annual International Conference on Digital Government Research*, ACM, 11 Juni 2024, 515–24, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3657054.3657261>.

¹⁵ Branden Thornhill Miller dkk., “Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication, and Collaboration: Assessment, Certification, and Promotion of 21st Century Skills for the Future of Work and Education,” *Journal of Intelligence* 11, no. 3 (Maret 2023): 54, <https://doi.org/10.3390/jintelligence11030054>; Asep Sopian dan Nunung Nursyamsiyah Tatang, “Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Digital di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 Bagi Guru Bahasa Arab di Kabupaten Subang,” *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengabdian Masyarakat* 6, no. 4 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppm.v6i4.5672..>

¹⁶ Asep Sopian, Anwar Sanusi, dan Rima Nurkomala, “Industrial Revolution 4.0: A Case Study On Character Building For Arabic Teaching At Islamic Boarding School In Indonesia,” *Ijaz Arabi Journal of Arabic Learning* 7, no. 3 (Oktober 2024), <https://doi.org/10.18860/ijazarabi.v7i3.26291>.

The 21st-century skills framework that forms the basis of this research is derived from the Framework for 21st Century Learning by the Partnership for 21st-Century Skills,¹⁷ as shown in the following table, focusing on learning and innovation skills. Although UNESCO also provides a comprehensive framework for 21st-century competencies, this study deliberately adopts the P21 framework because it offers a more operational classification that is widely applied in language education research. In particular, P21 emphasizes learning and innovation skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration, which are directly relevant to the objectives of Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) learning.

Tabel 1. Framework for 21st Century Learning by Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2009)

| No. | Aspects 21st-century skills | Description |
|-----|---|---|
| 1. | <p>Creativity and innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think creatively • Work creatively with others • Implement innovations <p>Critical thinking and problem solving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reason effectively • Use system thinking • Make judgments and decisions • Solve problems <p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate clearly | <p>Think creatively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming). <p>Work creatively with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, implement and communicate new ideas to others effectively. <p>Implement innovations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur. <p>Reason effectively</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation. <p>Use system thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how parts of a whole interact with each other to produce overall outcomes in complex systems. <p>Make judgments and decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs. <p>Solve problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways. <p>Communicate clearly</p> |

¹⁷ Bernie Trilling dan Charles Fadel, *21st century skills: learning for life in our times*, 1st ed, with Partnership for 21st Century Skills (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009).

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|--|---|
| <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts. <p>Collaborate with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams. |
|--|---|
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Based on a Publish or Perish search using the Scopus and Google Scholar databases, no research has comprehensively analyzed Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) textbooks in Indonesia by examining all learning activities within a single chapter while integrating 21st-century skills. Some related studies exist but remain limited. Fahmi investigated cultural representation in two widely used AFL textbooks, *Al-Kitaab* and *Arabiyat al-Naas*, yet without linking them to 21st-century skills.¹⁸ Similarly, Majadly & Haj Yahya¹⁹ studied Arabic textbooks in Arab-Palestinian schools, finding an imbalance in social-emotional skills representation, but their work did not address Indonesian contexts or broader 21st-century integration. Other research has focused on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks, such as studies analyzing the representation of 21st-century skills representation but limited to task analysis without considering other learning activities.²⁰ In addition, Susrawan dkk.,²¹ only examined the development of Indonesian language textbooks that were valid, practical, and effective in supporting 21st-century skills. Therefore, there remains a gap in the literature on AFL textbooks in Indonesia, particularly in studies that evaluate all learning activities in a chapter while integrating 21st-century skills.

It is important to note that AFL and EFL are not entirely comparable. Unlike EFL, AFL learning in Indonesia is strongly tied to religious, cultural, and contextual factors, which influence textbook content, objectives, and pedagogical approaches. Therefore, despite the growing body of research on AFL and EFL textbooks in other contexts, there remains a clear gap in the literature on AFL textbooks in Indonesia, particularly in studies that evaluate all learning activities in a chapter while integrating 21st-century skills. To address this gap, the present study focuses on the grade IX AFL textbook published by the Directorate of

¹⁸ Zakaria Fahmi, "Curricula as Ideology: A Study of Cultural Representations in Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) Textbooks" (University of South Florida, 2024), <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=11470&context=etd>.

¹⁹ Haifaa Majadly dan Athar Haj Yahya, "Beyond the Language: Arabic Language Textbooks in Arab–Palestinian Society as Tools for Developing Social–Emotional Skills," *Education Sciences* 14, no. 10 (Oktober 2024): 1088, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14101088>.

²⁰ Rinekso, "The Representation of 21st Century Skills in an Indonesian EFL Textbook."

²¹ I Nyoman Adi Susrawan dkk., "Indonesian Textbooks Oriented on Social Integration and 21st Century Skills in Higher Education: Validity, Practicality, and Effectiveness," *International Journal of Language Education* 8, no. 1 (April 2024), <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v8i1.60910>.

KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. It seeks to answer two key questions: (1) what elements of 21st-century skills are integrated into the textbook, and (2) how these elements are represented across learning activities. By doing so, this study aims to evaluate the extent to which AFL textbooks in Indonesia meet the demands of 21st-century education while also providing practical recommendations for their improvement.

To answer these questions, this study applies a qualitative descriptive approach with an evaluative method to provide a comprehensive picture of the actual conditions and interpret the integration of 21st-century skills in the Arabic language textbook for grade IX.²² The book was published by the Directorate of KSKK Madrasah, Directorate General of Islamic Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. This study also critically examines the integration of 21st-century skills in the Arabic language textbook for grade IX. The elements analyzed are all activities in Chapter 1 that are integrated with 21st-century skills.

Chapter 1 was selected because it contains a complete set of learning activities, including *qira'ah* and *istimā'* (text comprehension), grammatical rules, and exercises or assignments, that are consistently structured across other chapters, making it representative of the textbook as a whole. In addition, Chapter 1 is pedagogically significant as it introduces students to the main themes and learning orientation of the textbook, thus reflecting the authors' approach to integrating skills and content. Its position at the beginning also ensures that students encounter these activities early, which may influence their subsequent learning experiences. Therefore, analyzing this chapter provides both a practical sample and a meaningful representation of the overall textbook design. The analysis was carried out using the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21) framework, focusing on the 4Cs: creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication, and collaboration.²³

The data source in this study was obtained from a respondent with high competence in the field, with the initials SH, who filled out the questionnaire provided. The respondent is 56 years old and has served in education for over 21 years. Currently, he serves as a civil servant at a school. His expertise and credibility as an educator make him an appropriate source for assessing how the integration of 21st-century skills is applied in textbook. The components assessed in the textbook that will be assessed include learning objectives, materials or content presented, learning procedures or steps, and the role of teachers/participants.²⁴ Furthermore, the data were analyzed using a Likert scale

²² Adhi Kusumastuti dan Ahmad Mustamil Khoiron, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Semarang: Lembaga Pendidikan Sukarno Pressindo (LPSP), 2019).

²³ Trilling dan Fadel, *21st century skills*.

²⁴ David Nunan, *Task-Based Language Teaching*, Reprinted, Cambridge Language Teaching Library (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2009); Ditta Mustika Rakhmawati dan Joko Priyana,

as a descriptive tool to facilitate categorization, with the following assessment scores: strongly agree (5), agree (4), sufficient (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The average score for each component of the learning activity was then calculated, along with the percentage of 21st-century skills integrated into the textbook. However, in line with the qualitative approach, these numerical results were not treated as final findings but rather as a basis for narrative interpretation. The results and scores were analyzed and explained to capture how each of the 21st-century skills was represented in the textbook. For descriptive clarity, the results of the Likert scale analysis were categorized into five levels of interpretation. The categorization is based on the score range adapted, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Categories of Score Ranges in Data Interpretation

| Category | Score Range |
|------------|-------------|
| Very poor | 0-54 |
| Poor | 55-64 |
| Sufficient | 65-74 |
| Good | 75-84 |
| Very good | 85-100 |

Findings and Discussion

Distribution Results of 21st Century Skills on the Aspect of Learning Skills and Innovation (4C) Integrated with Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) Textbook

The results of the analysis of the AFL textbook integrated with 21st-century skills are classified into several categories, namely objectives, input, procedures, and the roles of teachers and students. The analysis was carried out using a questionnaire consisting of 17 questions, of which four represent creativity and innovation, six represent critical thinking and problem-solving, three represent communication, and four represent collaboration. This questionnaire was given to a teacher who is competent and experienced in teaching Arabic in Grade 9 to ensure valid and relevant results in assessing 21st-century skills. The results of the distribution of the research questionnaire can be seen in Table 3 and are presented using a Likert scale.

Table 3. Distribution of Questionnaire Assessment

| No. | Aspects 21st-century skills | Statements | Scores |
|-----|-----------------------------|------------|--------|
| 1. | Creativity and innovation | 1 | 4 |
| | | 2 | 3 |
| | | 3 | 3 |
| | | 4 | 4 |
| 2. | | 5 | 5 |

| | | | |
|----|--|----|----|
| | | 6 | 4 |
| | Critical thinking and problem solving | 7 | 3 |
| | | 8 | 3 |
| | | 9 | 3 |
| | | 10 | 3 |
| 3. | Communication | 11 | 4 |
| | | 12 | 5 |
| | | 13 | 5 |
| | | 14 | 5 |
| 4. | Collaboration | 15 | 5 |
| | | 16 | 5 |
| | | 17 | 5 |
| | Total | 17 | 69 |

The distribution results above show that the assessment of 21st-century skills varies across each aspect. For Learning and Innovation skills, there are varying assessments on creativity and innovation, with several statements scoring strongly agree (SS), agree (S), and sufficient (C). The critical thinking and problem-solving aspects also show variations in scores, where most statements score sufficient (C), while several others score agree (S) and strongly agree (SS). In the communication aspect, the assessment is dominated by strongly agree (SS) and agree (S) scores, with one statement scoring sufficient (C). Finally, all statements score strongly agree (SS) for collaboration, indicating a solid agreement on the importance of collaboration in this context. The presentation of 21st-century skills can be seen in Table 4,5,6,7.

Table 4. Percentage of 4C Skills Integration in Creativity and Innovation Aspects

| No. | Aspects 21st-century skills | Scores | Average |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------|---------|
| 1. | Creativity and innovation | 14 | 70 |

In the Creativity and Innovation aspect, the total score obtained was 14 out of 4 questions, with an average of 70, indicating high acceptance of the creativity elements in the textbook and falling into the sufficient category (65-74). In the first and fourth questions, respondents answered S (Agree) because the textbook asked students to analyze and present ideas from the text with the theme of the Hijri New Year. However, in the second and third questions, respondents answered C (Quite Agree), indicating that although the textbook provides analysis questions, there must be more open-ended tasks and creative projects, such as making short stories or presentations, encouraging students' expression. Nevertheless, the textbook supports the development of students' creativity, with a score indicating sufficient acceptance, although there is still room for further development.

Table 5. Percentage of Integration of 4C Skills in the Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Aspects

| No. | Aspects 21st-century skills | Scores | Average |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| 1. | Critical thinking and problem solving | 18 | 72 |

In the critical thinking and problem-solving aspect, the textbook obtained a total score of 18 with an average of 72, which is included in the sufficient category (65-74). Although the textbook is based on essential competencies 3.2 and 4.2, which direct students to analyze ideas in simple texts, the textbook still needs to challenge students enough to explore and evaluate the material in more depth. Based on the SS (Strongly Agree) response, the textbook provides exercises that help students analyze ideas in the text, such as focusing on grammatical form, meaning, and function but does not encourage students to relate the material to the social, cultural, or historical context S (Agree). The at-Tarakib material, as seen in C (Sufficient), has yet to fully develop critical thinking skills because no tasks connect these concepts to more complex contexts. In addition, more descriptive tasks, as shown in C (Sufficient), do not encourage students to think analytically or creatively, for example, by writing essays or stories. The textbook also does not facilitate a deeper exploration of the celebration of the Hijri New Year, focusing more on descriptive understanding without involving broader analysis C (Enough). Although the textbook has contributed to the development of critical thinking, there is much room to increase the challenge for students to think more analytically and creatively.

Table 6. Percentage of Integration of 4C Skills in the Communication Aspect

| No. | Aspects 21st-century skills | Scores | Average |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------|---------|
| 1. | Communication | 18 | 85 |

In the communication aspect, the textbook obtained a total score of 18 with an average of 85%, which is in the outstanding category (85-100). The exercises in the textbook focus on understanding descriptive texts, but deeper analysis and more challenging tasks still need improvement, as seen in response C (Enough). The textbook also helps improve oral communication skills through vocabulary exercises, although variations in tasks such as making contextual sentences would be more supportive of mastery of the material S (Agree). In addition, the textbook provides conversation exercises on Ras as-Sanah al-Hijriyah, which strengthens the oral communication skills of SS (Strongly Agree) students, as well as supporting collaborative learning through at-Ta'bir al-Muwajjih Jama'iyyan activities such as discussions and speaking practices with SS (Strongly Agree). Although some areas have been covered, this textbook effectively improves communication skills, with scores showing excellent results overall.

Table 7. Percentage of Integration of 4C Skills in the Collaboration Aspect

| No. | Aspects 21st-century skills | Scores | Average |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------|---------|
| 1. | Collaboration | 20 | 100 |

Regarding collaboration and cooperation, the textbook obtained a total score of 20 out of 4 questions, with an average of 100 indicating an outstanding category (85-100). All textbook questions reflect a practical approach in encouraging students to work together, speak, and discuss in groups. Based on the response of SS (Strongly Agree), activities such as composing sentences in groups according to the theme of Ras as-Sanah al-Hijriyah are beneficial for students to collaborate and develop their communication skills. Group assignments and discussions in the textbook strengthen students' collaboration skills, allowing them to share ideas and learn from their friends SS (Strongly Agree). Group discussion activities encourage students to share thoughts, compile answers, and support better understanding through collaboration SS (Strongly Agree). With various activities involving speaking exercises and group discussions, this textbook trains students to exchange ideas and work together effectively SS (Strongly Agree). Overall, this textbook effectively develops students' collaboration skills, with a total score of 20 and an average of 100, indicating excellent results.

The analyzed textbook showed variation in integrating 21st Century Skills (4C) skills across multiple aspects. In the Creativity and Innovation aspect, a score of 14 with an average of 70 indicates a good category (65-74), reflecting a fair acceptance of the creativity element despite the lack of more challenging open-ended tasks to encourage students' expression. In the Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving aspect, with a score of 18 and an average of 72, the textbook is in the fair category (65-74), indicating room for deeper analysis and more critical evaluation of the material. In the Communication aspect, a score of 17 with an average of 85 indicates an outstanding category (85-100), indicating the effectiveness of the textbook in developing students' oral communication skills. However, more varied tasks could further support mastery of the material. Finally, in the Collaboration aspect, a total score of 20 with an average of 100 places the textbook in the outstanding category (85-100), reflecting success in encouraging teamwork and group discussion, which strongly supports collaborative skills. Overall, this textbook shows good achievement in developing 21st Century Skills, especially in communication and collaboration, but still needs improvement in creativity and critical thinking.

Discussion of 21st Century Skills in the Aspect of Learning Skills and Innovation (4C) Integrated with Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) Textbook

The discussion below will explain each component related to 21st-century skills in the learning and innovation skills (4C) aspects integrated with Arabic as a foreign language (AFL) textbook.

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Critical thinking and problem-solving in AFL textbook are often found in the التدریبات or exercise activities. In AFL textbook, they can be found in the التدریبات

(exercise) activity, which invites students to read a text about the migration of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Students are asked to analyze sentences in Arabic related to historical facts, such as the statement that the Prophet migrated to Cairo when, in fact, he should have migrated to Medina. This exercise encourages students to think critically by checking the accuracy of the information and answering related questions, such as “What do Muslims celebrate on 1 Muharram?” or “Why did the Prophet migrate to Medina?” This activity hones thinking skills while training students’ ability to solve problems by evaluating and connecting information from the text with their knowledge of history. An example of the integration of these skills can be seen in Figure 1, which is presented in the textbook.



Figure 1. Representation of Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (Page 7-8/ArabicClassIX/2019)

This curriculum-adapted AFL textbook presents material relevant to students’ level of understanding and encourages them to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Practice activities, such as translating texts and answering analytical questions, invite students to analyze in-depth information, evaluate evidence, and judge relevant arguments.²⁵ Through these exercises, students are invited to solve problems related to historical events, such as the migration of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, in both conventional and innovative

²⁵ Winda Harniati, “Implementasi Pendekatan Pembelajaran HOTS untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Siswa SMP pada Mata Pelajaran Pkn Kelas IX.3,” *Journal on Teacher Education* 2, no. 1 (September 2020): 207–13, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jote.v2i1.1189>.

ways. This approach enriches students' mastery of Arabic and trains them to think systematically and face the challenges of an increasingly complex world by the demands of 21st-century skills.²⁶

Communication

Communication in AFL textbook is often found in the form of activities, namely in the activity *الحوار* or conversations in AFL textbook. First, the example of a conversation in the AFL textbook about the hijrah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW provides a clear example of how communication skills in 21st-century skills are integrated into Arabic language learning. Namely by providing readings that instruct *اقرأ واستمع* "read and listen" and supported by teacher procedures to practice communication in direct conversation as in the picture below. In this conversation, indicators of students being trained to express thoughts and ideas effectively and clear and structured oral communication skills are seen when students ask about the hijrah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and their interlocutors explain in detail about the event, mentioning the reasons for the hijrah, the challenges faced, and support from the Ansar. This dialogue teaches students how to use communication for various purposes, from providing information to explaining more complex concepts, such as the reasons and impacts of the hijrah event.

This conversation also achieves nonverbal communication indicators in addition to oral communication skills. Students are encouraged to pay attention to facial expressions and body movements that can support the message being conveyed. In this context, learning is limited to words and how students respond and interact with the conversation context. An example of the integration of these skills can be seen in Figure 2, presented in the textbook.

²⁶ Uraidah Abdul Wahab, Mat Taib Pa, dan Lily Hanefarezan Asbulah, "Saiz Kosa Kata dan Pengetahuan Kolokasi Bahasa Arab dalam Kalangan Pelajar Sijil Tinggi Agama Malaysia (STAM)," *Issues in Language Studies* 10, no. 1 (Juni 2021): 183–202, <https://doi.org/10.33736/ils.2794.2021>.



Figure 2. Communication Representation (Page 13/Arabic Language Grade IX/2019)

This curriculum-adapted AFL textbook presents material relevant to the level of understanding and skills of junior high school students, especially in developing communication skills. The conversation activities (الحوار) in this book encourage students to hone their ability to communicate orally, in writing, and nonverbally.²⁷ Well-structured discussions also make it easier for students to apply communication and information skills in contexts they understand. Clear explanations tailored to students’ daily lives make it easier for them to understand the material better.²⁸ With this approach, this book focuses on mastering Arabic and enriches students’ ability to communicate effectively to the demands of 21st-century skills.²⁹ This is reflected in students’ ability to communicate for various purposes, such as providing information, giving instructions, and interacting in multilingual situations. These skills are bridged through the conversation activities in this book, which also teach students how to communicate effectively in various contexts.

²⁷ Khudriyah, “Analysis Of Fundamental Factors In Planning And Teaching Conversation (keith s. Folse overview),” *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (September 2019): 163–78, <https://doi.org/10.37286/ojs.v5i2.53>.

²⁸ Ade Evi Fatimah, “Penerapan Pendekatan Pembelajaran Matematika Realistik Terhadap Kemampuan Pemecahan Masalah Matematis Siswa,” *Journal of Didactic Mathematics* 1, no. 2 (31 Agustus 2020): 78–84, <https://doi.org/10.34007/jdm.v1i2.256>.

²⁹ Dian Ekawati, H.D. Hidayat, dan Dede Rosyada, “Enhancing Vocabulary, Dialogue, and Writing Skills in Arabic through Communicative Language Teaching: An Experimental Study,” *International Journal of Religion* 5, no. 9 (Juni 2024): 896–907, <https://doi.org/10.61707/5880sz57>.

Collaboration

Collaboration in this AFL textbook can be seen from the activity of **جماعيا** **التعبير الموجه**, which is an activity of expression or expression that is directed collectively. This activity connects with the indicators of collaboration in 21st-century skills in an obvious way. In the textbook, there are instructions in the form of **التلاميذ يجلسون مع فريقهم** and **يعمل التلاميذ التدريبات جماعيا** which means “students sit with their teams” and “students work on exercises collectively.” This means that students are asked to sit with their teams and work on exercises collectively, demonstrating the application of collaboration skills in learning. Students are asked to work in groups, which requires them to collaborate in arranging sentences into a coherent or related paragraph. In this process, they must discuss and exchange ideas, demonstrating their ability to work effectively in a diverse team. Through this interaction, students also learn to value each group member’s opinion and develop a sense of mutual respect in achieving a common goal.



Figure 3. Collaboration Representation (Page 14/ArabicClassIX/2019)

The activities in this AFL textbook are by the curriculum that emphasizes the development of collaboration skills and teaches students to be flexible, compromise, and take joint responsibility in achieving goals so that they not only master Arabic but are also ready to collaborate in various learning activities in particular.³⁰

Creativity and innovation

Based on the results of the questionnaire and respondents' responses, the development of creative thinking skills and the application of innovation in learning, especially on the theme of رأس السنة الهجرية (Hijri New Year), still show significant shortcomings. Data from respondents revealed that although students answer questions based on texts, textbook do not provide open-ended tasks that allow students to express personal opinions. For example, creative tasks such as creating short stories themed on the Hijri New Year can be added to provide more room for expression. Although the learning procedures carried out by teachers support the development of these skills, the materials in AFL textbook still do not provide opportunities for students to express personal views or use their Creativity to the fullest. Most activities only ask students to answer questions in the text without providing open-ended tasks, such as creating short stories or relevant creative projects. This contradicts the creative thinking indicators prioritizing exploring various idea creation.³¹ Creativity and innovation are essential in 21st-century skills because they are the key to learning problem-solving and the ability to adapt to increasingly rapid changes.³² The lack of assignments, such as projects or presentations related to the Hijri New Year, also limits students' ability to develop creative and innovative work skills. Therefore, it is recommended that this textbook include more varied and open-ended assignments, such as collaborative projects or other creative assignments, to support creative thinking skills, innovation, and collaboration more optimally.

Overall, the analysis of the AFL Grade IX textbook shows that communication and collaboration skills are the most strongly represented components of 21st-century learning, particularly through structured dialogue and group work activities. In contrast, the integration of critical thinking and

³⁰ A. Afandi dkk., "Development Frameworks of the Indonesian Partnership 21st-Century Skills Standards for Prospective Science Teachers: A Delphi Study," *Jurnal Pendidikan IPA Indonesia* 8, no. 1 (Maret 2019), <https://doi.org/10.15294/jpii.v8i1.11647>; Dyah Indraswati dkk., "Critical Thinking Dan Problem Solving Dalam Pembelajaran IPS untuk Menjawab Tantangan Abad 21," *Sosial Horizon: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial* 7, no. 1 (25 Juni 2020): 12–28, <https://doi.org/10.31571/sosial.v7i1.1540>.

³¹ Zulkarnaen Zulkarnaen, Z.A. Imam Supardi, dan Budi Jatmiko, "Feasibility of Creative Exploration, Creative Elaboration, Creative Modeling, Practice Scientific Creativity, Discussion, Reflection (C3pdr) Teaching Model To Improve Students' Scientific Creativity Of Junior High School," *Journal of Baltic Science Education* 16, no. 6 (22 Desember 2017): 1020–34, <https://doi.org/10.33225/jbse/17.16.1020>.

³² Onkar Bagaria dkk., "A Study on Creativity, Innovation, and Knowledge," *World Journal of English Language* 12, no. 3 (April 2022): 55, <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n3p55>.

problem-solving is present but still limited to text-based analytical exercises, while creativity and innovation remain the least emphasized due to the lack of open-ended and project-based tasks. These findings are consistent with studies such as Majadly & Haj Yahya,³³ which also highlight imbalances in the representation of higher-order skills in Arabic textbooks. At the same time, they diverge by showing that in the Indonesian context, communication and collaboration are relatively stronger compared to creativity. This suggests that while AFL textbooks already support interpersonal and linguistic competencies, further enrichment is needed in fostering critical and creative capacities. Thus, strengthening the balance of the 4C framework not only benefits classroom practices but also provides direction for curriculum development and policy initiatives aimed at aligning AFL learning with the broader demands of 21st-century education.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion results, the Arabic as a Foreign Language (AFL) textbook integrated with 21st-century skills, especially the learning skills and innovation (4C) aspect, shows varying achievements in each aspect of skills. Regarding creativity and innovation, the average score is 14, which is in the sufficient category (65-74). Although the textbook makes a sufficient contribution to encouraging creative thinking, there are still shortcomings in providing more challenging tasks to encourage students' expression. The critical thinking and problem-solving aspects also show adequate results with an average score of 18, which is in the sufficient category (65-74), and there needs to be room to deepen the analysis and evaluation of the material so that students can be more involved in solving more complex problems. On the other hand, the communication and collaboration aspects show excellent results, with an average of 17 and 20, which are in the very good category (85-100). The textbook develops students' communication and collaboration skills through group conversations and discussions, which both support material mastery and train essential 21st-century competencies.

Overall, this textbook has shown effectiveness in developing communication and collaboration skills. However, efforts are still needed to improve the aspects of creativity and critical thinking to align with the demands of increasingly complex and dynamic 21st-century skills. The pedagogical implications of this study emphasize the importance of integrating 21st-century skills, especially the 4C aspects (creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration), in AFL textbook. This integration enriches students' learning experiences and prepares them to face challenges in the modern era. Therefore, textbook must further optimize approaches to encourage active student involvement, such as group discussions, collaborative assignments, and creative projects.

³³ Majadly dan Haj Yahya, "Beyond the Language."

Furthermore, this study recommends that textbook developers and curriculum policymakers ensure a more balanced integration of 4C skills by incorporating open ended tasks that foster creativity and innovation. Such efforts will help create a relevant learning environment that holistically supports 21st-century competencies, better preparing students for real-world challenges.

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