

The Level Of Soft Skills Inclusion In The 6th Grade English Textbooks

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the level of soft skills inclusion in the sixth-grade English textbooks.

The Study adopted the descriptive method. To achieve the objective of the study a content analysis was used, of the English textbooks (We Can 5-6, In 2023 renamed We Can 3), for the academic year 1444. The tools used for collecting data, prepared by the researchers, were a content analysis card of the soft skills that should be included in the sixth-grade English textbooks, and an exploratory questionnaire which was distributed to 261 Saudi Arabia's 6th-grade English teachers. The main tool was a list of soft skills that should be included in the sixth-grade English textbooks, after verifying the tool's validity and reliability, it was converted to a content analysis card and was statistically analyzed by extracting the frequencies and percentages.

The study found the following results: (1) Determining a list of soft skills that should be included in the content of the English language textbooks for the 6th grade. It consisted of 3 main areas of skills, 7 related subskills, and 30 indicators. (2) The number of subskills that were included in the content of We Can 3 textbooks reached 899 skills, of which 346 were related to the field of personal skills, 220 were related to the field of social skills, and 333 were related to the field of cognitive skills. (3) The personal skills were the highest included in the content of the activities of the We Can 3 textbooks with a percentage of 38%, followed by cognitive skills with a percentage of 37%, and finally, social skills with a percentage of 24%. (4) Personal skills were included in We Can 3 textbooks with 346 indicators and a percentage of 38%, followed by cognitive skills with 333 indicators and a percentage of 37%, and finally, social skills, with 220 indicators and 24% percentage. (5) Based on an exploratory questionnaire given to Saudi English teachers by the researchers, it is evident that the sixth-grade English textbooks have a low rate of soft skills.

Keywords: soft skills, personal skills, cognitive skills, social skills, content analysis.

Introduction:

Textbooks are the pillars on which the construction of knowledge is built in the educational system. They function as teaching tools, reliable sources of information, and stimuli for critical thinking. There is a complex relationship between textbooks and skill development, ultimately adding to the material of educational knowledge that is always developing.

Textbooks provide a structured and consistent approach to teaching and learning, which helps students develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter. The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2020 states that "Textbooks remain the most

widely used medium for delivering education content in schools around the world" (UNESCO, 2020). Textbooks are a vital tool for ensuring that all students have access to the same information and knowledge, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

As this study is about English textbooks A study by Akbari and Behzadpoor (2020) investigated the impact of English textbooks on language learners' motivation and achievement. The researchers found that well-designed and engaging textbooks positively influenced learners' motivation and ultimately led to improved language learning outcomes.

Al-Seghayer (2020) believes that English began to be taught in Saudi Arabia in 1928, five years after the Directorate of Education was established in 1923. In 2003 it was introduced to the 6th grade. Later in 2012, it was taught starting from the 4th grade, and in 2022 it was introduced to the first grade. It was decided to start teaching English from an early stage because children are less likely than adults to have negative attitudes toward a foreign language or culture. Furthermore, they are less inhibited and thus less afraid to make mistakes. As a result, they are generally more active, which is a trait conducive to language learning success. Gawi (2012) compared young students' performance (level-4 elementary school) with older students' performance (level-3 intermediate school) to determine whether there is a significant difference in EFL achievement between younger starters (aged five or six) and somewhat older learners receiving their first exposure to the L2 at around the age of 12. The study's findings supported the widely held understanding that younger starters generally achieve better fluency and a more advanced lexical competence. The study's author encouraged the MOE to introduce EFL classes at an earlier age. This shows clearly that younger learners are more capable of learning new languages or even new skills.

According to Khamis (2013), soft skills are personal skills that enable learners to deal positively, express their thoughts, demonstrate leadership, and achieve positive communication and interaction with others. As shown by Rao's (2014) study, soft skills are an essential and crucial part of life skills that bring success to learners because they are highly related to an individual's behaviors and actions. El Abdalla's study (2015) indicates that soft skills teach learners initiative, flexibility, social interaction, leadership, and the ability to deal with adversity.

Soft skills are vital since they are linked to an individual's personality and the growth of his performance in society. In order to communicate and engage with those around him, he requires specific skills. Academic institutions have expanded their thinking beyond the technical skills needed in the workplace to include new

"Soft Skills" relating to social behavior. The examiner in these skills quickly discovers that they are one of the most important values that regulate the individual's relationship with others, strengthening the notions of integration, collaboration, and interdependence, such as kindness, trust, love, transparency, and acceptance with another.

The region has seen numerous improvements and reforms in education, such as increased preschool coverage, enhanced access to formal education, and higher completion rates across various educational levels. Furthermore, increased access to education has not led to significant learning achievements that effectively address the ongoing economic and social inequality issues affecting countries.

To overcome these challenges, it is essential to emphasize incorporating skills (fundamental, soft, digital, and job-specific) into regulatory frameworks and public education policies while enhancing efforts to measure these skills. This necessitates promoting curriculum reforms, training educators, implementing innovative teaching methods, and ensuring the availability of required human and financial resources.

Integrating soft skills as early as pre-primary education and extending them into secondary and post-secondary education will guarantee well-rounded development and improved learning outcomes, support young people's employability during the transition from school to work, bolster economic growth, and foster equal and just societies.

Based on the findings mentioned above, the current study arose from an attempt to present a proposed analysis based on the level of soft skills inclusion in the 6th-grade English textbooks to contribute to this field that requires research and study.

Statement of the Problem

Based on the previous and in response to MOE development projects (Tatweer, 2015), it is clear that there is a need to investigate the content of the textbooks, including English textbooks for the 6th grade in Saudi Arabia, to determine the level

to which they include soft skills; since there have been no studies of such coherence.

From the experience of the second researcher as a primary school teacher for more than 12 years and according to the active learning card (MOE, 1439) and the supervisors' evaluation card (Onaizah Educational Department, 2018), they all require teachers to incorporate problem-solving and creative thinking into their lessons, because these skills are not primarily available in the textbooks. One of the current study's goals is to serve as a road map for these activities to which teachers might refer.

Based on an exploratory questionnaire given to Saudi English teachers by the researchers, it is evident that sixth-grade English textbooks lack soft skills.

Questions of the Study:

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1- What were the soft skills that should be included in the 6th-grade English textbooks in Saudi Arabia?
- 2- What level are the soft skills included in the 6th-grade English textbooks in Saudi Arabia?

Purpose of the Study:

The Study aimed at:

1. Building a list of soft skills that should be included in the 6th-grade English textbooks in Saudi Arabia.
2. Identifying to what level are the soft skills included in the 6th-grade English textbooks in Saudi Arabia.

Significance of the Study:

The significance of the proposal from the researcher's point of view can benefit the following:

Curriculum developers and designers:

This research could assist them in defining soft skills and incorporating them into exercises and activities that will enable learners to acquire them.

Supervisors:

Prepare a program that explains to teachers the principles and foundations of education according to soft skills to guide them in their teaching.

Teachers:

This research may make teachers aware of the soft skills that young learners require. This allows teachers to guide and train learners in these skills as well as present these skills in an original, progressive, and related form.

It may assist teachers in treating some of the problems that learners face. Moreover, it may assist teachers in creating a soft skills exam to determine how well learners perform in this area.

Researchers:

The findings of this proposal may pave the way for future studies on the subject.

Society:

This research may help meet the community's need for individuals equipped with the soft skills required to contribute to society. These individuals are the core of every family and society, and the job market depends on them to achieve the 2030 vision goals.

Delimitation of the Study

The proposal was applied to the 6th-grade English textbook 1444 (We Can 5-6).

Definition of Terms

Soft skills: According to Boyce et al, "Soft skills are the range of general education skills that are not domain- or practice-specific, which include communication and interpersonal skills, problem solving skills, conceptual/analytical and critical skills, visual, aural and oral skills, judgement and synthesis skills." (UKEssays, 2018)

The researchers define soft skills as the skills which are essential to personal life and profession, such as communication, teamwork, leadership, time management, decision-making, positive attitude, adaptability, positivity, motivation, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and interpersonal skills.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS STUDIES:

This study's theoretical framework cover tow perspective: The first perspective focuses on the English language in Saudi Arabia's elementary stage in terms of the development of children at this level, the curriculum's goals, the English Language Development Project, and the books recommended for study under the "We Can" series. The second perspective focuses on soft skills in terms of their classification, definition, and value.

TEACHING ENGLISH AT THE ELEMENTARY STAGE IN SAUDI ARABIA:

MOE began implementing EFL in the upper classes of the elementary stage in 2003 and later in grade four in 2012. It was first introduced to first-grade students in 2022 .

MOE has approved the application of the English language to students in the first grade to meet the requirements of the stage, enhance the skills of the 21st century, meet the requirements of the 4th Industrial Revolution, and prepare for the labor market that requires proficiency in English; especially with the opening of the Kingdom's labor market, numerous opportunities, and entry into many global sectors that require qualified native English speakers (MOE, 2021) .

Numerous studies have shown that children are more proficient than adults over the long term, though many focus exclusively on oral proficiency. A study by Abdan (1991) indicated that pupils who started studying English in kindergarten and the first grade were more proficient than those who started in the fifth grade. The same researcher also discovered that kindergarten students who started learning English performed even better than those who started in first grade. The study's findings support that learning English at an earlier stage is associated with higher proficiency.

General Goals of Teaching the English Language for the Elementary Stage:

By the end of the elementary stage and within the assigned structures and vocabulary for this stage (MOE, 1424), pupils should be able to:

1. Learn the basics of the English language that would form the foundation for its mastery in the future.
2. Use the fundamental structures of English sentences.
3. Learn the core vocabulary assigned for this stage.
4. Listen and understand the simple English language.
5. Express themselves orally using the simple English language.
6. Read and understand simple written English language materials.
7. Write simple guided sentences in the English language.
8. Appreciate the importance of the English language as an international language of communication for introducing Islam, the Islamic nation's culture, and the cultural achievements of Muslims to other nations.
9. Appreciate the importance of the English language as an international language of communication to benefit from the achievements of other cultures in accordance with Islam.

Elementary students' characteristics :

The cognitive, social, and emotional development of these early learners is significant, according to new study. Piaget observed (as quoted in Woolfolk, 2021) that elementary school students are in the concrete operational stage, displaying increased logical reasoning and problem-solving skills.

Primary school students exhibit the following traits because they are in their late childhood:

- 1 .Students' memory is improving steadily in terms of their capacity to take in information, comprehend concepts, work out difficulties, and recognize connections among things.
- 2 .They have a strong sense of self-centeredness, start practicing giving and taking, and have a sense of belonging to a group, such as brothers or colleagues.

3 .They tend to be concerned about the outside world and well-informed about local events (Saadeh, Ibrahim, 2014).

The traits mentioned above highlight how crucial it is to instill values in students at this age because their psychological makeup is fully prepared to accept any advice, behaviors, and ethical standards given to them, whether explicitly or implicitly, through various educational materials.

Soft Skills

The Concept of Soft Skills

Khamis (2013) defined it as "the totality of personality traits related to the field of communication with others in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere, as well as the ability to express oneself, communicate, and present attractive ideas."

Rao (2013) defined it as "life skills that relate to an individual's presentation, behavior, and behavior toward others."

As a result, soft skills might be viewed as one of the fundamental life skills that complete hard skills. This can help improve children's abilities to deal with and communicate their ideas, adopt argumentative and tactful leadership behaviors, and successfully communicate, all contributing to success and psychological and social compatibility.

Importance of Soft Skills for Childrens:

Many academics agree that teaching soft skills to young learners is important and necessary. By examining some relevant research (Mohammad 2019, Rao 2014, Edwards 2013, Schulz 2008, Tikhonova et al. 2018), the current study was able to determine the value of soft skills for young learners in the following ways:

- 1- Allowing children to communicate effectively with others around them .
- 2- Assisting children in achieving psychological and social adaptation .
- 3- Children are taught how to present themselves persuasively to others .
- 4- Teaching children how to think critically and apply critical thinking skills.

Soft Skills Classification:

All skills can be classified into soft and hard skills. Soft skills are a subset of all skills" (Kannan, 2009).

UNICEF Classification:

Soft skills are needed to adapt to various life contexts, and people can potentially transfer to different social, cultural, or work settings. Soft skills include cognitive, social, and emotional skills, which enable children and adolescents to continue lifelong learning and become active and productive citizens (UNICEF, 2019).

Cognitive skills:

Cognitive skills (learning to know) include learning skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

Social skills:

The social skills (learning to live together) include skills for active citizenship, such as respect for diversity, empathy, and participation.

Emotional skills:

Emotional skills (learning to be) include personal skills such as self-management, resilience, and communication.

WHO Classification:

Life skills education school handbook: approaches for schools (WHO, 2020).

Interpersonal skills:

1. Communication skills
2. Refusal and negotiation skills
3. Advocacy skills
4. Empathy building
5. Co-operation and teamwork

Cognitive skills:

1. Decision-making skills
2. Critical thinking skills

Personal skills:

1. Self-awareness and self-management skills
2. Behavioral skills
3. Increasing personal confidence and abilities to assume control, take responsibility, make a difference, or bring about change
4. Skills for managing feelings
5. Skills for coping and managing stress.

Integrating soft skills in young students' Curriculum:

Soft skills integrated into the curriculum can assist young students in preparing for accomplishment in both the workplace and their personal lives. Here are some strategies for including soft skills in the curriculum:

1. **Project-Based Learning:** Students who participate in project-based learning work on a project or issue pertinent to their daily life or community. Students who use this method may improve their collaborative, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills. Project-based learning can enhance students' communication and teamwork skills (Mills & Treagust, 2013).
2. **Service Learning:** Students participate in community service projects related to their coursework as part of service learning. Students that use this strategy can improve their communication, leadership, and empathy abilities. Service learning can enhance students' leadership and communication skills (Chiang & Lee, 2017).
3. **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** SEL gives students the knowledge and abilities to control their emotions, form wholesome relationships, and make wise decisions. This strategy can support kids' growth in social awareness, empathy, and self-consciousness. SEL programs can enhance students' emotional and social skills and academic achievement (Durlak et al., 2011).
4. **Extracurricular Activities:** Extracurricular pursuits like athletics, music, and drama can aid in developing various soft skills, such as leadership, communication, and teamwork. According to research published in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, participation in extracurricular activities can enhance students' social skills and academic achievement (Mahoney et al., 2003).
5. **Volunteering:** According to the National Conference on Citizenship (National Conference on Citizenship, 2011) report, students who participated in volunteer work had superior teamwork and collaboration abilities over those who did not. Based on the report, volunteering can aid students in cultivating a sense of social responsibility and active citizenship.

Overall, there are many ways to include soft skills into the curriculum for young kids, including project-based learning, service learning, social and emotional learning, volunteering, and extracurricular activities. These methods can aid students in acquiring the skills required for professional and personal success.

The researcher investigated several soft skills mainly:

1. Self-regulation
2. Psychological flexibility
3. Social and cultural interaction
4. Successful leadership
5. Critical thinking
6. Problem-solving
7. Innovative thinking

Previous Studies

Studies Related to Soft Skills:

Dharmarajan et al. (2012) searched the effects of soft skills on students' lives both during their time as students and after they graduate and enter the workforce. This paper examined the necessity of soft skills to supplement hard skills, for which a student must complete extensive college coursework.

The paper concluded that professors who teach students hard skills are in a far better position to effectively combine soft skills with hard skills, resulting in a better professional and a greater human being. Faculty members can play a significant role in this situation by ensuring that their students practice soft skills while attending university and using soft skills to teach their courses.

In conclusion, soft skills must therefore be ingrained in children from an early age and throughout youth to prevent them from becoming a liability to their parents and the country.

Tikhonova et al. (2018) indicated that studying courses in English for special purposes (ESP) tend to focus on fostering communication skills applied to future professional spheres. These skills are the backbone of soft and employability skills, being on the top target list of university education at large. The previous

studies of soft skills prompted the authors to single out indisputable soft skills (communication skills, social skills, and cognitive skills). With foreign languages being the most efficient discipline to nurture soft skills, the present research was fulfilled to find out the exposure of ESP course books at Russia's universities to soft skills. The ESP course books were sampled through an ESP experts', all exercises were grouped to limit the study to those related to soft skills. The research encompassed two (one structured, one Likert-type) questionnaires to get lecturers' and students' assessments of the relation of the ESP exercises to the selected soft skills.

The findings showed that, some exercises and tasks successfully impart soft skills and develop students' communication and professional language aptitude. They showed that soft skills are non-professional skills, qualities, and personal attributes leading to efficient, professional activities.

Qizi (2020) gave literature on the relationship between soft skills and employability in the global labor market. The definition and selection of the most difficult soft skills were also examined in the paper from the perspective of various literary works. It showed that employers are eager to find workers with cognitive skills due to economic changes. It presented the findings of a survey conducted to evaluate the level of soft skill integration in the academic curricula and Study Skills program offered to bachelor students at Uzbek State World Languages University. Today's graduates from higher education must possess not just the technical abilities required for their jobs but also a variety of soft skills, such as the capacity for coordination, communication, and problem-solving under time constraints.

The findings of the researched surveys and research have demonstrated a rising understanding that hard skills alone are inadequate for professional success, especially in today's dynamic, distributed, and complex workplace. The inclusion and integration of cognitive knowledge with soft skills, which would properly integrate theory and practice for students to develop soft skills, is also low. As a

result, graduates from higher education have unsatisfactory levels of soft skill development.

Mitsea et al. (2021) study examined soft skills in the context of metacognition. Researchers investigated the most important soft skills in the 21st century, including green skills and their cognitive and metacognitive backgrounds. A conclusion was drawn on a metacognition-based approach, and practical tools and tactics were recommended. The metacognitive approach to soft skills can be used in various educational situations as a framework for training that can hasten the success of students, workers, and citizens, especially those who belong to vulnerable groups like those with disabilities. According to Gardner (2011), there are eight types of intelligence: linguistics, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, visual-spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligence. The study concluded that each intelligence stands for a more elevated level of understanding, intelligence, and consciousness. Metacognition plays a decisive role in building understanding and enhancing intelligence and consciousness. Thus, developing the soft skills required in the 21st century is impossible without metacognition.

Anthony's (2022) showed that skills like dependability, responsibility, ethical values, removing listening barriers, and professionalism in group work could be cultivated in the classroom while teaching the needed material. This study examined how courses are created to help students build "soft skills" that will help them be better equipped for life after graduation and involve them in obtaining these skills. Your efforts in the classroom may be more successful if you assist students in acquiring soft skills. A different focus is needed to help children thrive beyond the classroom.

The study results showed that college students should not need to take a separate class or course to learn soft skills. It can be included in the curricula, emphasizing how it will affect students' future professional performance. Teachers need to draw a connection between everyday classroom standards, practices, and

activities and the soft skills readily transferable to the workplace.

Study Procedures:

The study procedures included the study population, sample, and procedures of the study, along with the researcher's steps to build and design the study tool. It also included checking the reliability and validity of the tool and statistical methods used in the data analysis to reach the study's conclusions.

Method of the Study

The study adopted a descriptive methodology based on content analysis for its suitability for the purpose of the study, where it is possible to collect, describe, and analyze data related to the objectives of the study to reach some conclusions related to the level of inclusion of soft skills in the content of the sixth-grade English book.

Study Community

All the (We Can) series' first and second sections of the books (the Student and Workbook), published by Mc Graw Hill Publication, edition of the academic year 1444 AH-2022 AD, totaling six books, were mandatory for the 6th year elementary students in Saudi Arabia (We Can 3: Term 1 (Student and Workbook), Term 2 (Student and Workbook) and Term 3 (Student and Workbook)).

Study Sample

The activities featured in the (We Can 3) series content for the 6th grade in Saudi Arabia formed the study sample. The series includes the 3 term books (the Student and Workbook), which totaled in 6 books, 24 units, 192 pages and 409 activities. As in Table 1, a thorough description of the study population and sample is provided.

Table 1: Study sample

#	Book	Term	Units	Pages	Activities
1	We Can 3 Student Book	Term 1	4	32	57
2	We Can 3 Workbook	Term 1	4	32	71
3	We Can 3 Student Book	Term 2	4	32	52
4	We Can 3 Workbook	Term 2	4	32	80
5	We Can 3 Student Book	Term 3	4	32	52
6	We Can 3 Workbook	Term 3	4	32	97
Total		3	24	192	409

Instrument of the Study

The study Instrument was a content analysis card to determine the level of inclusion of soft skills in sixth-grade English language textbooks. The researchers relied on a group of sources to arrive at a preliminary content analysis card for soft skills, which included three categories of basic skills, seven sub-skills, and (30) indicators, namely:

Personal skills

- Self-regulation (4 indicators)
- Psychological flexibility (4 indicators)

1) Social skills

- Social and cultural interaction (6 indicators)

- Successful leadership (4 indicators)

2) Cognitive skills

- Critical thinking (4 indicators)
- Problem-solving (4 indicators)
- Innovative thinking (4 indicators)

The card was presented to (10) arbitrators of academics and experts in the fields of curricula, teaching methods, and applied linguistics from various Saudi universities, in addition to some English language teachers and supervisors in Saudi public education, with the aim of verifying the validity of the card, evaluating the instrument, and expressing their comments on its content regarding the suitability of skills. For sixth grade students, the degree of linguistic integration, and

the relationship between each sub-skill and its basic field, according to a judging form prepared by the researchers for this purpose.

After the amendments made based on the recommendations of the arbitrators, the card in its final form included three main skill areas and 7 sub-skills. The skills included personal (subskills; 8 indicators), social (subskills; 10 indicators), and cognitive (3 subskills; 12 indicators).

Adjust the study Instrument:

The study Instrument was controlled in terms of its validity and reliability.

A- Validity of the card:

The validity of the card was assessed using the validity of the arbitrators, by presenting it to 10 arbitrators and experts in curricula, teaching methods, and applied linguistics, in addition to distinguished English language supervisors and teachers, to evaluate the validity of the study Instrument.

B- Reliability of the card:

The stability of the study Instrument lies in the fact that the scale gives close readings every time it is used. The first unit of each book was selected in order to verify the reliability of the analysis card, and reliability was measured in two ways:

1 -Calculating the reliability of the content analysis card over time:

One of the researchers used the analysis card to examine the first unit of the study sample books. Then the same researcher repeated the analysis process after 30 days, and the reliability coefficient was extracted by calculating the percentage of agreement between the two analyzes using the Holsti equation(0.91) .

Based on what was stated by Kassarjian (1977), a reliability coefficient that exceeds 0.80 gives a positive indication of the stability of the analysis tool. This indicates that the reliability coefficient is considered appropriate and that the tool is reliable and can be used to obtain the results of the study.

2 .Calculating the reliability of the content analysis card for individuals:

Each researcher individually analyzed the first unit of each book. The reliability coefficient was determined using the Holsti equation by calculating the percentage of agreement between the two analyses, giving an appropriate reliability coefficient of (0.84). It indicates the reliability of the study tool and the possibility of using it to obtain study results.

Statistical Analysis:

Based on the nature of the study, and the goals it seeks to achieve, the researchers used the following statistical methods:

- 1) Holsti equation calculation coefficient of stability of the content analysis card.
- 2) Frequencies and percentages to identify the level of inclusion of soft skills in the content of the We Can 3 series for the 6th grade in Saudi Arabia.

An exploratory Questionnaire

A questionnaire was created using the content analysis card, as in Appendix 5. The exploratory questionnaire was distributed to 261 Saudi Arabia's 6th-grade English teachers.

The exploratory questionnaire was divided into two parts: The first part was the respondents' information (sex, degree, and years of experience), shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondents' information

Sex	78% Female	22% Male
Degree	81% Bachelor	19% High studies
Years of experience	23% 5-10	77% more than 10

The second part was about the soft skills inclusion in the 6th-grade English textbooks. The categories were represented in 3 key skills, 7

subskills, and 30 indicators, as shown in Table.3 (personal skills, 2 subskills-8 indicators; social skills, 2 subskills-10 indicators; cognitive skills, 3 subskills-12 indicators).

Table 3: The areas of the questionnaire

Subskills	indicators
Self-regulation	4
Psychological flexibility	4
Social and cultural interaction	6
Successful leadership	4
Critical thinking	4
Problem-solving	4
Innovative thinking	4
7	30

The three-point Likert scale (Agree – Neutral – Disagree) was used in the exploratory questionnaire to measure the responses.

The following criteria were taken from Aldossary & Albedaiwi (2021) study and used for determining the inclusion of soft skills in the study sample, based on the respondent, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The percentage of availability of soft skills

Percentage	Availability
0%-20%	Available at a very low rate
20%-40%	Available at a low rate
40%-60%	Available at a medium rate
60%-80%	Available at a high rate
80%-100%	Available at a very high rate

Results:

1) Results Related to the First Question:

The question was "What were the soft skills that should be included in the 6th-grade English textbooks in Saudi Arabia?"

This question has resulted in creating a suggested list of soft skills that should be included in the sixth-grade English textbooks (We Can 5-6). A list was reached in its final form (Appendix 5), where three main skills were included, namely:

personal, social, and cognitive, and 30 indicators are associated with it. This was conducted after verifying the veracity of the list by presenting it to a group of arbitrators who specialize in curricula and methods of teaching as well as teachers and supervisors of the English language in general education.

Table 5 shows the number of subskills and indicators associated with each main skill that should be included in the 6th-grade English textbooks.

Table 5: Soft skills that should be included in 6th-grade English textbooks

Skills	Subskills	Indicators	Percentage
Personal skills	Self-regulation	4	13%
	Psychological flexibility	4	13%

Social skills	Social and cultural interaction	6	20%
	Successful leadership	4	13%
Cognitive skills	Critical thinking	4	13%
	Problem-solving	4	13%
	Innovative thinking	4	13%
3	7	30	100%

According to Table 5, out of all the skills, cognitive skills have the greatest subskills (3) and indications (12), totaling 39% of all skills. With a percentage of 33%, the social skills of 2 subskills and 10 indicators are in second place on the list. While personal skills, with 2 subskills and 8 indications, are in third and last position, making 26% of the total.

Discussion:

Based on the information above, the subskills and indicators related to cognitive skills are the most numerous. This may result from the nature of soft skills and the value of cognitive skills in daily life, education, and the workplace.

Additionally, cognitive skills assist EFL learning and acquisition based on Swain's (2010) Linguaging Theory, which asserts that language (speaking and writing) is a cognitive facilitating tool for humans. An individual's thinking ability can be improved by learning to speak and write in a language. Some individuals call themselves "verbal processors" because they pick up new information when speaking or writing. It asserts that the process of cognitive development involves speaking and writing. Learning a language is an excellent way to measure a person's progress in cognitive development. Therefore, communicating effectively in a range of contexts—including oral, written, multicultural, electronic, and even communication climate—is a prerequisite for learning a language.

As Qizi (2020) mentioned, employers are eager to find workers with cognitive skills these days due to economic changes. As well as, the findings of numerous studies show that; one must possess at least seven different cognitive skills to succeed in the twenty-first-century workplace,

including working memory, semantic and episodic memory, verbal and numerical reasoning, selective attention and mental flexibility, verbal attention and inhibition, abstract reasoning, problem-solving and creative thinking, and learning potential.

Based on an exploratory questionnaire given to Saudi English teachers by the researchers, it is evident that sixth-grade English textbooks have a low level of soft skills.

2) Results Related to the Second Question:

The question was: "To what level are the soft skills included in the 6th-grade English textbooks in Saudi Arabia?"

The researchers examined the writing exercises in the content of the WE Can 3 textbooks for the sixth grade (the study sample) and calculated the repetitions of the soft skills included in it, as well as the percentage of repetitions of each subskill to the overall repetitions of the three skills in each course separately. The researchers also determined the order of repetitions based on inclusion ratios for skills. The comprehensive findings from the analysis of the activities in (We Can 3)'s content for the sixth grade are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9: Distribution of personal skills according to terms

Indicators	1 st term				2 nd term				3 rd term				Total	
	Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Books	
Self-regulation	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%
learner prioritizes tasks and accomplishes them without direct supervision.	14	4.0% *	14	4.0% *	3	0.9%	4	1.2%	2	0.6%	3	0.9%	40	11.6%
It guides the learner to be a self-directed learner.	5	1.4%	5	1.4%	12	3.5% *	26	7.5% *	0	0.0%	4	1.2%	52	15.0%
It motivates learners to move beyond mastery of core skills and curriculum requirements to exploring and extending	10	2.9%	15	4.3%	8	2.3%	11	3.2%	11	3.2% *	14	4.0% *	59	17.1%

Indicators	1 st term				2 nd term				3 rd term				Total	
	Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Books	
Self-regulation	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%
personal learning and opportunities for experience														
It guides learners to take advantage of leisure time to practice loving hobbies or learn new things.	11	3.2%	17	4.9%	9	2.6%	13	3.8%	9	2.6%	14	4.0%*	73	21.1%*
Psychological flexibility														
It directs the learner to invest feedback effectively.	3	0.9%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	4	1.2%	1	0.3%	3	0.9%	12	3.5%
It encourages learners to be positive about success,	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	1.2%*	9	2.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	13	3.8%

Indicators	1 st term				2 nd term				3 rd term				Total	
	Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Books	
Self-regulation failure, and criticism.	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%	Repetition	%
The learner is directed to set goals that are aligned with his or her abilities and capabilities.	5	1.4%	5	1.4%	2	0.6%	11	3.2%*	0	0.0%	4	1.2%	27	7.8%
It raises awareness of the importance of taking responsibility	9	2.6%*	13	3.8%*	4	1.2%*	9	2.6%	11	3.2%*	14	4.0%*	60	17.3%*
Total	57	16.5%	69	19.9%	43	12.4%	87	25.1%	34	9.8%	56	16.2%	346	100.0%

The percentage of first-term personal skills in self-regulation in the student book and workbook for learner who prioritizes tasks and accomplishes them without direct supervision was 4.0%, according to Table 9. The greatest percentage in the student book and the workbook for self-regulation in the second term was 11.0% for: It guides the learner to be self-directed. It motivates learners to move beyond mastery of core skills and curriculum requirements to exploring and extending personal learning and experience opportunities, reported as having the greatest percentage in the student book and the workbook for self-regulation in the third term (7.2%).

The greatest percentage for psychological flexibility for the first term in the student book and workbook was reported for: It raises awareness of the importance of taking responsibility (6.4%). The highest percentage in the student book for psychological flexibility in the second term was noted for: It encourages learners to be positive about success, failure, and criticism and: It raises awareness of the importance of taking responsibility (1.2%) each; for the workbook: The learner is directed to set goals that are aligned with his or her abilities and capabilities (3.2%). Psychological flexibility in the third term was the highest percentage in the student book and the workbook for the following topics: It raises awareness of the importance of taking responsibility (7.2%). It raises awareness of the importance of taking responsibility (17.3%) overall had the highest psychological flexibility.

According to Table 10 social skills data for social and cultural interaction from the first term

student book, the following categories accounted for the highest percentages in both the student book and workbook: It includes situations for developing interactivity skills, such as speaking and listening (7.7%). The most common statements in the student book for the second term's social and cultural interaction were: It guides the learner to plan group work (8.6%), and It includes situations for developing interactivity skills, such as speaking and listening (4.1%). The student book for: It guides the learner to plan group work (10.0%), and the workbook's inclusion of It includes situations for developing interactivity skills, such as speaking and listening (6.4%), received the greatest percentages in the third term's social and cultural interaction course. Overall, the student book's greatest percentage was found for: It guides the learner to plan group work (26.4%).

The section of the student book and workbook with the greatest percentage for the first term of successful leadership was: It includes situations to help invest the strengths of others (12.7%). The student book's inclusion of: It includes situations to help invest the strengths of others had the highest percentage in successful leadership's second term (3.6%), and the workbook's inclusion of: It includes situations for developing decision-making skills had the highest percentage (5.0%). The student book and workbook entry with the greatest percentage for successful leadership in the third term was: It includes situations to help invest the strengths of others (8.2%). It includes situations to help invest the strengths of others (32.7%) received the greatest proportion in all the books overall.

Table 10: Distribution of Social skills according to terms

Indicators	1 st term				2 nd term				3 rd term				Total	
	Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Student book		Work book		Books	
	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%
Social and cultural interaction														
It promotes positive attitudes toward other cultures.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
It refers to what distinguishes the cultures of the world.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	1.4%	6	2.7%	9	4.1%
It helps to understand, negotiate, and evaluate diverse perspectives and beliefs for practical solutions, especially in multicultural environments.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.9%	5	2.3%	7	3.2%

It guides the learner to plan group work.	11	5.0%	4	1.8%	19	8.6%*	0	0.0%	22	10.0%*	2	0.9%	58	26.4%*
It directs the learner to engage in volunteer work.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
It includes situations for developing interactivity skills (e.g., listening and speaking).	8	3.6%*	9	4.1%*	4	1.8%	9	4.1%*	9	4.1%	14	6.4%*	53	24.1%
Successful leadership														
It includes situations for developing decision-making skills.	5	2.3%	5	2.3%	4	1.8%	11	5.0%*	1	0.5%	4	1.8%	19	8.6%
It enhances leadership through initiative-taking situations.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	0	0.0%	2	0.9%
It includes situations to help invest the	11	5.0%*	17	7.7%*	8	3.6%*	12	5.5%	5	2.3%*	13	5.9%*	72	32.7%*

strengths of others														
It persuades responsible behavior when leading the team.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	35	15.9%	35	15.9%	36	16.4%	32	14.5%	43	19.5%	44	20.0%	220	100.0%

Table 11: Distribution of cognitive skills according to terms

Indicators	1 st term				2 nd term				3 rd term				Total	
	Student book		Workbook		Student book		Workbook		Student book		Workbook		Books	
Critical Thinking	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%	Repetitio n	%
It instructs the learner to express his opinions.	5	1.5%	5	1.5%	4	1.2%	11	3.3%	1	0.3%	4	1.2%	30	9.0%
It guides the learner to interpret and clarify ideas.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.9%	0	0.0%	3	0.9%
It gives an opportunity to judge different answers.	11	3.3% *	15	4.5% *	8	2.4% *	12	3.6% *	5	1.5% *	13	3.9% *	64	19.2% *
It develops skills to interpret information, opinions, and events.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.9%	0	0.0%	3	0.9%
Problem-Solving														
It exposes the learner to different types of	9	2.7%	13	3.9%	4	1.2%	9	2.7%	10	3.0%	14	4.2% *	59	17.7%

unusual situations and real-life problems.														
It encourages the learner to obtain information that will help in solving problems independently .	5	1.5%	5	1.5%	2	0.6%	11	3.3%	0	0.0%	4	1.2%	27	8.1%
It encourages the learner to conduct research, survey, and investigation.	18	5.4% *	23	6.9% *	15	4.5% *	15	4.5% *	14	4.2% *	10	3.0%	85	25.5% *
It guides the learner to find solutions by connecting prior information to the current.	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	2	0.6%	2	0.6%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	6	1.8%
Innovative thinking														
It includes different ways to create ideas (e.g.,	3	0.9% *	5	1.5% *	1	0.3%	4	1.2% *	2	0.6%	4	1.2% *	19	5.7%

brainstorming)														
It stimulates the building and expansion of ideas.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.6%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	4	1.2%
It encourages adding new and varied details to a particular idea.	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	1.2%	3	0.9%	5	1.5% *	4	1.2% *	16	4.8%
It encourages organizing information with new ideas.	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	5	1.5% *	3	0.9%	5	1.5% *	4	1.2% *	17	5.1%*
Total	53	15.9 %	66	19.8 %	47	14.1 %	71	21.3 %	48	14.4 %	59	17.7 %	333	100.0 %

The greatest percentage in the student book and workbook was recorded for: It allows judging different answers (7.8%) in Table 11's analysis of cognitive skills for the first term. The greatest percentage in the student book and workbook for critical thinking in the second semester was noted for: It allows judging different answers (7.0%). The greatest percentage in the student book and workbook for critical thinking in the third term was noted for: It allows judging different answers (5.4%). Overall, the whole book's highest percentage was noted for the statement: " It allows judging different answers" (19.2%).

The highest proportion for the first term of problem-solving was noted in the student book and workbook for: It motivates the learner to perform research, survey, and investigation (13.3%). The student book and workbook entries for problem-solving from the second semester with the greatest percentage was: It encourages the learner to conduct research, survey, and investigation (9.0%). The student book and workbook entries for problem-solving from the third term with the greatest percentage was: It encourages the learner to conduct research, survey, and investigation (7.2%). It encourages the learner to conduct research, survey, and investigation indicator had the greatest percentage in the books overall (25.5%).

The indicator "It includes different ways to create ideas, such as brainstorming" was mentioned the most in the student book and workbook for the first term of innovative thinking (2.4%). The greatest percentage in the student book for innovative thinking in the second term was recorded for: It encourages organizing information with new ideas (1.5%); and for the workbook: It includes different ways to create ideas, such as brainstorming (1.5%). The highest percentage in the student book for the third trimester of innovative thinking was noted for: It encourages

adding new and varied details to a particular idea, and: It encourages organizing information with new ideas (1.5%), and in the workbook for: It includes different ways to create ideas, such as brainstorming, It encourages to add new and varied details to a particular idea, as well as It encourages to organize information with new ideas (1.2%). The statement that received the greatest overall percentage in the books was: It encourages organizing information with new ideas (5.1%).

Discussion:

Based on the study's results and the previous studies findings, it is essential for students that soft skills are included in 6th-grade English. As shown by Rao's (2014) study, soft skills are an important and crucial part of life skills that bring success to learners because they are highly related to an individual's behaviors and actions. Due to the significance of their influence on students' future professional success, soft skills should be easily incorporated into the curriculum. For students to quickly transfer these practices to their careers in the future, English teachers should also combine strategies, practices, and activities with the soft skills needed in that grade (psychological flexibility, social and cultural interaction, self-regulation, successful leadership, critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovative thinking). This helps students to advance educationally and professionally and succeed in the labor market. Rao's results were equivalent to the results of the current study.

According to Khamis (2013), soft skills are personal skills that enable learners to deal positively, express their thoughts, demonstrate leadership, achieve positive communication, and interact with others. El Abdalla's study (2015) indicated that soft skills teach learners initiative, flexibility, social interaction, leadership, and the

ability to deal with adversity. Which was equivalent to the results of the current study, which showed that the first-term self-regulation had the largest percentage recorded for: learners prioritizing tasks and accomplishing them without direct supervision (8%). The student book and workbook's highest self-regulation percentage for the second term were: It guides the learner to be self-directed (11%). It motivates learners to move beyond mastery of core skills and curriculum requirements to exploring and extending personal learning and opportunities for experience (7.2%), according to data from the student book and workbook for the third term in self-regulation.

These findings agree with the study conducted by (Antony, 2022) who reported that skills like dependability, responsibility, ethical values, removing listening barriers, and professionalism in group work could be cultivated in the classroom along with teaching the needed material.

Mitsea et al. (2021) study examined soft skills according to the metacognitive approach. The development of soft skills requires: systematic education on soft skills theory, including cognitive and metacognitive theories. Reality-based training assists students in developing self-awareness of their abilities and flaws through experience, discovering new growth areas, and using appropriate strategies for making amends for weaknesses and instruction in self-observation using a variety of strategies to improve attentional control, which is the basis of the development of soft skills.

The current study is similar to Dharmarajan et al. (2012), which dealt with the effects of soft skills on the lives of students during their time as students, after their graduation, and their entry into the labor market. It came to the necessity of soft skills as a complement to hard skills, often referred to as vocational-technical

qualifications, in order to effectively train students in soft skills.

This study's findings as well as previous studies clarified that including soft skills training in textbooks is a very effective way of shaping one's personality. Every student must acquire sufficient skills beyond academic or technical knowledge. As well as the responses of researchers' exploratory questionnaire given to 6th-grade English teachers, it was evident that the sixth-grade English textbooks have a low rate of soft skills.

Recommendations:

1) Recommendations for the Curriculum Developers:

- Conducting an overall evaluation of the content of the sixth-grade English textbooks to ensure that the activities' emphasis is equally distributed across personal, social, and cognitive skills.
- Inclusion of extracurricular activities to develop soft skills.
- The study's findings indicated a variation in the degree of inclusion of soft skills. The study suggests revisiting the distribution of these skills and including them in balanced proportions.
- Offering learners, the opportunity to practice soft skills by modifying and adding soft skills to the activities found in the English textbooks.

2) Recommendations for English Teachers:

Making teachers aware of the soft skills that young learners require. This allows teachers to guide and train learners in these skills as well as present these skills in an original, progressive, and related form.

Suggestions for Future Research:

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers suggest the following:

1. A descriptive study to identify the English teachers' training requirements

for acquiring knowledge about soft skills and how to assist learners in developing them.

2. Using extracurricular activities like volunteering, community service, and project-based learning to help young learners build soft skills.

Conclusion:

The current study highlighted the importance of teaching and learning English at an early age, because children are less likely than adults to have negative attitudes toward learning any foreign language or culture. Moreover, they are less resistant to learning them than adults. Soft skills are an important part of life skills that bring success to learners because they are closely linked to an individual's behaviors and actions. Given the importance of their impact on students' future professional success, soft skills should be integrated into the curriculum. The effective impact of soft skills on students' lives during their studies, after they graduate, and when they enter the labor market makes learning them necessary as a complement to hard skills. The study also revealed the importance of using extracurricular activities such as: volunteer work, community service, and project-based learning to help young learners build skills. Personal.

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