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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Readability of Jordan High Note Textbooks for 9th and 11th Grades in Jordan for the Academic Year 2024/2025

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ABSTRACT

There is no doubt that textbooks are considered a milestone in the educational process; therefore, assessing their readability is essential. This study examines the readability of Jordan High Note textbooks for 9th and 11th grades during the 2024/2025 academic year in Jordan, utilizing the online Fry Graph calculation to assess the texts' readability, their alignment with student proficiency levels and global standards, as well as the efficacy of the Fry Graph in indicating the readability level of the texts. The study sample comprises 25 randomly selected reading texts, 15 from grade 9 and 10 from grade 11. This study adopts a quantitative descriptive design. The results indicate that the Fry Graph illustrates the texts' readability level, indicating that all the reading texts examined in this study fall below the learners' expected level, are thus considered readable, and lack alignment with the global standards. Some texts are marked as invalid according to the Fry Graph criteria. Numerous recommendations are proposed to have more scrutiny for any new curriculum, considering the global standards and the students' levels.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an essential skill. Not only is it important to read the words, but it is also vital to comprehend what they represent in the context. Reading is not a skill that involves memorization; it is a process that involves comprehension and critical thinking. It is our primary means of acquiring knowledge (Pradani, 2021). Since reading is the basis of studying cross-disciplinary topics, it is one of the crucial skills that should be mastered. Finding a career or attending college requires a great degree of reading ability. The ability to read offers many advantages, including adding to the repertoire of knowledge, opening up new information, explaining new information to others, increasing concentration, and also for entertainment; hence, the ability to improve individual life, abilities in school, and the development of a nation depends on this capacity (Rintaningrum, 2019).

School textbooks are undoubtedly one of the primary resources for learning. A significant number of students today obtain their knowledge and information from textbooks. When constructed on pedagogical principles, they serve as a source of learning, study, and enjoyment, containing valuable instructional material presented engagingly and comprehensibly (Al-Khalidi, 2013). Therefore, they should be readable, understandable, and suitable for learners' levels.

Nuttal (2005) claims that a good textbook has to accomplish three main goals. It first has to be suitable for the subjects of the chosen pupils. It should be just demanding, engaging, and entertaining for that audience. Second, it has to be exploitable, meaning it should be set up to achieve particular language goals with different instructional approaches. Readability is the third goal; it covers

structural and lexical complexity and the suitable difficulty level for pupils. To accomplish their goals, especially for EFL textbooks, evaluating the readability of textbooks is essential.

Many EFL learners find reading texts difficult, which can prevent them from acquiring the gist of the text. One way to help learners overcome this obstacle is to measure the readability of the texts. Assessing readability levels is the most straightforward method of ascertaining the appropriateness of texts for the audience. Text readability is a concept frequently related to readability formulas, which are statistical methods established by specialists to evaluate a text's relative difficulty objectively. The readability of the text is determined by the components of the text, which include the number of sentences, the number of words in each phrase, the number of syllables in each word, and the number of words that have three or more syllables. No consideration is given to external considerations, such as the student's capacity to comprehend the material being taught (Kiselnikov et al., 2021).

Many scholars have defined readability. Richards et al. (1992) defined readability as the ease with which written content can be read and comprehended. This process is contingent upon various criteria, such as the average sentence length, the quantity of novel vocabulary, and the grammatical intricacy of the language employed in a passage. McLaughlin (1969) defined readability as the extent to which students had natural reading materials. Dale and Chall (1949) defined readability as the entirety of the communication from each component in a specific segment of written text that affects readers' comprehension. The readability of a text affects its ease of reading and comprehension. Data processing converts data into information, which holds value only when comprehensively understood. The readability metric, an essential mathematical equation, is crucial in forecasting the reader's understanding of written material. The readability score of a text document influences both the accessibility of the content and the speed of reading. Inferior text quality in a document can lead to extended comprehension durations for readers (Akgül, 2022).

EFL/ESL educators, like other English instructors, have historically utilized readability algorithms to align texts with students' reading proficiency levels (Greenfield, 2024). Readability formulas use multiple regression equations to predict a text's reading difficulty based on measurable characteristics such as letter count and sentence length. Many readability formulas have been conducted throughout history to test whether texts are readable: the Dale-Chall Readability Formula, the SMOG Formula, the Flesch Reading Ease, the Gunning Fog Index, and the Fry Graph are some examples (Long, 2023).

In 1968, Edward Fry developed the Fry Graph. He also extensively studied readability and reading and presided over the National Reading Conference, establishing himself as a worldwide authority on people and their reading preferences. He developed the Fry Formula while tutoring in Uganda. Librarians and teachers thought it quite helpful for determining readers' reading ages. It is compatible with other high-quality formulas, such as the Flesch Reading Ease, Dale-Chall, and Spache Readability Formula (Gillham, 2024).

This study uses the Fry Graph to measure the readability of *Jordan High Note* textbooks for 9th and 11th grade. Since The Jordanian Ministry of Education has demonstrated significant interest in the textbooks utilized for instructing students in public schools and has consistently endeavored to enhance them at both primary and secondary levels, it has decided to adopt this book, which is a new version featuring updated themes, introduced in the 2024/2025 academic year, for Jordanian schools. This decision has become in line with the approval of the Higher Council of the National Center for Curriculum Development in their meeting No. 3/2024 on 7/5/2024 and the Board of Education decision No. 53/2024 in their conference No. 3/2024 on 26/6/2024 for the 2024/2025 academic year (National Center for Curriculum Development, 2024).

Jordan High Note is a lively and demanding five-level course available to Jordanian students from the A2 to C1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and 30 to 85 on the Global Scale of English (GSE). The course looks at the differences between classroom reality and young adult life. It is aimed to inspire and challenge modern teenagers so they may realize their ambitious goals: pass school-leaving and external exams, communicate fluently and precisely in English in a variety of circumstances, become successful university students, and change their employment outlook. This is attained by strengthening their confidence while speaking English and arming students with language skills and life competencies (Darrand, 2024).

According to Pearson, the author of *Jordan High Note*, the curriculum is founded on a synthesis of school curricula, external examination criteria, and the Global Scale of English. This guarantees extensive language coverage and an appropriate equilibrium of general English, examination preparation, and practical life skills. Students will acquire appropriate language skills and effectively practice to enhance their examination performance and communicate with assurance. Moreover, exam preparation is intricately integrated into the progression of a course. Throughout the book, students develop their examination methods and confidence through sequential activities and task-oriented examination advice. The meticulous language development in *Jordan High Note*, its systematic skill strategies, and diverse exam tasks may also benefit students preparing for other international examinations, such as the TOEFL, IELTS, or International GCSE (Darrand,2024).

According to the English Global Scale suggested by Pearson and the CEFR levels adopted by the National Center for Curriculum Development, this curriculum is supposed to help learners achieve levels B1 and C1 by the end of grade 9 and grade 11, respectively. Consequently, assessing the texts utilized in *Jordan High Note* for these grades is essential, as they have influenced students' academic performance and motivation to learn English and to investigate whether the reading passages in the mentioned books align with these levels (B1, C1).

Numerous Studies and assessments of readability levels—nationally and internationally—have been carried out. For Jordan's 10th and 11th grade EFL students, Alghazo (2024) assessed the readability of the *Action Pack* textbooks. The reading contents in the textbooks were analyzed for EFL students in both the 10th and 11th grades. The study sample consisted of fifty percent of the entire text. The research assessed textbook worldwide readability using two techniques: Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level (FKRE) and Flesch Reading Ease (FRE). According to the results, the textbooks' reading levels for 10th and 11th-grade EFL students fall short of the expected level. Based on these facts, the suggestions made for course designers included changing textbook reading materials and evaluating their readability before publication.

Al Hatamleh and Yacoub (2024) examined how easily Applied Arabic textbooks for Al-Balqa Applied University in Jordan could be read. To complete this, students were given a Cloze Test on four texts from the Applied Arabic textbook they had not read before. The research involved 54 university students in all. With students' scores ranging from 0.46 to 0.66, the four books were shown to be inside the frustration threshold. Readability did not demonstrate any statistically significant gender variations. Hence, both male and female students struggle to understand book contents. The study advised that textbooks be tested on students to evaluate their readability level before being implemented to solve students' challenges while reading material.

In Indonesia, Hanifah et al. (2022) measured the readability degree of a high school EFL textbook. Using grade-level calculations, the Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch Kincaid, the researchers assessed 26 textbook portions using the Coh-matrix program. The findings showed that the books were written at a lower level than the expected readers. Some suggested recommendations were that English teachers incorporate other reading materials suitable for their students to complement the textbook.

Examining the readability level of 12th-grade English textbooks, Abusa'saleek and Khataybeh (2020) evaluated the linguistic appropriateness of the reading texts used in *Action Pack 12* for 12th-graders. The study used a qualitative descriptive method, applying the Fry Graph to evaluate the degree of readability. The study sample consisted of 20 randomly chosen books among 36. According to the results, eighty percent of the twenty texts fell below Jordan's 12th-grader proficiency level. According to the findings, just 5% of the books fit 12th graders; 15% were useless. Furthermore, proving that *Action Pack 12* was linguistically appropriate for 12th graders were the outcomes.

Kodom and Pearl (2019) examined the readability level of English language textbooks for diploma students at the University of Cape Coast. The Flesch Reading Ease and Flesch-Kincaid grade level indices were employed to assess the reading difficulties of the textbook sections. The findings indicated that the complexity of the textbooks ranged from "moderately challenging" to "challenging." The outcome was determined to be statistically distinct from the readability of the suggested public documents—a recommendation to amend the textbooks and compose them at a readability level appropriate for the target audience.

Çetinkaya et al. (2018) investigated the readability of fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade mathematics course books developed by the 2017 curriculum and supplied to schools by MEB. The Çetinkaya-Uzun Readability Formula was used quantitatively to evaluate the mathematical course book readability. To ascertain their readability degrees, the study examined the typical word and sentence lengths in secondary mathematics course books. According to the findings, grade level, word, and sentence length averages showed no linear correlation. The grade level does not match the readability ratings and text levels in the evaluated secondary school math courses. Reading ratings for information and solution texts in the fifth-grade course book were thus lower than those in other grades' course books; readability scores for question texts were lower than those in all grades' course books except the eighth-grade course book. The evaluated secondary school math course book's content ranged in readability from educational to frustrating.

Khataybeh and Sakal (2017) looked at how well readability evaluation equations suited student levels and how effectively they established the appropriateness of reading materials for the Jordanian curriculum *Action Pack* 1st, 7th, and 9th grades. For native speakers, hand-calculated readability tests include the Fry Graph, Smog Formula, and Flesch Chain. Their usage in evaluating foreign language reading materials is not very prevalent. The investigation revealed that the present evaluation forms do not consider variations in text difficulty and are inadequate in estimating students' actual levels.

Gutierrez (2014) assessed English and Filipino passages using two readability formulas to ascertain the difficulty level and appropriateness of the texts for the target readership. The evaluation results indicated that just 6.01% and 8.41% of the passages from the English textbooks corresponded to the target level according to the Fry and SMOG formulas, respectively. The bulk of the English sections yielded no findings and were therefore considered invalid. The SMOG assessment indicated that most passages exceeded the target reader level by two or more grades. Simultaneously, none of the assessed Filipino passages corresponded to the desired level; the majority were deemed invalid, and numerous passages yielded no results according to the Fry readability formula. The SMOG assessment indicated that most paragraphs exceeded the intended reader level by six to ten levels. Findings indicated that current readability formulas may not be suitable for Filipino and Philippine English passages, necessitating the creation of a readability formula for Filipino writings in both languages.

Rahmawati and Lestari (2012) examined the readability degrees of reading texts in 10th-grade English language textbooks, *Developing English Competencies for Grade X* and *English Today 1.* The study sample consisted of six books from each book. The researchers applied the Fry Graph technique and the Flesch Reading Ease Formula. According to both computations, the books' readability

matched a seventh-grade level—below the expected tenth-grade level. The results showed that the *English Today 1* texts were more complicated than the *Developing English Competencies for Grade X*.

The previous studies examined the readability of numerous textbooks using diverse methods such as the Fry Graph, Smog Formula, Cloze Test, Flesch Reading Ease, and Flesch Kincaid grade-level formulas. This study is consistent with the research conducted by Khataybeh and Sakal (2017) and Abusa'aleek and Khataybeh (2020), who employed the Fry Graph to assess the readability of several textbooks within the Jordanian setting. Also, Gutierrez (2014) and Rahmawati and Lestari (2012) employed the Fry Graph alongside other formulas in their research. They concluded that there was no alignment between the text and learners' levels. This study differs from the research conducted by Alghazo (2024), Al Hatamleh, and Yacoub (2024), which employed alternative formulae such as the Flesch Reading Ease and the Flesch-Kincaid grade-level formula, as well as the Cloze Test, respectively.

This study is distinct as it examines the readability level of a new curriculum released by Pearson for Jordanian students in the 2024/2025 academic year, utilizing the Fry Graph and comparing the results to international standards. It examines two grades 9 and 11 textbooks that prepare students to transition from high school to university. This study seeks to assess the readability of these textbooks and determine whether the reading passages align with students' proficiency levels, the worldwide English language standards established by Pearson and the CEFR, and the reading passage levels of international examinations. Consequently, it is crucial to examine *Jordan High Note* for the above reasons and to assist teachers, educators, and publishers revise these textbooks.

Problem of the Study

Reading texts in a foreign language is crucial for EFL or ESL students; however, it presents significant challenges for them. In Jordan, most students struggle to understand the meaning of texts, resulting in their inability to grasp the central ideas or answer related questions, creating challenges for teachers and learners. Reading sessions are typically exhausting and monotonous for Jordanian pupils, primarily due to the complexity of the texts, which often exceed their proficiency levels, rendering them mismatched. Furthermore, upon completing high school and transitioning to universities or workplaces, students encounter the challenge of inadequately comprehending the necessary materials for their studies or jobs. This issue extends to international examinations, which require readability and alignment of the reading passages in school textbooks with students' proficiency levels to enhance their competencies and prepare them for the coming stages in their lives.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to examine the efficacy of the Fry Graph in determining the precise readability levels of reading passages from the *Jordan High Note* textbooks for the 9th and 11th grades. It also seeks to assess the texts' readability, alignment with students' proficiency levels, and correlation to the English Global Scale.

Questions of the Study

1. To what extent does the Fry Graph formula reveal the exact level of the reading texts from the *Jordan High Note* textbooks?
2. To what extent are the reading passages from *Jordan High Note* textbooks readable?
3. To what extent do the reading passages from *Jordan High Note* textbooks match the students' levels?
4. To what extent do the reading passages from *Jordan High Note* textbooks correlate with the English Global Scale and CEFR?

Operational Definition of the Study's Terms

Readability

In this study, readability means the extent to which the content is comprehensible to the students as it aligns with their proficiency levels.

Fry Graph

It is the online tool used in this study to measure the texts' readability.

Jordan High Note

It is the new curriculum the Ministry of Education in Jordan adopted to teach grades 9 and 11 for the academic year 2024/2025. This curriculum is written by Pearson and adapted by the National Center for Curriculum Development to correlate with the Jordanian context.

Global Scale of English (GSE)

The Global Scale of English (GSE) is a standardized framework for assessing and monitoring English language proficiency. Pearson created it to offer a detailed and precise framework for learners, educators, and institutions to evaluate and facilitate English language acquisition progress. It spans from 10 to 90, providing more nuanced levels of competency than the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), which has broader categories such as A1, A2, B1, etc. (Pearson, n.d.)

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

It is a globally acknowledged standard for delineating language ability. It offers a definitive framework to evaluate and classify an individual's proficiency in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing a foreign language. The CEFR, created by the Council of Europe, is extensively utilized in global education and certification frameworks. It is divided into six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2 (Council of Europe, n.d.).

Limitations of the Study

This study solely covers the reading materials for the first semester of the Jordanian Curriculum *Jordan High Note* for the 9th and 11th grades for the academic year 2024/2025.

Significance of the Study

Based on the fact that reading is one of the primary skills in learning a foreign language since it is a key to understanding and getting new ideas, in addition to the need to provide the learners with adequate readable texts that match their levels and make the reading sessions fruitful and enjoyable, the notion of using Fry Graph to assess the readability of *Jordan High Note* textbooks has emerged since this formula is widely used due to its effectiveness in determining the text's levels and their match with the students levels. The *Jordan High Note* curriculum is a new edition with improved content, launched in the school year 2024/2025. Therefore, evaluating the texts utilized at *Jordan High Note* for grades 9 and 11 is essential, as they have impacted students' academic performance and motivation to learn English.

Consequently, this study is notable as it is, to the researcher's knowledge, the first in Jordan to assess the readability level of the textbooks *Jordan High Note* for 9th and 11th grades, specifically in its latest version. Furthermore, it is crucial to introduce other academics and educators to the evaluation of texts using the Fry Formula. This study's results may urge the Ministry of Education in Jordan to modify English language textbooks utilizing the Fry Formula to suit the learners' levels and align with English Global Scales.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the study

This study used a descriptive quantitative design to measure the readability of the reading texts in the *Jordan High Note* Curriculum for 9th and 11th grades. The Fry Graph was used to assess the readability of the selected texts.

Population and Sample of the Study

This study's population is the first semester of *Jordan High Note* textbooks for 9th and 11th grades for the academic year 2024/2025. Each book consists of 5 units with a total of 23 reading texts. The researcher randomly selected 25 reading texts as a sample for this study: 15 reading texts from grade 9 and 10 reading passages from grade 11. Fry's internet-based calculation was executed to ascertain their readability level.

Instrument of the Study

The present study collected data using the Fry Graph Readability Formula. The complexity of the reading text was determined using this formula. The instructions for the Fry Graph formula are as follows:

a. Select three samples from the text; nonetheless, this study encompasses 25 samples. Every sample exceeds 100 words.
b. The syllable count for each sample should be computed to get the average.
c. The total number of sentences for each sample should be computed to get the average.
d. After calculating the average number of syllables and sentences, plot the average on the graph to determine the readability level.
e. The convergence of the average number of sentences and syllables signifies the reading grade level of the text.

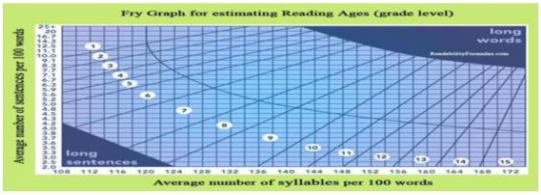

Figure 1: Fry Graph Scale

Data Analysis Procedure

The study sample comprised 25 random texts. All these texts were assessed to determine the readability level of the 9th and 11th grades. 15 were chosen from 9th grade and 10 from 11th grade. The chosen texts were downloaded and examined utilizing the following link: https://readabilityformulas.com/calculator-fry-graph-readability-formula.php. This website assessed the content using the number of words and syllables. To conduct the readability evaluation test, the downloaded texts must include a minimum of 100 words. All the chosen texts were above 100 words. The website calculated the number of sentences and the number of syllables automatically and gave the results on a graph showing the readability level for each text.

The researcher employed the subsequent scale to assess the readability level:
a. *Simple* if the score indicates a grade below 9 or 11. This indicates that the text is accessible to students.
b. *Achieve the Grade* if the score indicates grade 9 or 11. This indicates that the books are suitable for 9th and 11th-grade students.

c. *Challenging* if the score exceeds a grade above 9 or 11. The examined texts are complex.
d. *Invalid* if the score indicates the shaded region on the Fry Graph (long sentences and long words).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's findings indicate that the Fry Graph illustrates the readability of the examined texts, revealing that the reading materials for grades 9 and 11 do not correspond with the student's competency levels. The reading passages are simple and below the students' levels, making them readable and approachable, as shown in Tables 1 and 2. Furthermore, the reading passages examined in this study do not align with the English Global Scales and the CEFR (as shown in Table 3 and Figures 2 and 3) when juxtaposed with the standard levels of reading passages sourced from the British Council, as illustrated in Table 4, nor do they correlate with the reading passage levels derived from the international examinations, as demonstrated in Table 5.

Table 1: Readability Results of the 9th Grade Reading Texts

No	Text Title	Number of Syllables	Number of Sentences	Readability Level
1	The Greatest Gift of Life	131.55	14.62	3
2	VIPs: Very Intelligent People	152.40	23.58	Invalid
3	Graham Hughes	143.06	16.67	4
4	Qatar: A Sporting First	165.77	19.14	Invalid
5	An Inspiring Life	137.61	14.96	4
6	The Four Ps to a Perfect Presentation	141.65	19.95	3
7	The World is your Oyster	136.67	19.26	3
8	A Bad Travel Day	123.48	21.27	1
9	Mustafa Madi, Mystery Shopper	137.14	19.22	3
10	The Secrets of Advertising	144.44	19.56	4
11	Malek the Minimalist	132.08	16.98	2
12	Blue Zones' and What We Can All Learn from them	145.88	16.76	5
13	The Golden Age of Islam	159.12	19.34	Invalid
14	Historic Universities	157.85	17.10	Invalid
15	Treasure Island	116.87	18.09	1

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that only one reading passage aligns with grade 5 in the 9th-grade textbook, which is the highest grade level represented by the Fry Graph yet remains below the students' levels. Four passages were deemed invalid, indicating that 27% of the reading passages lacked a designated reading grade level. Two reading texts (13%) correlate with grade level 1, one reading text (6%) for grade 2, four reading texts (27%) for grade level 3, and three reading texts (20%) for grade level 4.

Regarding the number of sentences and syllables, the text "Blue Zones and What We Can All Learn from them" had the highest number, 16.76 and 145.88, respectively. In contrast, the text entitled "Treasure Island" had the lowest number, 18.09 and 116.87, respectively.

Table 2: Readability Results of the 11th-Grade Reading Texts

No	Text Title	Number of Syllables	Number of Sentences	Readability Level

1	Messaging Through Time	141.10	9.39	6
2	Making Contact	147.68	12.24	6
3	The Future's	143.14	16.05	4
4	They Need Saving Too!	150.57	12.86	7
5	Oliver Twist	135.24	15.16	3
6	Meet Two Readers Who Have Had Experiences with Extreme Weather	133.97	17.22	3
7	An Amazing Woman	140.29	18.20	3
8	The Jordan Museum	156.97	12.07	Invalid
9	Food And Science	162.35	17.77	Invalid
10	Not of an Age, But for All Time.	156.98	19.68	Invalid

Table 2 indicates that the highest grade level determined by the Fry Graph for 11th grade is for the text entitled They "Need Saving Too," with a readability level of 7, which is also below student levels. This text got the highest number of syllables and sentences, with 150.57 and 12.86, respectively. The lowest number of syllables and sentences went to "Meet Two Readers Who Have Had Experiences with Extreme Weather," with 133.97 and 17.22, respectively. It correlates with grade 3. Three texts were determined invalid, meaning that 30% did not have a reading grade level. 30% of the reading passages correlate to grade 3, 20% to grade 6, and 10% to grade 4.

It is notable from the previous tables that the Fry Graph demonstrates the readability of the selected texts from the *Jordan High Note* textbook for 9th grade and 11th grade. According to 9th grade, it effectively highlights the difference between the text level and the pupils' expected level, as they are meant to be in ninth grade. It also demonstrated the text's readability by simulating a lower level with simple, straightforward words and meanings. There are no problematic terms, and most of the structure is simple, consisting of basic sentences. Complex structures emerge occasionally. However, it assigned specific reading texts to a second-, third-, or fourth-grade level, which could be attributed to the fact that the Fry Graph is intended to measure the readability of authentic English texts produced for native speakers, not for materials designed for foreign learners. Based on this, the text may be appropriate for a native third- or fourth-grade speaker. The Fry Graph shows a considerable difference when comparing the texts in the book to actual third- or fourth-grade texts taught at these levels in Jordanian public schools. This suggests that while the Fry Graph helps demonstrate that the texts are readable and below the students' level, it does not produce accurate findings for assessing the proper level of these texts in a way consistent with the features of Jordanian students.

The same applies to the reading texts for 11th grade. The assessment tool indicates that the reading texts are at a lower level for the learners in this category and are indeed readable; nonetheless, they do not exceed the levels of the 7th, 6th, or 3rd grades, as depicted in Table 2. While it may be accurate for native learners, it may not apply to Jordanian learners. The Jordanian learners are undoubtedly at a lesser proficiency level than native speakers, and according to the Jordanian curricula, the texts may correspond to 8th or 9th-grade levels. Since the Fry Graph is an international tool and according to the prior outcomes, the above findings underscore the necessity of validating the CEFR levels adopted by the National Center for Curriculum Development and the English Global Scale suggested by Pearson. The National Center for Curriculum Development developed the Framework for English Language Standards and Performance Indicators for K-12 Learners in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, which associates student English language proficiency with the Common European Framework of Reference. It equips pupils to attain specified CEFR levels by fulfilling designated grades. Table 3 delineates the designated CEFR levels pupils are anticipated to achieve by the end of particular grades (National Center for Curriculum Development, 2024).

Table 3: CEFR Levels that Pupils are Expected to Achieve by the End of Particular Grades

End of Grade	CEFR Level
3	A1
6	A2
10	B1
12	B2/C1

Table 3 shows that students are supposed to obtain level B1 according to the CEFR levels by the end of grade 10 and C1 by the end of grade 12. This means that the reading passages in *Jordan High Note* for grades 9 and 11 are expected to help learners achieve similar levels. This correlates with Pearson's Global Scale of English, as shown in Figures 2 and 3, which states that 11th grade should correspond to levels B2 to C1, whereas 9th grade should correspond to levels A2+ to B1.

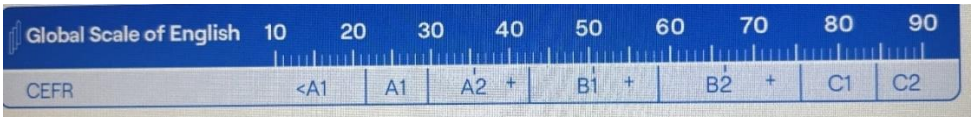

Figure 2: Correlation between GSE and CEFR

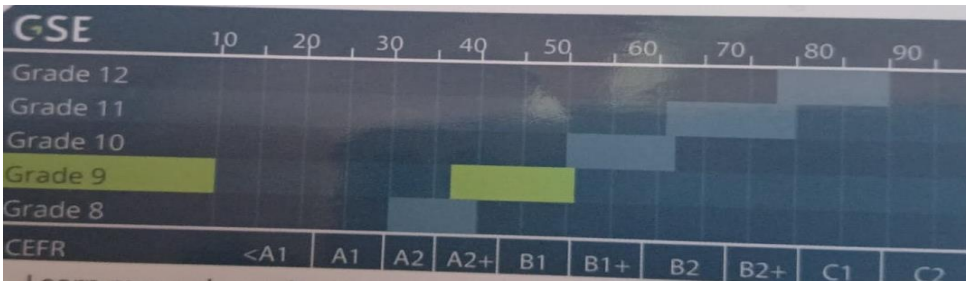

Figure 3: Correlation between GSE and School Grade Levels

However, the *Jordan High Note* textbooks discussed in this study do not appropriately represent these levels or adequately equip students to meet these standards by the end of ninth or eleventh grades.

To illustrate the difference between the Global English Scale and the determined levels in the *Jordan High Note* textbooks for grades 9 and 11, a group of reading passages was selected randomly from the British Council website that correspond to B1, B2, and C1 levels and analyzed in the same way using the Fry Graph, as illustrated in Table 4 and compared to the previous results in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 4: Results of Analyzing Random Reading Texts from the British Council Website

No	Text Title	Actual Level Determined by the British Council	Number of Syllables	Number of Sentences	Readability Level
1	A Travel Guide	B1	136.22	4.59	8
2	Digital Habits Across Generations	B1	134.26	4.63	8
3	TheTaj Mahal	B1	147.44	7.85	7
4	How to Spot Fake News	B1	139.47	6.30	7
5	Robot Teachers	B1	152.74	6.05	9
6	Asteroids	B2	147.66	4.44	10

7	Cultural Expectations and Leadership	B2	155.03	4.23	11
8	Star Wars and the Hero Myth	B2	142.34	4.26	9
9	The Buy Nothing Movement	B2	151.50	5.08	10
10	Why Bridges Collapse	B2	153.36	5.57	10
11	Cultural Behavior in Business	C1	164.65	3.32	14
12	How Humans Evolved Language	C1	148.35	4.88	9
13	Life on Mars	C1	160.31	6.11	11
14	Sustainable Supermarkets	C1	165.77	3.77	14
15	The State of the World	C1	146.01	5.25	9

Table 4 shows that five reading passages from levels B1, B2, and C1 were taken. However, when analyzed by Fry Graph, they correlate to various grade levels; for example, B1 aligns with 7, 8, and 9 grades, B2 aligns with 9, 10, and 11, C1 correlates with 9,10, and 14 grades demonstrating that the mentioned texts in *Jordan High Note* do not align with the actual level standards of the Global Scale because if they do, the analysis of Fry Graph should approximately yield grade 7 or 8 to 9th-grade reading texts and grade 9 or 10 to grade 11.

Moreover, as indicated in the introduction of *Jordan High Note* textbooks, the meticulous language development, methodical skill strategies, and diverse examination objectives of *Jordan High Note* may advantage students studying for other international assessments, such as the TOEFL, IELTS, or International GCSE (Darrand,2024). Therefore, the researcher examined random reading passages from IELTS (Academic and General) and TOEFL examinations to assess their readability levels using the Fry Graph formula and juxtapose them with Tables 1 and 2. The results are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Results of Analyzing Random Reading Texts from IELTS and TOEFL Exams

No	**Text Title**	**Exam Type**	**Number of Syllables**	**Number of Sentences**	**Readability Level**
1	Time Travel	IELTS/Academic	169.37	4.58	14
2	A Bar at the Folies	IELTS/Academic	157.72	3.90	12
3	Miles Davis - Icon and Iconoclast	IELTS/Academic	159.18	3.21	13
4	Beneficial Work Practices for the Keyboard Operator	IELTS/General	158.60	4.74	11
5	Calisthenics	IELTS/General	169.69	4.72	14
6	Making the Cut	IELTS/General	160.22	4.47	12
7	Risk-Taking and the Monkey Economy	TOEFL IBT	153.50	4.99	10
8	Smart Energy	TOEFL IBT	172.53	5.01	exceeded the maximum

					number of syllables
9	The Creators of Grammar	TOEFL IBT	153.53	5.65	**10**

Table 5 demonstrates that the reading passages from the IELTS exam, both academic and general, correspond to grade levels 11, 12, 13, and 14, according to the Fry Graph. In contrast, those from the TOEFL exam align with grade 10, with one passage surpassing the maximum syllable count. The table indicates that all reading passages in the international tests surpass the specified grade levels in *Jordan High Note.*

The assessment of *Jordan High Note* textbooks for 9th and 11th grades, B1, B2, and C1 texts taken from the British Council website, and IELTS and TOEFL exams consistently indicates that the reading passages in *Jordan High Note* textbooks discussed in this study do not align with the global standards nor adequately help learners to easily achieve success in these international exams because if so the readability levels of *Jordan High Note* texts should at least be close to the results of the international exams reading texts analyzed in this study or the other levels (B1, B2, and C1) not to have the significant gap observed in this study.

CONCLUSION

Considering that numerous learners in Jordan encounter difficulties with university materials post-high school, particularly those presented in English, finding it challenging to read or comprehend, even among those majoring in English disciplines, in addition to the need to pass international exams for educational and professional purposes, sparks the need to revise the reading passages in the new curriculum of *Jordan High Note*.

This study reveals that the reading passages in *Jordan High Note* for 9th and 11th grades are accessible, as they are below the students' proficiency levels, posing no reading or comprehension issues. The Fry graph illustrates the readability levels of reading passages in *Jordan High Note*, indicating a misalignment with the pupils' levels as prescribed by the CEFR standards outlined by the National Center for Curriculum Development and the Global Scale proposed by Pearson. Furthermore, the study reveals a significant disparity between the reading passages in *Jordan High Note* and those in international examinations, reinforcing the argument that the reading passages in *Jordan High Note* do not conform to international standards or the proficiency levels of students in these grades. This disparity may account for the significant divergence illustrated by the Fry graph between the actual grade level and the texts' readability.

Recommendations

The current study's results suggest the following recommendations:

1. The Ministry of Education should scrutinize this book more before suggesting it for 9th and 11th grades and ensure that the reading passages in these books align with the students' and standard levels.

2. It is recommended that the Fry Graph assessment tool be used to check the readability level of the reading passages in any new curriculum before adopting it to ensure its alignment with the students' and standards' levels.

3. The authors of this book should supply reading texts that correspond to the grade level and worldwide scale of English to support students' language progress and ensure they achieve the expected proficiency levels when they graduate from Jordanian high schools.

4. To bridge the gap of the current version taught in this academic year, 2024/2025, teachers are recommended to supplement the material with more reading passages that help to enhance learners' levels.

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