

# An Analysis of Life Skills in the Content of English Language Text Books

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**Abstract**—This present paper aims at analyzing the six main domains of life skills: Effective Communication, Problem-solving, Decision-making, Creative/Critical thinking, Personal/ social life skills, and Leadership life skills / Self-awareness. The unit of analysis used in this study is the activities that show or indicate the specific life skill. The criteria of this paper are the extent of the inclusion of life skills activities that enhance interactive learning and meaningful communication in the pupils' book of Action Pack10. The researcher adopted the analytical descriptive approach. Frequencies and percentages are measured to verify the results of the questions of the study. The findings showed variation in the frequencies of the six main domains and each domain as well. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester.

**Index Terms**—content analysis, communicative activities, life skills, action pack

## I. INTRODUCTION

*"Life skills are those skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life."* Hendricks (1998, pp. 28-29).

The educational system in Jordan tries to accustom the learners to improvement and development in the areas of teaching and learning. This system is responsible for integrating the English language into the learners' daily life by stepping from the secondary stages at schools to advanced levels at universities in a systematic process. To achieve that, there should be a well-designed curriculum that takes into account the learners' cognitive, linguistic, and emotional factors. Hutchinson and Torres (1994; cited in Litz, 2005) stated that:

*The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Every year millions of copies are sold, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in [various] countries... No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook. (p. 315)*

In addition, there is a major need to take life skills factors such as social, religious, political, and communicational factors when designing the curriculums and courses into consideration. These kinds of life skills have a crucial role to engage the learners in their community and make them productive members in their real-life conditions. Educators, syllabus designers, supervisors, and teachers have a big responsibility toward offering students with needed skills for developing their level of proficiency and enabling them to be active members in everyday life situations.

Language proficiency is a measurement of how well an individual has mastered a language. Proficiency refers to the ability of an individual to communicate effectively in a particular language. It involves the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and the ability to use them in context. In today's globalized world, language proficiency has become increasingly important. It is no longer enough to be able to speak one's native language; being able to communicate in multiple languages has become a valuable skill in many fields. There are different levels of language proficiency, ranging from basic to advance. Basic proficiency refers to the ability to understand and use simple phrases and sentences, while advanced proficiency involves the ability to understand and use complex language structures and express oneself fluently. Language proficiency can also be categorized into receptive and productive skills. Receptive skills refer to the ability to understand spoken or written language, while productive skills refer to the ability to produce spoken or written language. In short, proficiency is what students can do with what they know.

The ACTFL proficiency guidelines which were published in 1982 and continued to be updated and developed through the 1990s define and measure language ability in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The guidelines were not initiated from a particular theoretical view, but they share many of the same components of other theoretically derived frameworks of communicative language ability. The ACTFL guidelines have four major proficiency levels: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior, and three sublevels: low, mid, and high. The levels of proficiency on the ACTFL scale have four interrelated assessment criteria, global tasks/ functions, context/ content, accuracy, and text type. Today the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines have a crucial effect on the content and the teaching methodology of many foreign language courses.

Based on the above-mentioned frameworks, Omaggio (2001, pp. 90-91) suggests five guiding principles for organizing and planning instruction in a second language classroom. These principles apply to instruction at all levels of proficiency ranging from novice to superior. They are meant to be flexible enough to meet the varying needs and develop the growth of learners. The principles are stated in the form of hypotheses. The hypotheses are built on five major characteristics. She believes that they are conducive to the development of proficiency when they are taken into

consideration in the foreign language curriculum. These characteristics are context, functions, accuracy, effectiveness, and cultural understanding. The five working hypotheses are as follows:

*Hypothesis 1: Opportunities must be provided for students to practice using language in a range of contexts likely to be encountered in the target culture. Hypothesis 2: Opportunities should be provided for students to practice carrying out a range of functions (task universals) likely to be necessary for dealing with others in the target culture. Hypothesis 3: There should be a concern for the development of linguistic accuracy from the beginning of instruction in a proficiency-oriented approach. Hypothesis 4: Proficiency oriented approaches should respond to the affective needs of students as well as to their cognitive needs. Students should feel motivated to learn and must be given opportunities to express their meanings in a non-threatening environment. Hypothesis 5: Cultural understanding must be promoted in various ways so that students are prepared to live more harmoniously in the target-language community.* (pp. 90-91)

All the ACTFL guidelines and Omaggio's principles, push foreign language teachers to focus on the communicative aspect as a whole and not to separate the components of language learning into separate skills that must be mastered individually (Omaggio, 2001, p. 39). These communicative aspects promote communication, interaction, authenticity, and life skills practices, etc. The communicative language teaching approach and its principles (communication, task, and meaningfulness) conform to the five hypotheses of proficiency. It is a flexible approach to teaching and practicing the language. As a result, the Ministry of Education in Jordan has realized the fundamental role of using the communicative approach to teach English language skills for the basic and secondary stages in public and private schools. Ministry of Education (2006, p. 9) stated that "English language teaching should be interactively attempted and evaluated in light of the basic principles of communicative language teaching".

Communicative language teaching (CLT) makes use of real-life situations that require communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. Language teaching is based on different functions and the classroom activities vary according to the learners' needs. Students' motivation comes from their intrinsic desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics. Richardson and Rodgers (cited in Omaggio, 2001, p. 117) assure that "(CLT) does not claim a particular theory of language learning as its 8 bases..." though, they believe there are several theoretical premises that can be deduced from a consideration of the approach: 1. The communication principle: activities that involve communicative promotion of learning. 2. The task principle: completion of real-world tasks promotes learning. 3. The meaningfulness principle: meaningful and authentic language uses are necessary for learners. Accordingly, Communication skills are vital to good performance in society. Learners should learn strategies and ways to communicate effectively by listening carefully to what others say to state their thoughts and ideas (Ferry, 2006; Loy, 2006).

English language courses in Jordan are introduced as compulsory subjects to the learners in Government and private schools from the early stage, kindergarten to the twelfth class. Action Pack, which is the Jordanian English curriculum, is built based on the General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language that tries to build the communicative competence of learners. CLT has been established as the major approach in teaching English as a foreign language in Jordan that focuses on enhancing good communication with other peoples (McLean et al., 1985). The English textbook is considered one of the precious tools to develop learners' communication skills and abilities.

Consequently, the Educational process in Jordan tries to prepare the learners for their future life. Recently, "the education for Life" attended much interest among educators all around the world. This concept put much emphasis on the relationship between schools and universities and society. Accordingly, English textbooks in Jordan should include a variety of life skills to engage learners in their society and enable them to be effective members of everyday life situations. Motalebzadeh and Ashraf (2014) stated that English language textbooks are used as tools for developing the learners' life skills. Consequently, life skills should be taken into consideration while designing the curriculum and textbooks. Ferch (2005, p. 47) indicated that teachers agree that textbooks have a crucial role and influence on daily instruction.

Richards (2001, p. 91) stated that to engage learners in society, there is a need to develop life skills in the curriculum. World Health Organization (2000) stated that "Life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". Hendricks (1998, pp. 28-29) also defined life skills as "those skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life". It can't be denied that life skills are needed for helping individuals and learners to be productive members of their homes, schools, society, and their life in general (Anderson, 2005).

Maass et al. (2006) classified life skills into these types: communication, problem-solving decision-making, community service, goal setting, conflict resolution, critical thinking, and cooperation. El Sawi and Smith (1997) also stated that these life skills, such as decision-making, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving, communication should be taken into account while designing an account of a young program. Bender (2002; cited in Hamdona, 2007) analyzed the life skills into these domains "decision making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relating, self-awareness, ability to empathize, coping with emotions and coping with stress" (p. 15). By adopting these life skills, learners can make their decision correctly, develop responsibility, build their motivation and self-esteem, improve solve-problem abilities, develop their communication skills, and develop they are working in pairs and teams. There is an urgent need to take these skills when designing curriculums

and textbooks into consideration. Content analysis is considered a good way and technique to identify specified characteristics of texts and messages. It also provides valuable insights into texts and the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook. Palmquist (1990) indicated that there are many advantages to analyzing the content of any text:

looks directly at communication via texts or transcripts, and hence gets at the central aspect of social interaction, can provide valuable historical/cultural insights over time through analysis of texts, allows a closeness to text which can alternate between specific categories and relationships and also statistically analyzes the coded form of the text, can be used to interpret texts for purposes such as the development of expert systems (since knowledge and rules can both be coded in terms of explicit statements about the relationships among concepts), is an unobtrusive means of analyzing interactions and provides insight into complex models of human thought and language use. ( p. 3)

Accordingly, this paper is an attempt to analyze eight main domains of life skills 1) Effective Communication 2) Problem-solving 3) Decision-making 4) Creative/ Critical thinking 5) Personal/ social life skills 6) Leadership life skills / Self-awareness.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although the Jordanian Ministry of Education (2006) puts down a list of English guidelines "General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language" that stress the integral role of English as a foreign language in developing and improving the learners' language competence and proficiency, EFL learners still face many difficulties and challenges on how to communicate in English effectively. It is essential to analyze the required life skills that should be involved in the content of English textbooks. So the researcher took Action Pack ten as a sample to measure the distribution and the inclusion of these skills in it and see if it is sufficient or not.

## III. PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

According to the General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language in Jordan of 2006, the present paper aims at analyzing six main domains of life skills 1) Effective Communication 2) Problem solving 3) Decision-making 4) Creative/Critical thinking 5) Personal/ social life skills 6) Leadership life skills / Self-awareness.

This will be answered by the following questions:

1. To what extent does the textbook provide skills that enhance effective communication?
2. To what extent does the textbook include a variety of problem-solving life skills?
3. To what extent does the textbook enhance the development of decision-making?
4. To what extent does the textbook enhance creative and critical thinking?
5. To what extent do the activities enhance personal and social life skills?
6. To what extent does the textbook enhance self-awareness and leadership life skills?

## IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In Jordan, the English language is taught from grade one to grade twelve. It is used as a foreign language for communication. As a result, the Ministry of Education gives great importance to school textbooks since they are the sources of knowledge. Accordingly, a content analysis of English textbooks becomes a necessity for EFL syllabus designers and teachers to investigate the required life and their roles of enhancing the learners to make their decision correctly, develop responsibility, build their motivation and self-esteem, improve solve-problem abilities, develop their communication skills and develop their working in pairs and teams. Moreover, the analysis of textbooks helps those EFL teachers and syllabus designers to assess the English content to find out the weakness and strengths points.

## V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is limited by the following factors:

1. The study analyzes the life skills activities in the student's book for the first semester of Action Pack10
2. Analyzing six main domains of life skills:
  - Effective Communication
  - Problem-solving
  - Decision-making
  - Creative/Critical thinking
  - Personal/social life skills
  - Leadership life skills/Self-awareness

## VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher reviewed several previous studies related to the effectiveness of life skills and their domains.

Maass et al. (2004) investigate the impact of long-term 4-H participation on the development of life-skill competencies. A questionnaire that included seven domains was used to obtain the needed data. The results revealed that the most effective 4-H aspects were trips, clubs, meetings with volunteers/leaders, and making important decisions.

Anderson (2005) studied students, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the value of lifelong skills. Moreover, they implemented Lifelong Guidelines Program to produce a community of responsible learners for life. Teachers and students from a public elementary school in a small urban area in East Tennessee participated in the study. Interviews and open-ended surveys were used in the study. The findings revealed that the life skills and Lifelong Guidelines program have a positive effect on teachers and students at their schools.

Smith et al. (2005) evaluated the impact of the Appalachian Regional Commission Youth Leadership Incubator Program (ARCYLI) on the development of the participants' leadership life skills to increase the economic development within their home counties. 32 participants participated in the study to get the needed data. The researchers used suitable statistical analysis to analyze the results. The findings showed that the program has a positive effect in that the participants develop their leadership life skills ability and foster them in their lives.

Ferry (2006) tried to identify the most common components of communication and decision-making skills used by the learners as a result of attending the training program. 100 participants who live in urban counties near Philadelphia participated in this study. After making a comparison between selected socio-demographic groups to determine if there is a statistically significant difference in the curriculum's effectiveness due to educational attainment level, gender, and race/ethnicity, the findings focused on the forms of communication and decision-making skills for which learning occurred and the training did affect use.

Hamdona (2007) analyzed the activities in the textbook that match the five main domains of life skills. The researcher designed a card and measured its' Validity and reliability to collect the needed data. The results revealed that the Communication life skills domain, personal/social life skills domain Leadership life skills domain, and decision-making/problem-solving life skills domain got the highest score while the critical thinking domain got the lowest one.

ALghazo (2013) analyzed the activities of Action Pack Eleven which enhance meaningful communication in light of the communicative language teaching approach. To answer the results of the questions, Frequencies, and Percentages are measured. The results revealed that contextualized activities are given the highest percentage (78) among the other activities. Moreover, the results showed that grammar and vocabulary, and group work activities are also given good space among other activities. However, the functional language practice activities, and cross-cultural understanding activities, are not given much space among the other activities.

Al Masri et al. (2016) analyzed the availability of life skills -decision-making interpersonal relationship skills, creative thinking, critical thinking, problem-solving, effective communication, self-awareness, and coping with emotions- in the Action Pack English textbooks for the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades. The results showed that life skills are distributed irregularly.

## VII. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-analytical method was used to obtain the needed results. Conducted this method is used due to its relevance and suitability for analyzing the main life skills in English textbooks in Jordan – Action pack, Grade ten textbook.

### A. *Sample of the Study*

Action Pack ten is one of the Action Pack Series that are taught in public schools in Jordan. It was published in 2009, as the EFL textbook, and consists of six modules that are divided into two semesters, each module has two units. Action Pack Ten is selected as the representative sample of this study. Each unit includes theme/title, functions, Grammar in context activities, listening, speaking and writing activities, vocabulary and pronunciation activities and some and supplementary reading activities in addition to the self-projects to develop their abilities.

### B. *Instrument of the Study*

To achieve the study purpose, the researcher developed a life skills list included in an English language textbook, for grade tenth in Jordan based on the educational literature. The life skills list consisted of (6) categories and each category has a number of the sub- category. Six main domains of life skills are categorized as 1) Effective Communication 2) Problem-solving 3) Decision-making 4) Creative/Critical thinking 5) Personal/social life skills 6) Leadership life skills/Self-awareness

### C. *Reliability and Validity of the Instrument*

To guarantee the validity of the study instrument, a jury of TEFL professors at Ajloun National University, supervisors, and EFL teachers in the Directorate of Ajloun, examined the criteria to be amended and improve the life skills list. To measure the inter-rater reliability, the content analysis was carried out by three EFL-qualified teachers who have been teaching the English language for 10 years and above. The Pearson correlation of agreement between these two analyses was .85, which is considered an acceptable value for this study. The researcher also measured the Intra-rater reliability of the content analysis by attempting the analysis of the activities twice by one analyst at two

weeks intervals. The result shows that the total I coefficient of agreement between the first analysis and the second analysis was high (.96) which is acceptable for this study: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) was .037.

#### D. Analysis Procedures

This study used the content analysis method for analyzing the main life skills in English textbooks in Jordan – Action pack, Grade ten textbook. Berelson (cited in To'eima, 1987, p. 22) defined content analysis as “a systematic, scientific technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding”. Holsti (1969) also gave a broad definition of content analysis as “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages”. Accordingly, the researcher measured the extent of the inclusion of life skills activities in the textbook, Grade ten, that enhance interactive learning and meaningful communication.

#### E. Categories of Life Skills

To do this analysis, the researcher divided the life skills into the following categories:

- Effective Communication life skills:
- Problem-solving life skills
- Decision-making skills
- Creative/Critical thinking skills
- Personal/ social life skills
- Leadership life skills/Self-awareness.

#### F. Statistical Analyses

This study has a descriptive-analytical design. It used a content analysis approach. The researcher used percentages and frequency for eight life skills: a. Effective Communication life skills. b. Problem-solving life skills. c. Decision-making skills. d. Creative / Critical thinking skills. e. Personal/ social life skills. f. Leadership life skills / Self-awareness.

### VIII. FINDINGS AND THEIR DISCUSSION

#### A. Findings Related to the First Question of the Study

The activities that enhance meaningful communication will be shown and contrasted with other activities. The table below presents the frequencies and percentages of all the communication life skills included in the student's book in “Action Pack 10”.

TABLE 1  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE COMMUNICATION LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK10"

communication life skills Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Oral and non-oral communication with others.	13	38
Listening carefully to others	6	18
Giving and receiving feedback.	5	15
Expressing feelings, ideas, and opinions clearly	10	29
communication Activities- total	34	18.8
Others	117	81.2
Total	144	100%

The table above shows that the frequencies range between 5 and 13. It also shows that the percentages range between 15 and 38. Through looking into the results, one can notice that oral and non-oral communication with others has the highest percentage 38%. 13 activities encourage EFL learners to communicate with others. The second domain which indicates "Expressing of feelings, ideas, and opinions clearly" got a percentage of 29. This means that 10 activities encourage the learners to express their feelings, ideas, and opinions clearly. The third and the fourth criteria which represent Listening carefully to what others say and Giving and receiving feedback have the lowest frequencies and percentages in a percentage of 15% and 18%.

This means that many activities give the learners opportunities to learn the language in context and apply their knowledge to cope with real-life situations. Moreover, these kinds of activities allow students to engage in practicing new features of the language, vocabulary, grammatical form, pronunciation ... etc. They also focus on working in small groups and pairs to paraphrase ideas, ask questions, and share their feelings and ideas to solve the problem and develop their language proficiency.

According to General Guidelines for the English Language (2006), it is expected that the "students will speak and interact in English in a variety of authentic contexts in light of the basic principles of communicative language teaching". The general guidelines assure that "through learning English, students will be able to develop confidence, competence, and self-reliance ..." (General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language

Curriculum, 2006, p. 9). Communicative activities provide EFL learners with opportunities for natural learning of language in context to increase their interaction and communication.

An example to clarify this issue is presented on p. 13: "Work in pairs. What have you already done today? What haven't you done yet?". The main function of this activity is to express opinions freely. In this activity, the teacher needs to explain that their students are going to work in pairs to talk about what they have/haven't done.

A: I have already my school bag for tomorrow.

B: I haven't found a topic for my project yet.

Another example listed in Unit Two, page 23, as explained in sample activity 2 is mainly based on the discussion in groups to collect more information about super scientists who won the Nobel prizes. The function of this activity is to think and speak about super scientists who won the Nobel Prizes. This task is designed to encourage learners to have more exchangeable conversations to practice language for a communicative purpose. A third reading activity on page 108 is about Ajloun Forest Natural Reserve. This article is considered an authentic one; the students should have information about Ajloun Forest Natural Reserve from many resources such as media which is a good example of presenting authenticity. This task is designed to support students to read about important places in their environment. The teacher allows time for the students to read the article. The students are encouraged to collect information about this natural reserve and other places in Jordan from many resources such as the media which is a good example of presenting authenticity. According to these authentic activities, it is clear that most of the activities in Action Pack 10 are related to the students' real environment. Since the Jordanian curriculum is supposed to follow the CLT approach, activities should be similar to what is likely to happen in the real life situations.

### B. Findings Related to the Second Question of the Study

Table 2 presents the frequencies and percentages of all the problem-solving life skills activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 2  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Problem-solving life skills Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Identifying alternative solutions to problems	8	25
Accomplishing certain purposes by using systematic plans.	9	28
Thinking about what will happen after making my decision.	5	16
Conflict resolution.	2	6
Managing time during accomplishing a certain purpose	5	16
Solving problems that are presented to me.	3	9
<b>Problem solving Activities( total)</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that there are 32 activities out of 144 in the Pupil's Book that represent problem-solving activities with a percentage of 22. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester. The item "Accomplishing certain purpose by using systematic plans" got the highest frequency with a percentage of 28%. "Identifying alternative solutions to problems" got the second frequency with a percentage of 25%. The lowest item is "Conflict resolution" which obtained a percentage of 6 %. An example to clarify this issue is presented on p.13. The main context of this activity is "Read the text and find the correct sentences". This task is designed to help students to think critically to fill the gap with correct sentences in the text. The teacher asks students to read the paragraphs about the birds in Jordan carefully, and then try to choose the correct sentence to complete the text. Another example is on page 27: the main context is "Read the text and list all the words for people connected with science". This task is designed to help students to think critically to read the text silently, list all the words for people "the famous scientist" connected with science then complete the table. It is found that practicing these kinds of solve problem activities, provides EFL learners with opportunities to concentrate while learning new information and interacting with the context effectively.

### C. Findings Related to the Third Question of the Study

TABLE 3  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE INCLUDED DECISION-MAKING SKILLS IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Decision-making skills	Frequency	Percentage
Setting main aims.	0	0
recording all points of view when making any decision	0	0
Recording options before making any decision.	3	75%
Assessing decisions	1	25%
<b>Decision -making Activities( total)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2.78%</b>
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>97.22%</b>
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100%</b>

This domain is not given much space among the other activities, Table 3 shows that there are only 4 activities out of 144 in the student's Book that present activities that have decision –making oriented, with a percentage of 2.7. This means that these activities are not fully represented. The item "Recording options before making any decision." got the highest frequency with a percentage of 75%. While "Assessing decisions " got the second frequency with a percentage of 25%. An example of this could be the activity that asks students to take a decision and react quickly "How Fast Do You React?". Another example could be the activity about a quotation. Students are asked to read it and give their opinion if they agree or disagree with it.

#### *D. Findings Related to the Fourth Question of the Study*

Table 4 presents the frequencies and percentages of all the critical thinking activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 4  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE CRITICAL THINKING LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

<b>Critical Thinking Life Skills</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Recognizing relevant information.	8	26.6
Having a deep understanding of subjects.	4	13.3
Findings solutions to different problems.	5	16.6
Searching answers to challenging questions.	6	20
Self-Confident in attaining a reasonable conclusion.	4	13.3
Seeking the truth	1	3.3
Organizing thoughts to reflect logical thinking.	2	6.6
<b>Critical thinking activities (total)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20.8</b>
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>79.2</b>
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 shows that there are 30 activities out of 144 in the Student's Book that represent critical thinking activities with a percentage of 20. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester clearly and regularly. The item "recognizing relevant information" got the highest frequency with a percentage of 26.6%. "Searching answers to challenging questions" got the second frequency with a percentage of 20%. The lowest item is "Searching for the truth" which obtained a percentage of 3 %.

Most of the activities which develop critical thinking are mainly to ask students to create new ideas about their expected future or to write a paragraph, sentences, suggestions, opinions and ...etc. Since students need to use language in real-life situations, critical thinking helps them to be more communicative and makes the class more active and dynamic. Students have to think critically, analyze, and give shreds of evidence to come up with new ideas and develop their understanding to become creative, enthusiastic, and positive respondents. Developing the learner's creativity of thinking leads to meaningful communication. Language is used to express our ideas and emotions and it is considered the main way to interact with different groups and individuals of people. In other words, it is the main mean of Socializing.

The general guidelines assure that "communicate information, ideas, opinions, and feelings, and utilize critical thinking skills to make value judgments on texts, context, and social norms in light of Arabic- Islamic culture and values; analyze information and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials based on evidence draw from other sources" (General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language Curriculum, 2006, p. 10).

An example of this could be the activity that is designed to help students solve problems in real situations. The teacher allows time for the students to study the information. Go round and explain any problems, then ask the class for their initial reactions – how can we protect our environment? Read out the question and ask different students for their opinions. Put the students in groups of three (AAA, BBB, and CCC). Ask them to read the appropriate role card carefully. Then ask them to discuss and note down their ideas about how our environment can be protected. Go around and make suggestions if necessary. Ask the students to look at the Useful Language 28 box. Then put students in new groups (ABC). Each student takes turns putting forward their character's point of view. In their groups, students discuss different ideas and try to persuade each other. Groups think critically and give solutions to the problem by acting in the roles.

#### *E. Findings Related to the Fifth Question of the Study*

Table 5 presents the frequencies and percentages of all the personal/social life skills activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 5  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE PERSONAL/SOCIAL LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Personal/ social life skills	Frequency	Percentage
Developing meaning of social life.	8	34.8
Giving the value of morals, values, and rights.	2	8.7
Showing understanding for others' rights and values.	0	0
Gaining social responsibilities.	2	8.7
Taking part as a member of a team.	10	43.5
Showing Loyalty to social morals and values.	1	4.3
<b>Personal/ social life Activities (total)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 presents the percentages and frequencies for each item in the personal/ social life skills. There are 23 activities out of 144 in the student's book that represent personal/social activities with a percentage of 16. The item "Taking part as a member of a team." got the highest frequency with a percentage of 43.5%. "Developing meaning of social life" got the second frequency with a percentage of 34.8%. The lowest item is "Showing understanding for others' values" which obtained a percentage of 0. Languages cannot be taught in isolation from their culture. But, the main question here is: which culture should be taught in a foreign language? Is it the target culture? Or the learner's own culture? It seems that the general guidelines and general and specific outcomes of Jordan's curriculum tend more to the teaching of the learners' own culture.

General Guidelines for the English Language (2006) stated that students are expected to speak and interact in pair and group work in a variety of authentic contexts in light of basic interactive learning and communicative approach. Consequently, EFL textbooks provide learners with authentic activities and tasks that have been carefully sequenced to help them cope with the real-world communication demands they will face. The main role of EFL teachers is to prepare their students to use the language in a real situation. An example to clarify this issue is presented in the activity which is designed to help students to develop meaning in social life, Contribute to them as a member of a team and show understanding of other cultures, values, and rights. A speaking activity entitled "Giving opinion". This activity indicates that the students discuss what people can do to save the rainforests in the group. In this activity, students are aware of how and why they should protect the environment. Another activity is an article about one of the most Islamic palaces "Alhambra Palace". This article is related to our Islamic architecture in Jordan and we are proud of this kind of Islamic heritage. Tomlinson (1998) stated that "most learners are more at ease with text and illustrations that they can relate to their own culture than they are with those which are culturally exotic" (p. 8).

#### F. Findings Related to the Sixth Question of the Study

Table 6 presents the frequencies and percentages of all Leadership life skills / Self-awareness activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 6  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE LEADERSHIP LIFE SKILLS / SELF-AWARENESS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Leadership life skills / Self-awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Organizing a group to achieve its goal.	4	19
Implementing different leadership styles.	2	10
Sharing others in leadership	3	14
Working cooperatively with others.	8	38
Showing responsibility for group activities.	2	10
Self and peer assessment.	2	10
<b>Leadership life skills/Self-awareness activities (total)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14.6</b>
<b>Other activities</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>85.4</b>
<b>Total activities</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6 presents the percentages and frequencies for each item related to leadership life skills. There are 21 activities out of 144 in the student's book that represent self-awareness and leadership activities with a percentage of 14.6. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester clearly and give prominence to pair and group work activities. The item "Working cooperatively with others" got the highest frequency with a percentage of 38%. "Organizing a group to reach its goal." got the second frequency with a percentage of 19%. "Implementing different leadership styles", "Showing responsibility for group activities" and "Self and peer assessment" got the same and lowest frequency in the percentage of 10%. These kinds of activities urge the learners to work cooperatively together in pairs or groups to increase interactive learning in the classroom. In addition, these activities encourage others to share in

leadership. For example, the researcher finds out the following pair and group work activities: In Unit 1, page 19, the activity asks students to discuss in pairs or groups some questions about an object that they can see in class Such as describing it to their friends briefly. Can your friends guess what the object is? By working in pairs or groups, students can exchange their ideas about the topic which will be more beneficial and make the class more effective and successful. Pair and group work activities are very useful to improve students' skills such as communication, sharing and getting knowledge, cooperation, and self-expression.

Such pair and group activities stimulate interaction in the classroom. Students can increase their language store since they can exchange their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Pair and group activities enable students to be cooperative, with each other to negotiate to mean, promote students' responsibility and autonomy, enhance students' motivation, and reduce stress to create a positive classroom climate. All of these advantages of Pair and group activities can provide students with opportunities for natural learning of language to increase their interaction and communication.

## IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Life skill education plays a crucial role in everyone's daily life. It is a type of education in which skills are developed to polish the learners' personalities to deal with any kind of situation and face struggles to achieve their goals. By educating life skills, learners can develop self-confidence in them. It makes them cooperative and communicative. It prepares them to take quick action in any unfavorable circumstances. Consequently, it is very important to add life skill education to the school curriculum to achieve better outcomes. The findings showed variation in the frequencies of the six main domains and each domain as well. This means that these kinds of activities are represented and distributed in the first semester clearly.

According to the results of this paper, the researcher recommends the need of administrating many training workshops on the crucial role of life skills activities. In addition, Life skills should be taken into account in all educational stages, from the primary stage in school to the advanced level at universities.

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