

## Investigating the Twenty-First Century Skills Integration in the EFL Second Generation Textbooks

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### Abstract:

Algeria has made reforms on its educational programs in an attempt to meet the requirements of the globalised world. This study aimed to find out the 21st century skills encompassed in the Algerian middle school English textbooks. In addition, it tried to gain insights into the ways in which the existing skills were integrated there. Content analysis was employed to scrutinize the second generation fourth-year middle school textbook of English. The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning framework (P21) was selected as a checklist to evaluate the textbook in that perspective. The findings revealed unbalanced presence of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in the three sequences of the textbook. They also indicated that learning and innovation skills have a significant presence along with life and career skills. The textbook, however, fails to provide sufficient materials and topics for developing technological literacy skills.

**Keywords:** Globalization; Partnership for Twenty-First Century Learning; Technology Literacy; Textbook Evaluation; The Four Cs; Twenty-First century skills



### Introduction

In current times, individuals have raised a need for a set of competences that would enable them to deal with several real-life challenges and ensure their own, national and international progress in the current globalized world. These skills become to be known as the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. They have come out of the realization that relating the expectations and values of the knowledge society to the market requirements is power. As a consequence, several studies have been conducted to set a pedagogical approach that would “enable an individual to face the challenges of the 21st century world that is globally-active, digitally transforming, collaboratively moving forward,

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creatively progressing, seeking competent human-resource and quick in adopting changes”(21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: A Handbook, 2020).

An increasing number of countries across the globe have started to incorporate the new set of skills in their educational systems and prepare learners with the necessary equipment for better life and career, and Algeria is no exception in that regard. The Algerian Ministry of National Education initiated a new program known as the Second-Generation Program which brought about new textbooks. The reform is meant to bring improvements to the first-generation coursebooks to “improve children’s literacy to enable them to face the world today” (Tamrabet et al., 2019). Instead of putting more focus on content knowledge, materials in textbooks are supposed to incorporate activities that engage students in authentic tasks and problem-solving activities they will actually need in the future. In addition to this, Black (2009) asserts that tasks revolving around new technologies offer opportunities to develop both language proficiency and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

On the learners’ and the teachers’ side, textbooks provide major source to study the target language and as Richards (2001) reckons they will always remain central to all teaching contexts despite the technological advancement. Given its importance, evaluation remains the unique means to measure the value of its learning materials and the extent to which they are in line with the students’ needs. The present study stems from the vitality of applying the practice of textbook evaluation to investigate the role of Algerian EFL middle school textbooks, taking the case of *My Book of English Year Four*, in training students with the skills that suit the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The results of the research are expected to answer three questions:

- 1- Does education in Algeria comply with the globalized world requirements?
- 2- What are the 21st Century Skills included in the Algerian textbooks considering the case of *My Book of English Year Four*?
- 3- How are the 21st Century Skills represented in *My Book of English Year Four*?

## I. Literature Review

### 1. The Impact of Globalization on Education

Globalization can be defined as a structured international phenomenon which increases interdependence and interconnection among different parts of the world. It is also known as the process of international integration evolving from the enormous interchange of products, visions, ideas, cultural aspects,

etc. of various nations. It has had a significant impact on all life domains including education.

Globalization has two main aspects: advances in communications and technologies on one hand and increasing international physical or online interactions on the other. It has compelled individuals to adopt new skills in order to integrate in the present world. Therefore, it has initiated opportunities for new partnerships in research, economies and education with organizations and institutions across the world. It has created modern demands and exigencies such as unprecedented jobs. It has resulted in an accelerated change and brought new concepts and perspectives.

Sir Ken Robinson claims that “The more complex the world becomes, the more creative we need to be to meet its challenges” and this is becoming increasingly clear in education and the workplace (Driscoll, 2017). The new generations have grown up in an absolutely unique amount of information, communications and advanced technology to the extent that they become to be called digital natives. Their intuitive skills using internet, applications and portable devices everywhere and anywhere has transformed them into independent active individuals. The great telecommunication tools and the increasing intercultural interactions provide immense opportunities to travel and interact, creating a truly borderless prospects of learning. So, the national educational frameworks have to be adapted to this situation. Some school subjects like English have been internationalized along with the modern key educational competencies known as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. These requirements become essential for students’ success in a constantly changing world.

## 2. Teaching and Evaluating 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

The education discourse has shifted towards a concern regarding national and global citizenship and how one can function effectively in this modern world. This discussion, however, was not limited to business leaders, academic circles or worldwide organizations, but is starting to be addressed at the level of educational systems in various countries. To keep up with this dynamicity, a set of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills have been introduced to cope with the new needs of professional, social and personal life. In other words, learners are not only interested to have a full mastery of different language skills, but are also keen to exhibit skills such as digital skills, critical thinking, collaboration and leadership which prepares them for the workforce. Responsive to this shift, educational systems virtually everywhere are in the quest of finding the best practices to prepare young learners at schools to meet the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Educational authorities, therefore,

should proactively work to integrate these skills at different levels including curricula, materials, instruction and assessment.

To start with, it is misleading to assume that the “21<sup>st</sup> century skills” is a novel concept that occurred only recently. In the words of Silva (2009), the former skills are not new but are “newly important” (p.631). Philosophers and educationalists from ancient times have always stressed the importance of skills such as critical thinking and problem solving as abilities that are necessary for quality education. Silva (2009) stated that the skills of creativity and critical and analytical thinking have been regarded of a great value by many philosophers and educators, from Socrates in the 5th century BCE, to John Dewey in the twentieth century. Historically, these skills can be traced in the different trends and methodologies that occurred in ELT. Some of the well-known methods include Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Content-based Instruction (CBI) and Task-based Instruction (TBI) have emphasized the importance of communication, interaction, learner-centeredness and autonomy. The emergent demands of the new economy and technology, however, brought the 21<sup>st</sup> skills to the fore again as they become necessary in this time more than any time.

Despite the consensus among the observers, critics and analysts on the need for new learning forms to deal with global challenges, there is no unique approach to ‘21st Century Skills’. Many employers, policy makers, teaching unions, and education institutions and experts have introduced a wide range of definitions to the 21st Century skills. Voogt (2008) argued that the 21<sup>st</sup> century education has to comply with the policy makers’ claims attached to lifelong learning competences. She focused on the need for pedagogical approaches encompassing various learning activities, promoting collaborative work, focusing on problem solving, providing the learners with opportunities to learn at their own pace, and involving them into the assessment process. She called for pedagogical approaches balancing the industrial demands on one hand and the knowledge or information needs on the other. According to Voogt and Roblin (2010), the 21st century skills or competences relate to the comprehensive concept for the knowledge, expertise and dispositions needed by citizens to be able to contribute to the knowledge society. For Binkley et al. (2011), the 21st Century Skills are the taught or learned abilities and attributes serving to develop the thinking, learning, working and living ways in the world. They identified the following skills: creativity and innovation, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, learning to learn, metacognition, communication, teamwork or collaboration, information

literacy, ICT literacy, local and global citizenship, life and career skills, and social and cultural awareness.

Over the recent years, different frameworks have emerged in order to outline and analyze the components needed to address the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges. One of the first frameworks was the Delors Report (1996) initiated by the UNESCO. It outlined four principles: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. This framework could not account for the faster changes, so it gave way to more elaborate frameworks. Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (P21), Assessment and Teaching of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (ATCS), National Educational Technology Standards (NETS) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are examples of how certain research projects and business consortia collaborated to identify the skills and competences needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

It can be stated that most frameworks recognize the importance of three broad set of skills: Learning skills which are vital for the acquisition of knowledge, life skills which are required to lead day-to-day life successfully and technological literacy which can be considered the core of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Care et al. (2017) clarify that: “there are more differences across ways of framing these [the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills] than there are in identifying the actual skills themselves” (p. 4). In other words, some frameworks refer to high-level concepts whereas others outline a detailed identification of skills. Some researchers have analyzed a wide array of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills frameworks in order to clarify the similarities and differences between them. In his article “Evolution of the framework for 21st century competencies”, Salas-Pilco (2013) found that the frequently mentioned skills were communication and collaboration, followed by citizenship and social responsibility, information and research skills with the inclusion of digital literacies.

All the frameworks provide a useful guideline to both teach and assess the presence of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, yet this paper is interested in the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (P21) framework. The reason behind this lies in the fact that this framework is the most detailed, its popularity in literature as well as being the most widely used (Dede, 2009). It provides a comprehensive description of the needed content knowledge, specific skills, expertise as well as literacies for success in today’s world.

### 3. Textbook Evaluation

Despite the technological advancement which allows for a better quality of teaching materials, textbooks continue to be in the words of Sheldon (1988) “the visible heart of any ELT program” (p.237). It goes beyond doubt

that textbooks offer valuable advantages, for they equip learners with the linguistic input, various skills and cultural information required to communicate effectively in the target language. It is no wonder that teachers still heavily rely on them as main source in language classes. It is, therefore, the responsibility of researchers and academicians to scrutinize and evaluate their content from time to time since the learning experience of large groups of students is directly influenced by books. Textbook evaluation addresses the strengths and limitations of the materials at hand to examine the extent to which the book content and the needs of the learners are aligned to finally take informed decisions about improvements.

In the light of the new developments in the educational scene, English textbooks play a key role in promoting the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Incorporating such skills would help student overcome the overwhelming challenges of this era. Along with fostering the linguistic skills of the learners, textbook activities should pay more attention to real-world problems. Life skills such as flexibility, adaptability and being responsible enable learners to navigate the complex life and work environment in this globally competitive age. Textbooks should also effectively address what is known as the 4 Cs. (Critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity). The world now demands students who are able to manage the deluge of information coming from different sources, work collaboratively with people they never met before and make decisions. Furthermore, activities in coursebooks should provide opportunities to learn through information and communication technologies, for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is synonymous to learning with digital technology (Noss, 2012). As digital technology and the internet are increasingly becoming an inseparable component in everyone's life, digital literacy is key to establish one's presence in the new world.

#### **4. Textbook Evaluation According to P21 Framework**

P21 Framework has been among the proposed plans engendering the outlined competencies needed to address the twenty-first century challenges. It comprises four main components:

- 1- Life and career skills depict competences which are necessary for everyday life including flexibility, productivity, leadership and responsibility.
  - a. Flexibility and adaptability refer to an individual's ability to successfully adjust his/ her behavior to find solutions to an unprecedented problem situation.
  - b. Productivity and accountability refer to the skill of achieving any task bearing the whole responsibility.

- c. Leadership and responsibility skill involve being an effective group manager with a great awareness of the basic duties and rights.
  - d. Social and cross-cultural skills require the capability of effective adapting to various social and cultural environments.
  - e. Initiative and self-direction skills mean the readiness to independently launch a task and to be able to motivate oneself.
- 2- Learning and innovation skills consist of four sub-skills named the 4Cs:
- a. Critical thinking and problem solving involves using effective reasoning to objectively analyze the information, evidence and arguments of the new challenges then coming to the right solutions. Schafersman (1991) states that “critical thinking means correct thinking in the pursuit of relevant and reliable knowledge about the world” (p.3)
  - b. Creativity and innovation refer to the ability to consider or act in new and unique ways regarding the faced situation.
  - c. Communication implies the oral, written and non-verbal expression of one’s opinions, aspirations, needs, uncertainties etc during the interaction with others. It requires mutual understanding and generation of meaning between participants.
  - d. Collaboration requires an effective engagement in a collective work to achieve, appreciating the value of each group member’s contribution and creating a mutual respect atmosphere.
- 3- Information, media and technology skills necessitate the person’s capability to access to information, media and technology, understand and evaluate different sources of data and content as a means to be ready to critically question anything he watches, reads or listens to rather than consuming them blindly.
- 4- 21st Century Themes:
- a. Global awareness demands the use of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills to understand, learn from people belonging to diverse cultures, countries, religions etc, and act collaboratively and respectfully with them.
  - b. Financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy involves the ability of making appropriate economic choices, employing entrepreneurial skills and recognizing the role of the economy in society to be ready for better career options and productivity.



- c. Civic Literacy means an effective participation in civic life through knowing how to stay informed about governmental systems, practices and policies. In addition, it needs an effective understanding of an individuals' position as citizens at local, national and international levels and the importance of their civic exercise of their rights and duties.
- d. Health Literacy implies obtaining, interpreting and understanding basic health information, services and preventive measures at local, national and international level to educate the learners to make appropriate health-related decisions and take the adequate safety measures.
- e. Environmental Literacy necessitates understanding issues related to air, climate, land, energy, water and ecosystems and the factors affecting them including people's activities impact on the nature (e.g. population growth, pollution, resources consumption rate, etc.). This knowledge is necessary to appropriately address the raising challenges and problems and reach the adequate solutions

## II. Methodology

This study employed content analysis to evaluate the level of compliance of the Algerian middle school English textbooks to the 21<sup>st</sup> century necessities. It investigated the existence of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in the research subject *My Book of English Year Four*, one of the so-called "second generation" coursebooks that were introduced by the Algerian Ministry of National Education as an update and a reform to earlier coursebooks in 2016-2017. The purpose of the study is to check the distribution of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills across the different components of the textbook including texts, pictures, tasks and instructions. For this reason, the P21 framework was selected as a checklist to provide a detailed description of the existent skills in the book.

### 1. Research Design

Cohen et al. (2007) state that research population "refers not only to people, but also, and mainly, to text– the domains of the analysis. For example, is it to be newspapers, programmes, interview transcripts, textbook" (p.477). In other words, population in text analysis does not exclusively encompass the people involved in the production or consumption of the text, but also to text itself as a key component of analysis.

Content analysis was adopted in this paper as a research method. It was employed to identify the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills encompassed within each sequence rubrics. In addition, it combined both qualitative and quantitative



approaches. The former extracted the underlying patterns and themes in the fourth year textbook following the model presented by P21 framework while the latter counted those criteria and represented them in numerical data.

The textbook appears to tackle some strategies aiming at shaping the ways learners think, communicate, cooperate and interact with other people in the today's interconnected world. However, an in-depth analysis is required to determine the extent to which this assumption is true. To that end, the research type was exploratory in nature. It investigated the existence of the determined criteria and features in the selected textbook according to P21 framework along with assessing its strengths, deficiencies and prospects for improvement.

## 2. Research Instruments

It goes without question that the best quality of a content analysis blends both quantitative and qualitative methods (Webber, 1990). *My Book of English Year Four* was, therefore, analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative content analysis seeks to quantify the extent to which the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are present in terms of projects, texts, photos, task content and instructions across the book summarizing and displaying the frequency counts and percentages in the form of tables. The qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, reveals how the book content promotes the various skills in the P21 framework. A qualitative description, then, accompanies the tables to interpret the quantitative data and evaluate the quality of their presentation in the coursebook content.

## 3. Data collection and Analysis

Content analysis of the mentioned textbook involved systematic examination of its content to identify any patterns and themes of significance to the research questions or topic of inquiry. First, the textbook was selected as the main unit of analysis to see whether the intended reforms of the second generation programs were implemented. Second, research questions were determined to tackle the existence of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in the components of the fourth year middle school textbook. Next, data were collected through taking notes while reading, considering and analysing every detail in the primary subject of inquiry. Tables were employed to record the frequency of appearance of each 21<sup>st</sup> century skill in each sequence rubric. Hence, three tables presented this study's results section. Further, a set of some skills examples were introduced along with description and analysis.

### III. Results

#### 1. Demonstration of 21st Century Skills in Sequence 1: Me, Universal Landmarks and Outstanding Figures in History, Literature and Arts

Based on the analysis of Sequence 1, it was found that all the 21<sup>st</sup> Skills were included in its sections with remarkable differences in the level of their frequency, with very little or no reference to the interdisciplinary themes as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Frequency and Percentages of the 21st Century Skills in Sequence 1*

21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills	Learning and Innovation Skills				Information, Media and Technology Skills			Life and Career Skills					21 <sup>st</sup> Century Themes			
Sub-skills	Creativity and Innovation	Critical thinking and problem solving	Communication	Collaboration	Information Literacy	Media Literacy	ICT Literacy	Flexibility and adaptability	Initiative and Self-direction	Social and Cross-cultural Skills	Productivity and Accountability	Leadership and Responsibility	Global awareness	Financial Literacy	Health Literacy	Environmental Literacy
Frequency	12	50	127	35	89	22	5	7	15	33	10	14	44	4	0	0
Percentage	3%	11%	27%	7%	19%	5%	1%	1%	3%	7%	2%	3%	9%	1%	0%	0%
Total	48%				25%			17%					10%			

Coming in the first rank were Learning and Innovation Skills with a percentage of 48% dominated by communication skills (with 27%), followed by Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving skills represented with 11%. Only 7 % of the first sequence content encouraged students' cooperation and team work. The least integrated skill in this category was Creativity and Innovation with 3%. In the second position of all categories came the information, media and technology skills with a percentage of 25%, firstly including information literacy with a ratio of 19%, followed by media literacy with a proportion of 5%, then the ICTs fell in the last position with only 1%. The third represented skills were those related to Life and career skills taking 17%. The sub-skills associated with it found with very little proportions in this sequence, led by social and cultural skills (7%). Immediately after them, initiative and self-direction appeared with approximately the same percentage as leadership and

responsibility (3%). Productivity and accountability were depicted with 2%. Flexibility and adaptability competences were scarcely noticed with any more than 1%. The interdisciplinary themes were merely ignored in sequence one (10%), except for global awareness which was illustrated with a proportion of 9%. There was very little reference for financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy (1%). Meanwhile, health and environmental literacies were totally absent in this part of the textbook.

## **2. Presence and Presentation of 21st Century Skills in Sequence 2: Me, My Personality and Life Experiences**

Table 2 below shows that all the 21<sup>st</sup> Skills were included in Sequence 2 with different frequencies, with reference to only one interdisciplinary theme. Like Sequence one, Learning and Innovation Skills came in the first place with a percentage of 48% dominated by communication (33%), and Collaboration skills (29%). 24 % of the second sequence content was devoted to critical thinking and problem solving. The least integrated skill in this category was Creativity and Innovation (13%). In the second rank came the category of Life and career skills (26%). The sub-skills related to them were initiative and self-direction (42%). After them, flexibility and adaptability appeared with a rate of (23 %). Social and cross-cultural Skills, Leadership and responsibility and Productivity and Accountability were barely noticed with nearly the same percentage (14%, 11%, 8%). The third represented skills were those of information, media and technology skills with a percentage of 20%; including media literacy (58%), followed by information literacy with a proportion of (29%), then the ICTs held the last position with only (12%). The interdisciplinary themes were merely ignored in sequence two, except for global awareness.

Table 2

### *Frequency and Percentages of the 21st Century Skills in Sequence 2*

21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills	Learning and innovation skills				Information, media and technology skills			Life and career skills					21 <sup>st</sup> Century Themes			
Sub-skills	Creativity and Innovation	Critical thinking and problem solving	Communication	Collaboration	Information Literacy	Media Literacy	ICT Literacy	Flexibility and adaptability	Initiative and Self-direction	Social and Cross-cultural skills	Productivity and Accountability	Leadership and Responsibility	Global awareness	Financial Literacy	Health Literacy	Environmental Literacy
Frequency	23	42	57	50	22	44	9	21	38	13	8	10	23	0	0	0
Percentage	13%	24%	33%	29%	29%	58%	12%	23%	42%	14%	8%	11%	100%	0%	0%	0%
Total	48%				20%			26%					6%			

### 3. Presence and Presentation of 21st Century Skills in Sequence 3: Me, My Community and Citizenship

The analysis of the current sequence of *My Book of English Year Four* demonstrates a higher frequency of the learning and innovation skills (41%) compared to life and career skills (31%), the interdisciplinary themes (17%) and then information, media and technology skills (11%). The integration of the sub-skills is characterized by total absence of health and environmental literacies, near exclusion of Flexibility and adaptability skills, ICTs and financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy all of which appear with a percentage of 1%. Initiative and self-direction, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility are no exception through a very small reference with a percentage of only 2% and 3%. Some importance is given to media literacy (5%) collaboration skill (7%) and global awareness (9%). A remarkable focus is put on information literacy (19%) and critical thinking and problem solving (11%). As in sequence 1, communication skill takes the lion's share with a percentage of (27%).

Table 3

*Frequency and Percentages of the 21st Century Skills in Sequence 3*

21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills	Learning and innovation skills				Information, media and technology skills			Life and career skills					21 <sup>st</sup> Century Themes			
Sub-skills	Creativity and Innovation	Critical thinking and problem solving	Communication	Collaboration	Information Literacy	Media Literacy	ICT Literacy	Flexibility and adaptability	Initiative and Self-direction	Social and Cross-cultural Skills	Productivity and Accountability	Leadership and Responsibility	Global awareness	Financial Literacy	Health Literacy	Environmental Literacy
Frequency	26	63	138	49	45	24	7	15	34	76	29	52	95	8	7	5
Percentage	9%	22%	50%	17%	59%	31%	9%	7%	16%	36%	14%	25%	82%	6%	6%	4%
Total	41%				11%			31%					17%			

#### IV. Discussion

The findings of the analysis and evaluation of the textbook *My Book of English Year Four* reveal that it integrates all 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills listed in P21 in its components and rubrics with different degrees of emphasis. It has indeed responded to the necessities of the globalized world through integrating the learning and innovative skills and the life and career skills. By doing so, it has linked the learners' present school needs to their desired future career expectations. Global values and universal concepts of foreign language learning, humanity issues, volunteering, travelling, and friendship have also been included. Socio-cultural skills are embodied in human experiences and are highlighted through the effect of close people and relatives on others' lives such as mother-daughter, teacher-learner, the ability to perceive human differences and respect other people who belong to different cultures.

The analysis also demonstrated some deficiencies. The first of which is the lack of a real equilibrium in the distribution of skills over the rubrics. Some skills are more concentrated in some rubrics than others. For instance, critical thinking is tightly related to the rubric "I Practise" whereas a little collaboration is found in reading tasks.

Although the communication skill is largely highlighted, it does not always encourage free expression and fluency of ideas. In fact, the majority of the

communicative tasks is guided and is a mere information transfer without any remarkable challenge for students' abilities. Concerning the productive tasks such as writing an e-mail, coursebook designers raise the learners' awareness of the format of an e-mail being away from the authentic situation of naturally communicating with English native speakers.

A number of tasks involving discussion in fact do not worth the effort of inclusion. They require no need to discuss and negotiate with others to obtain the right options and exact answers. That is, discussion is normally involving issues about agreement and disagreement, convincing others about their viewpoints, explaining their ideas... not to discuss whether an answer is correct or not in the meantime the answers are already there. Pupils only listen and find them without any great effort or real inquiry to deduce them.

Although the textbook provides tasks and content quite relevant to the level of learners' cognitive and proficiency level, some activities which are supposed to develop critical thinking such as making comparisons, do not prompt any reasoning or remarkable cognitive efforts on the part of the learners, but only a good communicative listening skill to get the information and copy it down on the copybook or convey it to the class.

There is a very little reference to ICTs (Google, websites, facebook, email). Moreover, some tasks are not authentic. Taking the example "I learn to Integrate" sequence 1, the task involves learners to post a report on Facebook and in the meantime, it ends with "Now, I can write my report on my copybook". That is, no ICTs real implementation will be integrated in this case.

"Check your answer with your partner" is the most dominant cooperation task in this textbook. However, though it is intended for encouraging collective work, there is no evidence that learners are going to use English to negotiate the right answers or options. In addition, even if the process takes place as it has been planned, it demands high English proficiency level.

#### **V. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The need for 21st Century Skills at the global level is imposed by societies needs changes as a result of technological progress, globalization and the shift in economies from being industrial social to become information and knowledge-based social ones (Voogt& Roblin, 2010). They empower individuals to communicate across cultures and borders, to critically assess, acquire and apply knowledge, to think independently to make appropriate judgments and to collaborate with others efficiently to tackle the new situations. They enhance young people's ability to integrate into the future global market, changes and uncertainties. It is, of course, not realistic to

expect schools and education institutions alone to cultivate all these attributes in children and young people, but considering the major role that they play during these formative years of life, they cannot be ignored. Hence, it is important that Algerian education practitioners and policy makers are ready to rethink the educational system and make the necessary reforms in the curricula, notably the textbooks.

The analysis of My Book of English Year Four shows that it complies with the necessities and requirements of the current globalized world through the integration of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and the main interdisciplinary themes necessary for developing a globally aware citizen. However, their integration is not balanced. The main emphasis is put on the learning and innovation skills and life and career skills at the expense of media, information and technology skills and interdisciplinary themes. In addition, this textbook has failed to give the deserved significance and power of the ICTs as 21<sup>st</sup> Century vital equipment.

Textbooks need to be all about empowering learners with convenient skills that will conform to a fast-changing world, not to limit their development to the prescribed content, but rather to the effective ways and strategies to critically obtain the information and appropriately implement it.

Bringing the educational institutions into the 21st century entails looking for new ways of actively doing things and building tight contact with their outside world. Teachers have to adopt only specific textbook content that works at engaging learners into the learning process and making them assume the responsibility of their progress. Policy makers and education practitioners should also set the relation between textbooks and the digital world. So, they should adapt them in a way that brings students toward a world of greater interconnectedness through transition to online learning modalities such as implementing blended learning and flipped classroom model.

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