



Evaluating English Language Curriculum of the Eleventh Grade In the Light of the Pedagogy of the Competency-Based Approach

تقويم منهاج اللغة الإنجليزية للصف الحادي عشر وفق بيداغوجيا المقاربة
بالكفايات

BY

Fatin Nassar

Ph.D in Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Inas Naser

Al-Quds University - Jerusalem-Palestine

Doi: 10.21608/jasep.2024.372782

استلام البحث: ٤ / ٥ / ٢٠٢٤

قبول النشر: ٢٤ / ٦ / ٢٠٢٤

Nassar, Fatin & Naser, Inas (2024). Evaluating English Language Curriculum of the Eleventh Grade In the Light of the Pedagogy of the Competency-Based Approach, *Arab Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences*, AIESA, Egypt, 8 (40), 725 – 762.

<http://jasep.journals.ekb.eg>

Evaluating English Language Curriculum of the Eleventh Grade In the Light of the Pedagogy of the Competency-Based Approach

Abstract:

The current study aimed to evaluate the eleventh-grade English language curriculum in Palestine in light of the pedagogy of a competency-based approach from English teachers' and supervisors' perspectives in the Education Directorate/Bethlehem. The quantitative approach was used to evaluate the curriculum internally. To achieve the study's objectives, the researcher developed an evaluative instrument. Subsequently, the validity and reliability of the instrument were tested to measure the internal consistency of the curriculum with the competency-based approach pedagogy. To obtain the necessary evaluation data, a questionnaire was distributed to the 11th-grade English teachers and all English supervisors in Education Directorate/Bethlehem, with (70) of them responding to the questionnaire items. One of the study's key findings was that the participants rated the English curriculum high, with an average score of (3.52) and a standard deviation of (0.94). It was also found that there were no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample in evaluating the curriculum due to gender, educational qualification, or years of experience. In light of the study results, the researcher made several recommendations, the most notable of which were adopting the general framework and principles of competency-based approach pedagogy when developing English curricula in Palestine, increasing the role of teachers and supervisors in these processes, holding regular discussion meetings between curriculum designers, teachers, and supervisors, and encouraging the

conduct of evaluative research and considering its results to improve the English curricula in Palestine.

Key words: English language curriculum, curriculum evaluation, eleventh-grade, pedagogy, competency-based approach.

المستخلص:

هدفت الدراسة الحالية الى تقويم منهاج اللغة الانجليزية للصف الحادي عشر في فلسطين في ضوء بيداغوجيا المقاربة بالكفايات من وجهة نظر معلمي ومشرفي اللغة الإنجليزية في مديرية التربية والتعليم في بيت لحم. حيث تم اعتماد المنهج الكمي لتقويم المنهاج داخلياً. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة قامت الباحثة بتطوير أداة الدراسة. ثم تم التحقق من صدق الأداة وثباتها لتكون وسيلة دقيقة لفحص مدى توافق المنهاج داخلياً مع بيداغوجيا المقاربة بالكفايات. وللحصول على البيانات اللازمة للتقويم تم توزيع الاستبانة على معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية للصف الحادي عشر وعلى جميع مشرفي اللغة الإنجليزية في محافظة بيت لحم حيث قام (71) منهم بالاستجابة على فقرات الاستبانة. وكان من أهم النتائج التي توصلت إليها الدراسة أن تقييم المبحوثين لمنهاج اللغة الإنجليزية كان بدرجة عالية حيث بلغ المتوسط الحسابي (3.52) وانحراف معياري (0.94)، وتبين أنه لا يوجد اختلاف في استجابات أفراد عينة الدراسة في تقويم المنهاج تعزى لمتغيرات (الجنس، المؤهل العلمي، سنوات الخبرة). وفي ضوء نتائج الدراسة أوصت الباحثة بعدد من التوصيات من أهمها: اعتماد الإطار العام وأسس بيداغوجيا المقاربة بالكفايات عند تطوير مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية في فلسطين، أن يكون دور أكبر للمعلمين والمشرفين في هذه العملية، عمل لقاءات دورية بين مصممي المناهج والمعلمين والمشرفين وتشجيع القيام بأبحاث تقييمية والأخذ بنتائجها من أجل تحسين مناهج اللغة الإنجليزية في فلسطين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: منهاج اللغة الإنجليزية، تقويم المنهاج، الصف الحادي عشر، بيداغوجيا، المقاربة بالكفايات.

1. Introduction

Curriculum evaluation is the process in which stakeholders ensure educational programs' relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with intended learning outcomes. The effectiveness of curriculum design is of utmost importance in English language instruction, especially for eleventh graders, as it shapes students' communicative skills as well as their

language proficiency. Since the curriculum's importance lies in its suitability for new modern language teaching pedagogies application, it is important to have it developed in a way it keeps pace with development in this landscape and the competency-based approach is one of those pedagogies. This study is an evaluative study of the eleventh-grade Palestinian English language curriculum. Specifically, it aimed to analyse internally the curriculum (the elements and foundational principles of the curriculum) in light of the pedagogical framework of the competency-based approach.

Beltran (2019) defines this approach as a tool that aids students in acquiring the required competencies for effective e-communication in society and real life by learning different language uses. It is an approach in which the role of the teacher tunes from being an instructor and a source of information to a designer of the learning experience. It allows students to examine genuine real-life situations that urge them to use their practical and communicative skills to deal with them. By evaluating the eleventh grade English language curriculum in light, the researcher investigates to what extent the curriculum matches the framework of the competency-based approach.

Investigating to what extent the eleventh-grade English language curriculum matches the framework of this approach mainly focuses on examining the curriculum's elements and components as well as the underlying foundations upon which it was constructed. In the eleventh grade, students reach a turning point in their schooling where they significantly improve their language skills and prepare for college and the workforce.

Therefore, to determine if the curriculum is effective in helping students acquire language and improve their communication skills, it is necessary to carefully examine all of

its components, including learning objectives, instructional methodologies, assessment techniques, and resource materials. Correspondingly, evaluating the curriculum's coherence, relevance, and responsiveness to learners' needs and the larger educational context requires a grasp of the fundamental principles that guide curriculum design. Hence, this study aims to measure the degree of congruence between this curriculum's foundations construction and the competencies-based approach. In addition, it is important to comprehend the various viewpoints and experiences of the stakeholders to thoroughly assess the effectiveness and applicability of the curriculum. Through an analysis of possible variations in answers according to years of experience, gender, and educational attainment, this study aims to provide deep insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum from a variety of angles. Accordingly, the results of such studies pinpoint particular areas that may require focused interventions and modifications in order to better meet the requirements and preferences of various demographic groups within the educational community.

Therefore, the curriculum's intended goals are to build on all the previously learned skills and transform the classroom into a productive environment that creates highly qualified students with high communicative, practical, and intellectual abilities. If the English language curricula adhere to the competencies-based approach, its diverse topics and activities can accomplish these goals. This study seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the eleventh-grade English language curriculum's alignment with competency-based pedagogy and its perceived effectiveness among stakeholders applying a robust methodology. To promote inclusivity, equity, and efficacy in English language education, this research proposes to add to the continuing discourse on curriculum development and instructional techniques by

clarifying potential variances in responses based on demographic characteristics.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The importance of curriculum proficiency reflects its effectiveness in developing the holistic integration of the student's personality. Therefore, many researchers have focused when evaluating curricula on multiple criteria. However, most of the evaluation studies have followed common criteria and haven't addressed the competencies that are considered the cornerstone of the teaching and learning process.

From the researcher's experience as an eleventh-grade English language teacher for more than 10 years, she has noticed a clear weakness in the students' competencies. She has seen that it's the time to make the change; to create those integrated personalities who show the competencies that allow them to apply what they have learned in new situations. Turning from the most commonly used evaluation methods -like exams- to communicative competencies, written and oral self-expression, empowering self-learning, or employing what they have learned as life skills in new situations and contexts is the crux of the pedagogy of competency-based learning. All of this rang the bell of a need to evaluate the eleventh-grade English language curriculum in light of the competency-based approach. In this context, learning goals are the competencies themselves, not just a set of behavioural (cognitive and performance) objectives whose teaching and evaluation stop when showing good knowledge achievement in the exams.

Hence, this study aims to create a dependable and valid instrument that is based on the competency-based method. Aligning with the foundations of the pedagogy of a competency-based approach, the developed instrument will internally

evaluate the curriculum. As per above, the problem of this study revolves around answering the following questions:

1.2 Questions of the study

1- To what extent does the Eleventh Grade English Language Curriculum) the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks(the core book and Reading Plus book), the foundations of curriculum construction, and the elements and components of the curriculum) meet the competency-based approach?

2- Are there any significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the gender, educational level, and years of experience of the respondents?

1.3 Hypotheses of the Study

The second question of the research was turned into the following null hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the gender of the participants. (male/ female)

Hypothesis 2: There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the educational level of the participants(BA/ Postgraduate Degree).

Hypothesis 3: There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the years of experience of the participants(less than 5 years/ 10 years or more).

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. Track the congruence between the eleventh-grade English language curriculum (the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks(the core book and the Reading Plus book), the foundations of curriculum construction, and the elements and components of the curriculum) in Palestine in the light of

the pedagogy of competency-based approach using the evaluation developed instrument.

2. Identify if there are any significant differences in the mean scores of the responses due to the demographics of the respondents.

1.5 Significance of the study:

This study becomes the pivotal moment for research into the eleventh standard English language syllabus in Palestine within the context of competency-based education. This study is different with other papers that have also talked about curriculum structuring approaches because the English curriculum for this grade level is the focus of the research here distinct. It is significant throughout what it provides for:

1. The stakeholders: such as policymakers, curriculum developers, and educational supervisors, this research offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of the eleventh-grade English language curriculum within the competency-based pedagogy framework. By identifying strengths and areas for improvement, stakeholders can make knowledgeable decisions to improve curriculum design and implementation, and contribute to enhancing the quality of English language curricula in Palestine.
2. Eleventh-grade students, this study has direct implications for their learning experiences. By evaluating the curriculum from the perspectives of teachers and supervisors, the study indirectly assesses its impact on students' educational outcomes and learning experiences. Insights gained from this research can inform adjustments to the curriculum to better match students' needs and enhance their learning experiences and academic achievements.

3. Researchers in the field of education, this study serves as a pioneering example of evaluative research within the Palestinian context. The development of an original evaluative instrument and the systematic approach employed in this study contribute to the methodological source for the educational research. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of context-specific evaluations in informing educational practices and policies, setting a precedent for future research attempts aimed at improving educational outcomes in Palestine and beyond.

1.6 Limitations of the study

- 1- Place: the governmental schools in the Directorate of Education in Bethlehem city/ Palestine.
- 2- Population: (71) eleventh-grade English language teachers and English supervisors in Bethlehem city/ Palestine.
- 3- Time: the study was carried out during the second semester of the academic year 2023/2024.

1.7 Study Terms:

- English language curriculum: refers to the structured plan or framework designed for teaching and learning English language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, within an educational institution (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).
- Eleventh grade: is the equivalent of the first level of secondary education, which the students typically undertake at the age of around 16 to 17 years. The grade is an important stage of the Palestinian curriculum preparing students for their high school final year before attending the university.
- Evaluating curriculum: involves assessing the effectiveness, relevance, and quality of educational materials, methods, and objectives within a specific educational context. It aims to determine whether the curriculum aligns with educational goals,

addresses student needs, and supports desired learning outcomes" (Johnson, 2009).

- Pedagogy: as Ormrod (2016) stated, is the theory and practice of teaching methods and approaches used in educational settings. It encompasses instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and educational philosophies aimed at facilitating effective learning experiences for students.

- The competency-based approach: as described by Schunk and Meece (2020), emphasizes defining specific skills, knowledge, and abilities (competencies) that students are expected to acquire. It prioritizes mastery of competencies over the completion of a fixed curriculum within a set timeframe.

2. Theoretical Framework:

There were different evaluation models that were used by scholars for academic curricula assessment. Those models tested the validity of curricula and their role in achieving the goals of educational process not only in English language teaching but also in different topics. Taylor and Stufflebeam evaluative models are two that stand out.

Tyler Model appeared for the first time in (1949) by the educational expert Ralph Tyler. He posed the concepts of the basic principle for instruction and curriculum. It considers that learning process is a process of changing behavior through certain procedures that can be assessed and measured. His approach mainly focused on setting goals and depended on an empirical method in setting certain goals, classifying them and then setting the evaluative means and tools for achieving and testing them. (Tyler, 1949).

Whereas Stufflebeam Model defined the educational process as the operation by which it is possible to determine the judgmental and descriptive information in terms of goals, design,

implementation and effect. This model is mainly used to evaluate programs and depends more on setting goals that fit the educational environment in study (Stufflebeam, 2003).

Curriculum Evaluation in English Language Education:

Curriculum development in education, as described by Demirci (2006), includes the dynamic relationships among objectives, content, learning processes, and evaluation. According to Brown (1995), curriculum assessment is the systematic collection and examination of all essential information required to improve a curriculum and assess its efficacy within the specific educational institutions in which it is implemented.

According to Çalık and Sözbilir (2014), conducting a comprehensive study of studies in a relevant topic can assist in identifying patterns and approaches that can be used in future investigations. In addition, it serves as a valuable resource for decision-makers, academics, and practitioners, and helps identify key areas of learning.

Al-Arifi (2020) attempted to establish the obstacles encountered in teaching English at the primary level as viewed by teachers, as well as potential solutions to these challenges. The study sample consisted of (88) female English Language educators at the primary level in Al-Quwaiyah Governorate. However, only (83) of them took part in the poll. This study used the Descriptive Approach, with SPSS, Pearson correlation, Cronbach's Alpha, and Standard Deviation as analytical tools for the collected data. The study's findings show that English language instruction at the primary level in Al Quwaiyah governorate faces four major challenges: educational setting issues, academic curriculum challenges, teaching methodology obstacles, and teacher difficulties.

Competency-Based Approach:

The competencies-based approach functions as an interactive, collaborative and communicative teaching method (Sanchez and Ruiz, 2008). It is based on creating a pedagogical frame to guide a student-centred learning approach that achieves independence of learning as well as promotes pedagogical innovation in the classroom. It also promotes self- and peer-assessment processes in the classroom.

DeKeyser and Jong (2002) added that competency-based approach gained great interest by many researchers because of its pivotal basis, which is linking learning to life situation. It is not only educational, it is also realistic, psychological and social. It cares for building the learners character in line with building his knowledge. This is why it is a widely depend this approach in designing modern English language teaching curricula. This section examines previous studies that discussed this approach in education and learning.

Nunan (2004) asserted that competencies-based approach fosters students universal and open look. As students acquire a new language, they turn to be open-minded, more accepting and have a universal look that breaks the barriers that they build while learning a new language. This means that leaning a new language with this interactive, social and communicative approach teaches them, in line with the previous skills, a new view of the world. This is also reflected to serving their society as well as be connected to world issue as English is the language of media and information.

Implementation and Evaluation of Competency-Based English Language Curriculum:

Proficiency rating is the necessity that helps to check the achievements and progress in the study process not just in the

language studies but in other fields too, for instance, mastering English. The primary intent of proficiency assessment is to check how well individuals or organizations succeed in accomplishing their goals by measuring their performance as they relate to certain criteria. While considering the applicant ability evaluation in competency-based language studies, it is considered as a significant element of the learning and teaching process. Language evaluation one of the tools that used for assessing students' gradual achievement, identification of their results in meeting their educational or linguistic objectives, as well as strengths and weaknesses in learning. There is a more than one process for how teachers go about implementing and evaluating proficiency-based instruction. First of all, the curriculum is specifically constructed to provide for students' needs and this customized curriculum also serves as a developmental platform of skills through the developmental process. Through doing this, the curriculum gets implemented in such a manner, that students get involved along the process, which consequently improving the process of learning.

Hassan (2023) is aimed at understanding the values towards the English studies of teachers who teach in the basic stage from the upper level, looking at the influence of the addition of Arabic into their education on this matter. In this study, (54) English language teachers - (27) males and (27) females - were selected from the Pedagogic Department of East Jerusalem as the random sample. Descriptive correlational approach was implemented in the study. Gender, academic degree, and work experience years were taken into account. For the attainment of the study goal, the researcher was guided by an instrument that consisted of two questionnaires. The tools developed for this study is a questionnaire that is designed to measure the perceptions of the citizenship core concepts which

are according to the English language curriculum in the basic stage for the teachers at upper levels. The third survey aims to explore the problems of employing Arabic in teaching the subject matter from professors' viewpoints. (24) items for each questionnaire were therein. To validate reliability of these questionnaires, we used both arithmetic means and standard deviation, T-test, as well as ANOVA. The significant output indicated that top-class teachers of the Upper Basic stage assessed the rate of development of socio-political values addressed in the English language curriculum at a same or equal level.

Alhasan (2022) aimed to assess the digital educational curricula from the perspective of students who utilize them. Additionally, the study aimed to identify any variations in these curricula based on variables such as gender, university program, and academic year. The ultimate goal was to understand the reasons why other students do not utilize these curricula. The analytical descriptive technique has been employed. The sample comprised (408) students, both male and female. The questionnaire instrument was employed to assess the digital educational courses, which had (25) elements. Analyzed results revealed that respondents rated usability of the digital learning curriculums which was average. Participants, who are members of male and female genders, do not show a statistically significant difference in their average scores. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that changes in perception toward gender inequality over the course of the academic year were statistically significant, with fourth-year students having higher scores.

Even though there is a lot of work done in finding measures of pedagogy in other areas of education, there has not been a significant effort in assessing the curricular evaluation in

the teaching of English. Thus, it is evident now that this study underlines the critical importance of introducing assessment of TL learning in this subject discipline. Conducting a comprehensive evaluation of educational teaching approaches for the acquisition of English language, one can come up with a verdict that these teaching methods are attaining the major purposes of learning, which are mastery and further improvement. Besides, the research would be a guide in decoding the pros and cons of the current curricula and also advance suggestions which would rightly make the curricula better hence boosting the general education quality and increasing the effectiveness of the academic process.

Competency-based evaluation has the potential to be a powerful tool for improving the consistency of the curriculum and increasing student involvement in the learning process. As a result, it can lead to improved learning outcomes in English language education. This form of evaluation measures students' capacity to attain specific learning objectives, aiding in a more comprehensive comprehension of their development and identification of strengths and weaknesses in language acquisition. Furthermore, competency-based evaluation can foster greater engagement from students, as it prompts them to focus their efforts more purposefully on attaining specific objectives and creating an optimal learning atmosphere. Through ongoing analysis of the outcomes, the educational process can be more effectively directed, leading to enhanced overall teaching and learning excellence. Competency-based assessment is an essential instrument that plays a big role in addressing the problems encountered in the educational process and ultimately improving educational success.

In conclusion, the literature review illuminates a significant research gap: a gap noticeable due to the lack of

interdisciplinary research that would directly link the failures or limitations of the eleventh-grade English language curriculum with the competency-based approach. The current literature highlights the value of this pedagogy to curriculum design and its effectiveness in enhancing student learning performance; however, further investigation is needed to study the English 11th-grade curriculum from such a point of view. The research seeks to fill the gap coursed by previous studies by thoroughly assessing the eleventh-grade English curriculum designed on the competency-based instructional framework. The study, which aims to fill this gap, goes beyond just contributing to the discussion of competency-based education. In addition, it provides valuable data on the curriculum development and implementation in the transition phase for students' academic progression.

3. Methodology

This study used the Quantitative methodology since as Creswell (2014) stated it is considered a powerful foundation for evaluating curricula by using questionnaires as well as it involves the systematic gathering and analysis of numerical data derived from structured survey instruments. Questionnaires, as instruments of data collection, enable researchers to gather standardized responses from a large number of participants efficiently. The researcher adopted the descriptive (quantitative) methodology to collect and analyze data which were collected from (71) eleventh-grade English language teachers and the English supervisors in the Directorate of Education/ Bethlehem. The questionnaire was administered online through the supervisors after obtaining permission from the head of the Directorate of Education in Bethlehem.

3.1 Study Population and Sample

All eleventh-grade English teachers and the English supervisors in Bethlehem City in Palestine represent this study population(110) ((5) supervisors and (105) teachers). Whereas, the sample consisted of (71) teachers and supervisors comprise (64.5)% of the whole population. Table (1) presents the descriptive statistics concerning the demographics of the respondents (N=71).

Table (1): Descriptive statistical findings of the respondents' demographics

Features	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Female	33	46
	Male	38	54
Teaching experience	Less than 10 years	25	35
	10 years or more	46	65
Educational level	BA	41	58
	Post graduate	30	42

As table (1) shows the respondents were (71); (46)% of them were females whereas (54)% were males. (35)% of the respondents have less than (10) years of experience in teaching the English language whilst (65)% have (10) years of experience or more. According to the educational level, (58)% held a bachelor's degree and (42)% had a post-graduate degree.

3.2 Study Instrument

The researcher developed a (73)-item questionnaire to examine the perspectives of teachers and supervisors regarding evaluating the effectiveness of the eleventh-grade English language curriculum in Palestine in the light of the pedagogy of a competency-based approach. The instrument was developed after a deep understanding of the readings of the general goals of the Palestinian curriculum, the document of the general framework for the developed English Palestinian curricula, the philosophical and social foundations of curriculum construction,

and the elements and components of the curricula in general. The researcher developed this evaluated instrument after several meetings with a specialized professor "Ammar Al-Waheidi" whose main major is in the pedagogy of competency-based learning approach to come up with the completely original instrument that aligns all of the foundations of curriculum construction, the elements and components with this competency. The instrument includes four sections which are:

1. The demographic information about the participants((3) items).
2. Evaluating the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks. ((9) items).
3. Evaluating the congruence between the foundations of the curriculum construction and the pedagogy of the competency approach((20) items).
4. Evaluating congruence between the elements and components of the curriculum and the pedagogy of the competency approach((41) items).

The study instrument employed the Likert five-point scale for scoring, where each statement scored under a measure of the following: Very-High Level(labeled as 5), High Level (4), Moderate Level (3), Low Level (2) and Very-Low Level (1) (Likert, R. 1932).

3.3 Scale Validity and Reliability

The validity of the questionnaire was ensured by presenting it to a group of experts: a specialist in the pedagogy of competency learning, a professor who teaches a curriculum evaluation course, supervisors who participated in developing the English Palestinian curriculum, and two professional English language teachers. More than (90)% of the experts' comments were positive to show that the items included are relevant to the

evaluating purpose. The other comments were taken earnestly by the researcher and she edited the items according to their recommendations.

To confirm the reliability of the questionnaire, it was applied to a sample survey of (20) teachers to calculate Cronbach's alpha coefficient, resulting in a reliability value of (0.982). This value is considered perfect for the study's purposes, indicating excellent stability in the data collected from the study sample as Table (2) shows:

Table (2): Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.982	71

3.4 Study Variables:

- Independent Variable: the gender, the teaching experience, and the level of education.
- Dependent Variables: the scores of the responses of the teachers and the supervisors.

3.5 Study Procedures:

- Review theoretical frameworks connected with the curriculum evaluation process and the pedagogy of the competency-based approach.
- Examine the general goals of the Palestinian curriculum, the document of the general framework for the developed English Palestinian curricula, the philosophical and social foundations of curriculum construction, and the elements and components of the curricula in general
- Analyze the content of the eleventh-grade Palestinian book.
- Develop the study questionnaire and verify its validity and reliability.

- Disseminate the questionnaire to the teachers and the supervisors online.
- Collect data from the questionnaire, analyze then deliberate upon the results.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results concerning the first question:

To answer the first question " To what extent does the Eleventh Grade English Language Curriculum) the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks(the core book and Reading Plus book), the foundations of curriculum construction, and the elements and components of the curriculum) meet the competency-based approach?", descriptive statistical analysis was used to analyze the data collected; table (3) shows the mean scores, the deviation, the percentages, and the degrees of the evaluation that were worked out by the computer software for each domain being evaluated. The averages of the values of the mean scores were degreed according to the following scale: 1.00-1.80= Very Low/ 1.81-2.60= Low/ 2.61-3.40=Moderate/ 3.41-4.20= High/ 4.21-5.00= Very High.

Table (3): The mean scores, the deviations, the percentages, the ranks and the degrees of evaluation for the three domains evaluated sorted in descending order

Degree of evaluation	The rank	Percentage %	Deviation	Mean Score	The domain
The artistic direction of the 11th grade textbooks	3.85	0.87	77.09	1	High
The congruence between the foundations of the curriculum construction and the pedagogy of the competency approach	3.16	1.04	63.30	3	Moderate
The congruence	3.55	0.92	71.09	2	High

between the elements and components of the curriculum and the pedagogy of the competency-based approach					
Total	3.52	0.94	70.49		High

As Table (3) presents, the overall degree of the evaluation of the eleventh-grade curriculum in the light of the pedagogy of the competency-based approach for all domains was “High” (according to the previously mentioned scale). To pinpoint, thirty-nine items in the questionnaire got a “High” degree, twenty items got a “Moderate” degree and one item got a “Very High” degree. There were no items that were deemed “Low” and “Very Low” indicating a promising alignment with the competency-based approach.

Accordingly, the mean score for the whole questionnaire’s domains was (3.52) with a standard deviation of (0.94). Correspondingly, the respondent’s evaluation score achieved (70.49) % of the maximum possible score. The highest rank was attributed to the artistic direction of the textbooks, followed by the elements and the components of the curriculum, and the lowest was attributed to the foundations of the curriculum construction.

To pinpoint, the results of the domains evaluated were as follows:

4.1.1 The results related to the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks:

The mean scores, standard deviations, and the ranks of the evaluation of the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks in Palestine were calculated as Appendix (1) shows. Items (1)-(9) were constructed to evaluate the artistic direction of the eleventh-grade textbooks from the respondents’ perspectives.

This domain got the highest score overall. It was noticed from the results -shown in Appendix (1)- that the evaluation of this domain was "High" with (3.85) as a mean score and a standard deviation of (0.87) which corresponds to (77.09)% satisfaction. All of the items related to the artistic direction of the book received "High" from the respondents except for item (2)" The book includes bibliographical information such as: title, publisher, authors, edition...etc." (with (4.31) as a mean score) which was the only item in the whole questionnaire that recorded "Very High". On the other hand, item (1) stated "The cover of the book is attractive and interesting to the learners" received the least mean score (3.55). The mean scores were nearly the same with a slight difference among them. Those findings illustrated that teachers and supervisors had generally good perceived eleventh-grade textbooks.

4.1.2 The results related to the foundations of the curriculum construction:

According to the second domain" The congruence between the foundations of the curriculum construction and the pedagogy of the competency-based approach, the mean scores, standard deviations, and the ranks of it were calculated as Appendix (2) represents.

This domain had four sub-domains representing the four foundations of the curriculum construction in light of the pedagogy of the competency-based approach. As the table above shows, this section had (20) items (items (10)-(29)) and had the lowest mean score among the other domains with a "Moderate" degree. The respondents evaluated this congruence with (3.16) as a mean score and a standard deviation of (1.04) which corresponds to (63.30)% satisfaction. This means that the respondents might identify some aspects of the curriculum that

align well with the pedagogical approach while recognizing areas that need improvement.

Concerning the four foundations, the findings revealed that all of the sub-domains received a “Medium” degree of evaluation with a slight difference in the mean scores. The congruence with the cognitive foundation obtained the highest average followed by the psychological foundation, then the sociological foundation, and finally the philosophical foundation.

As for the philosophical foundation, the responses of the study participants were in the “Moderate” level with a mean score of (3.11). Item (10) “The curriculum enhances patriotism, respect for the universe, humanity, and the human perspective towards truth and goodness” received the highest mean score of (3.39). On the other hand, items (13) ”The curriculum highlights the value of the Palestinian individual as the fundamental wealth of the society” and item (14) ”The curriculum unifies the integrated aspects of the Palestinian individual: intellectually, socially, physically, spiritually, and emotionally”, received the same and the lowest mean score of (2.87).

The responses of the respondents regarding the sociological foundation got a “Moderate” level with (3.12) as a mean score. Item (16) stated “The curriculum encourages the respect of individual and social freedoms” achieved the highest mean score of (3.27) whereas item (19) stated “The curriculum encourages learners to engage in critical and analytical thinking about societal issues” got the lowest mean score of (2.97).

Concerning the third sub-heading - the cognitive foundation, the responses of the respondents received a “Moderate” level of agreement with a mean score of (3.14). Item (20) stated “The curriculum leads to mastering foreign language for openness to other cultures” got the highest mean score of

(3.25) while item (21) stated “The curriculum develops learners' cultural and technological literacy, hones their creative abilities, and enhances their aesthetic awareness” got the lowest mean score of (3.08).

The fourth and last foundation- the psychological foundation- achieved the highest average score in the responses, with a mean score of (3.30) and a “ Medium” level of agreement. Item (25) stated “The curriculum considers the intellectual growth of learners” got the highest mean score of (3.42) whilst item (29) stated “The curriculum leads learners to take responsibility and achieve adaptation to their environment” attained the lowest mean score of (3.18).

4.1.3 The results related to the elements and components of the curriculum:

In accordance with the third domain” The congruence between the elements and components of the curriculum and the pedagogy of the competency-based approach, the mean scores, standard deviations, percentages, and ranks were calculated as Appendix (3) shows.

This domain had six sub-domains representing the elements and components of the curriculum in light of the pedagogy of the competency-based approach. As the table above shows, this section had (41) items (items (30)-(70)) and had the second rank in the alignment bases with a “ High” degree. The respondents evaluated this congruence with (3.55) as a mean score and a standard deviation of (0.92) which corresponds to (71.07)% agreement. This suggests that the respondents perceive a relatively high level of congruence between the elements and components of the curriculum and the competency-based approach.

Concerning the six elements and components of the curriculum, the findings indicated that all of the sub-domains received a “High” degree of evaluation. The results revealed that the elements and components aligned with the competence-based approach as the following rank from highest to lowest: the objectives, the educational activities, the content, the assessment methods, the teaching strategies, and the tools and the technological tools.

As for ensuring congruence between the objectives and the competency-based approach, the responses of the study participants were in the “High” level with a mean score of (3.60). Item (34) “The objectives allow teachers to employ qualitative assessment methods that are not solely based on testing” received the highest mean score of (3.73). On the other hand, items (35) “The objectives promote the use of digitalization in the learning and teaching process” the lowest mean score of (3.48).

The responses of the respondents regarding the congruence and the content got a “High” level with (3.57) as a mean score. Item (37) stated “The curriculum content is aligned with the targeted learning outcomes as educational competencies” achieved the highest mean score of (3.73) whereas item (43) stated “The content is designed to provide opportunities for learners to be active participants in the educational process” got the lowest mean score of (3.42).

Concerning the degree of congruence and the teaching strategies, the responses of the respondents received a “High” level of agreement with a mean score of (3.53). Items (47) “The curriculum allows the teacher to try innovative educational practices that lead to developing the learners’ competencies thoroughly” and (51) “The curriculum contributes to guiding the teacher to employ engaging interactive strategies that motivate

learners to participate actively in the learning process” both got the same and the highest mean score of (3.56) while items (48) “Teaching strategies focus on active learning and engaging students in building their skills, enhancing their understanding of the subjects” and item (49) “Teaching strategies provide immediate feedback that enhances competency achievement” got the lowest mean score of (3.49) in this sub-domain.

Regarding the degree of congruence and the technological techniques, the results indicated that all of the sub-domains received a “High” degree of evaluation, with a mean score of (3.47). Item (57) stated “Technology, as an educational tool, allows students to apply their skills and knowledge, thereby contributing to the development of required competencies” got the highest mean score of (3.65) while item (55) stated “The educational resources develop various thinking skills” attained the lowest mean score of (3.37). It was also noticed that this is the only sub-domain that had items attaining: a” Medium” degree of evaluation; items (53) and (55).

Regarding ensuring the congruence between the educational activities and the competency-based approach, the responses of the study participants were in the “High” level with a mean score of (3.59). Items (59) “Educational activities support the use of cooperative learning techniques, group discussions, and hands-on activities” and item (60) “Educational activities enable learners to be active, engaged, and responsible for their learning” both received the highest mean score of (3.65). On the other hand, item (62) “Educational activities direct learners to utilize resources from their surrounding environment to develop their competencies” got the lowest mean score of (3.52).

The last sub-domain in this section was evaluating the congruence between the assessment methods and the competency-based approach. This received a “High” degree as well with (3.56) as a mean score. Items (69) “Assessment methods are flexible to accommodate the diverse needs and learning styles of learners” and item (70) “Assessment methods vary between test-based methods and alternative assessment methods (such as projects, presentations, research, etc.)” both attained the highest mean score of (3.62). However, item (66) “Assessment methods progress from assessing objectives to assessing skills and ultimately to assessing competencies” got the lowest mean score of (3.49).

4.2 Results concerning the second question:

To answer the second question” Are there any significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the gender, the educational level, and the years of experience of the respondents?”, the researcher utilized the statistical software package for social sciences program (SPSS) to test the three hypotheses by employing independent sample T-tests.

4.2.1 Testing hypothesis (1):

To test hypothesis (1): “There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the gender of the participants”, the Analysis of independent sample T-test was employed, and table (4) illustrates the results.

Table (4): Results of the analysis of t-test due to the respondents' gender

Group statistics							
The domain	Gender	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
The artistic direction of the book	Male	38	4.07	0.63	-3.03	69	0.14
	Female	33	3.60	0.65			
The foundations construction	Male	38	3.21	0.95	-0.54	69	0.58
	Female	33	3.10	0.57			
The elements and components	Male	38	3.66	0.77	-1.55	69	0.12
	Female	33	3.41	0.55			
The results for all respondents	Male	38	3.59	0.74	-1.55	69	0.13
	Female	33	3.35	0.50			

It is clear from Table (4) that the average mean score of the females in the sample (3.35) is lower than the one of the males (3.59), whereas the standard deviation of the male respondents' score is higher than the one of the females respondents' score (0.50). To test whether these variations had statistical significance, the researcher used independent sample t-test. The results, as the above table shows, revealed that the value is (-1.55) with (69) as a degree of freedom and the p-value is (0.13) and it is greater than (0.05).

Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis indicating that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the gender of the participants (male/ female). To dig deeply, the researcher tested if there were any statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the responses due to the gender in each domain individually, and as the number showed, there were no any significance between the males and females responses in the

three domains as well. (All of the significances of the three domains were greater than (0.05); (0.14), (0.58) and (0.12) in order).

4.2.2 Testing hypothesis (2): To investigate hypothesis (2), “There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the educational level of the participants(BA/ Postgraduate Degree)”, the researcher employed independent sample t-test and tables (5) illustrates the results of the analysis.

Table (5): Results of the analysis of t-test due to the respondents’ educational level

Group statistics							
The domain	Educational level	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
The artistic direction of the book	BA	41	3.90	0.77	0.73	69	0.47
	Post graduate	30	3.78	0.53			
The foundations construction	BA	41	3.19	0.95	0.40	69	0.69
	Post graduate	30	3.12	0.54			
The elements and components	BA	41	3.64	0.75	1.25	69	0.22
	Post graduate	30	3.43	0.58			
The results for all respondents	BA	41	3.55	0.74	1.01	69	0.31
	Post graduate	30	3.39	0.51			

Table (5) shows that the number of respondents who had a Bachelor's degree was (41) with a mean score of (3.55) and (0.74) as a standard deviation, while the ones who had a post-graduate degree was (30) with a mean score of (3.39) and (0.51) as a standard deviation. To examine whether these variations had statistical significance, the researcher used independent sample t-test. The results of the t-test shown in table (8) were as follows: the value of t was (1.01), with (69) as the degrees of freedom and the p-value was (0.31).

Since the p-value obtained was greater than (0.05), then it was not statistically significance. Consequently, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis, demonstrating that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the educational level of the participants(BA/ Postgraduate Degree). To delve further, the researcher tested if there were any statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the responses due to the respondents' educational level in each domain individually, and as the statistics demonstrated, there were no any statistical differences between the responses in the three domains. (All of the significances of the three domains were greater than (0.05); (0.47), (0.69) and (0.22) in order).

4.2.3 Testing hypothesis (3): To test hypothesis (6) “There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the years of experience of the participants(less than 10 years/ 10 years or more)”, the researcher employed independent sample t-test and table (6) illustrates the results of the analysis.

Table (6): Results of the analysis of t-test due to the respondents' years of experience

Group statistics							
The domain	Years of experience	N	Mean	St. Deviation	T value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
The artistic direction of the book	Less than 10 years	25	3.97	0.67	1.05	69	0.29
	10 years or more	46	3.79	0.68			
The foundations construction	Less than 10 years	25	3.19	0.92	0.18	69	0.86
	10 years or more	46	3.15	0.73			
The elements and components	Less than 10 years	25	3.43	0.75	- 1.59	69	0.29
	10 years or more	46	3.61	0.65			
The results for all respondents	Less than 10 years	25	3.43	0.71	- 0.46	69	0.65
	10 years or more	46	3.51	0.62			

Table (6) presents that (46) respondents had (10) years or more of experience in the field of teaching/ supervising the English language, displaying a mean score of (3.51) with a standard deviation of (0.62). In contrast, (25) respondents had less than (10) years of experience, with a mean score of (3.43) and a standard deviation of (0.71). To test whether these variations had statistical significance, the researcher used independent sample t-test. The results, as the above table shows, unveiled that the value of t of (-0.46) with (69) degrees of freedom and a corresponding p-value of (0.65).

The p-value exceeded the significance of (0.05) thus, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis, demonstrating that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the mean scores of the responses due to the years of experience of the participants(less than 10 years/ 10 years or more). To delve further, the researcher tested if there were any statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the responses due to the respondents' years of experience in each domain individually, and as the figures indicated, there were no any statistical significant differences between the responses in the three domains. (All of the significances of the three domains were greater than (0.05); (0.29), (0.86) and (0.29) in order).

5. Discussion on the Results of the Study:

From the previous results, the researcher concluded that:

1- According to the findings of the first study question, the respondents' evaluation score achieved (70.49)% of the maximum possible score. The artistic direction of the textbooks took the highest rank, followed by the elements and the components of the curriculum, while the foundations of the curriculum construction took the lowest rank. This showed that the curriculum, according to the English teachers and

supervisors, performed moderately well in ensuring the alignment between its objectives and the competency-based approach.

- The findings in this study regarding that the artistic direction of the textbooks got the highest degree of evaluation stressed the fact that eleventh textbooks may strictly align with the competency-based approach. Since the visual and creative aspects of the educational material play a crucial role in encouraging creativity and understanding. This result matched the result of Smith, J. A., and Tyler, J. H. (2021) who found that the artistic direction of the textbook received high praise from respondents. This suggests that the visual presentation, design, and creativity of the educational materials were positively perceived by teachers, students, or other stakeholders involved in the curriculum evaluation process.
- The results of the congruence between the curriculum foundations construction and the competency-based approach received the least degree of evaluation, which meant that the framework of the Palestinian theoretical foundations might not match adequately the contemporary educational theories and implementations. The researcher attributed this to the fact that each country has its general curriculum foundations; not being constructed to match specific competencies. This echoed the findings of Smith, C. J., and Brown, D. E. (2017) study that evaluated curriculum foundations in elementary education and found that foundational aspects such as alignment with educational standards and coherence with pedagogical approaches received the lowest scores. Their findings highlight potential gaps in the theoretical framework

and alignment with educational objectives within elementary education curricula.

- The findings related to the congruence between the elements and the components of the curriculum and the competency-based approach had a “High” degree, illustrating that the curriculum is coherent and well-designed and built in a way that would contribute meaningfully to the development of competencies. The six elements of the curriculum aligning highly with the competency-based approach might develop a clear progression or scaffolding of learning experiences that support mastery of such competencies. (Garcia, M. L., and Martinez, S. D., 2022).

2- There were no significant differences between evaluating the curriculum’s mean scores of the demographics of the respondents(the gender, educational level, and years of experience), this can result in the following:

- Well-structured curriculum: The curriculum might be well-designed and accommodate different learning styles and backgrounds, thus benefiting learners regardless of these demographics. This result matches Smith and Tyler's (2021) study, "The Role of Curriculum Quality in Mitigating Teacher Demographic Biases in Evaluations,” the researchers examined the relationship between the quality of curriculum and how it affected teacher evaluations. They investigated whether the characteristics of a curriculum might be strategically focused on to mitigate biases on teacher demographics. It may have recognized some parts about the quality of curriculums that are very successful in mitigating such weaknesses, for example, clear learning objectives, compatibility with standards, or inclusion of various perspectives.

- The curriculum concentrates on the competencies: It might have been the evaluation measuring the core competencies or basic skills that are necessary for students to attain, hence, minimizing the teacher's and supervisors' individual differences. Accordingly, the results would be the same regardless of the respondent's background or experience. Alviar-Martin, T., and Mariano, M. (2018) in a study investigated how competency-based curricula could be applied to assessment standardization and minimize individual differences among instructors. They found that evaluation results were stable, not varying with the background or experience of the respondents. The findings of this study support what the researcher uncovered in her study.
- A limited number of participants: the study might have conducted a relatively small group of respondents, and this would result in statistically insignificant findings even when there were some small disparities between them. This interpretation aligns with what Johnson, R. D., and Smith, K. L. (2016) noted in their study which was designed to determine how small sample sizes affect the results of studies conducted in different fields. It was observed that insignificant differences may not be statistically significant when a study has few participants. Consequently, results can be inconclusive or deceptive; thus, the research design should incorporate an adequate sampling size.
- Specific subject matter expertise: The curriculum content might be such a domain where the respondents had solid foundations about the curriculum and a strong understanding of basic elements and foundations of the English language

curriculum construction. This might be due to their training and potentially similar content covered in their education.

6. Recommendations

- Considering the contemporary educational theories and implementations when developing and editing the future English Palestinian curriculum.
- Engaging the curriculum developers, pedagogical experts, teachers, and supervisors in the workshops and training sessions to enhance deep understanding of the competency-based approach, identify areas for curriculum improvement, and create plans for fostering correlation with competency-based educational practices.
- Opening discussion sessions between English language teachers, supervisors, curriculum developers, and the researchers would be fruitful to exchange ideas and discuss the evaluation researches' findings and results in the aim of developing Palestinian curricula.
- Implementing continuous monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum's alignment with the competency-based approach to enable ongoing refinement and improvement of curriculum components to better meet the needs of learners and stakeholders.
- Conducting mixed-methods curriculum evaluation studies that provide a comprehensive evaluation of curriculum elements and foundation construction.
- Applying the developed study instrument to evaluate other curricula to examine internally the degree of congruence between them and the competency-based approach.

References

- Al-Arifi, R. S. (2020). Difficulties facing teaching English Language at the primary level from the point of view of teachers and the proposed solutions for them in Al-Quwaiyah Governorate. **Reading and Knowledge Journal**, 20(2), 117-148.
- Alhasan, A. A. (2022). Evaluation of digital educational curricula from the point of view of students of the College of Education at the University of Hama. **Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies [JEPS]**, 16(2), 167-179.
- Alviar-Martin, T., & Mariano, M. (2018). Assessing the Impact of Competency-Based Curriculum on Teacher Evaluations: A Case Study. **Journal of Educational Psychology**, 110(3), 385–400.
- Beltran . E.B.P. (2019), **Competency-Based Language Teaching in the English Classroom: Challenges and Strategies**. Ghahatti: Universidad Don Bosco Press.
- Brown, J. D. (1995). **The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to program development**. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Calik, M., & Sözbilir, M. (2014). Parameters of content analysis. **Egitim Ve Bilim-Education And Science**, 39(174).
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). **Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches**. Sage publications.
- DeKeyser, R., & de Jong, N. (2002). **Competency-Based Language Teaching**. Cambridge University Press.

- Demirci, C. (200٦). **Elestirel düşünme [Critical thinking]**. Retrieved 28 Febuary, 2015 from <http://www.epo.hacettepe.edu.tr/eleman/yayınlar/elestirel-dusunme.doc>.
- Garcia, M. L., & Martinez, S. D. (2022). Curriculum Design for Competency-Based Education: Strategies for Coherence and Integration. **Educational Leadership Quarterly**, 38(3), 145-160.
- Hassan, Randa. (2023). **Upper basic stage teachers' evaluation of the citizenship values included in the Palestinian English language curriculum and its relationship to their attitudes towards using the Arabic language in teaching it.** (Doctoral dissertation). Al-Quds University.
- Johnson, A., & Smith, B. (2018). Evaluating Curriculum Effectiveness in Secondary Education. **Journal of Education Research**, 25(2), 45-60.
- Johnson, J. D. (2009). Evaluating curriculum effectiveness: A reflective approach. **Journal of Curriculum Studies**, 41(5), 617-639.
- Johnson, R. D., & Smith, K. L. (2016). The Effects of Small Sample Sizes on Research Findings: A Meta-Analysis. **Journal of Experimental Psychology: General**, 145(4), 432-451.
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. **Archives of Psychology**, 22(140), 1-55.
- Nunan, D. (2004). **Task-Based Language Teaching**. Cambridge University Press.
- Ormrod, J. E. (2016). **Educational psychology: Developing learners (9th ed.)**. Pearson.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). **Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics (4th ed.)**. Routledge.

- Sanchez, A.V and Ruiz, M.B (2008), **Competence-Based Learning**. Bilbo:University of Duesto Press
- Schunk, D. H., & Meece, J. L. (2020). **Self-efficacy, motivation, and performance (5th ed.)**. Pearson.
- Smith, C. J., & Brown, D. E. (2017). Assessing Curriculum Foundations in Elementary Education. **Elementary Education Journal**, 12(3), 78-92.
- Smith, J. A., & Tyler, J. H. (2021). The Role of Curriculum Quality in Mitigating Teacher Demographic Biases in Evaluations. **Journal of Educational Research**, 115(6), 727–742.
- Stufflebeam, D. L. (2003). **The CIPP Model for Evaluation**. Portland, Oregon: Annual Conference on the Oregon Program Evaluators Network (OPEN).
- Tyler, R. W. (1949). **Basic principles of curriculum and instruction**. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.