

TEACHING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN EFL CLASSROOMS: AN
INVESTIGATION OF TEACHER, STUDENT AND INSTITUTIONAL
PERCEPTIONS ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES OF THE 4C SKILLS

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INVESTIGATION OF TEACHER, STUDENT AND INSTITUTIONAL
PERCEPTIONS ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES OF THE 4C
SKILLS**

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN EFL CLASSROOMS: AN INVESTIGATION OF TEACHER, STUDENT AND INSTITUTIONAL PERCEPTIONS ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES OF THE 4C SKILLS

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The current study aimed at investigating the perceptions of English language instructors, preparatory school students and stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation and Professional Development units related to instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms by adopting exploratory case study approach. For this purpose, triangulation method was applied during data collection processes by conducting interviews with three groups of participants and gathering secondary data through document analysis. The findings revealed that the instructors were knowledgeable about the 4C skills and they had positive attitudes about integrating these skills in language classes while students had inadequate knowledge about the skills, but they believed the 4C skills to contribute their personal, academic and future professional lives. Students perceived communication and critical thinking as the most essential skills to acquire by prioritizing learning these skills over collaboration and creative thinking. Similarly, communication and critical thinking were found to be most frequently integrated skills in the lessons

according to the instructor and student responses. With regards to the challenges experienced by the students and the instructors, curriculum related constraints, lack of learner motivation and proficiency level, and exam oriented approaches were found to be the major obstacles. About the place of the 4C skills in the educational units, they were an integral part of the educational processes; however, there is still a need for further and more explicit integration. Recommendations for future implications include curriculum adjustments, integration of more authentic and engaging tasks, improvements in pre-service and in-service teacher training opportunities and promotion of formative assessment methods.

Keywords: 21st century skills, 4C skills, English language teaching, instructional practices, preparatory school education.

ÖZ

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİLEN SINIFLARDA 21. YÜZYIL BECERİLERİNİN ÖĞRETİMİ: 4C BECERİLERİNİN ÖĞRETİM UYGULAMALARINA İLİŞKİN ÖĞRETMEN, ÖĞRENCİ VE KURUM ALGILARININ İNCELENMESİ

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Bu çalışma, öğretim görevlilerinin, hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin ve Program Geliştirme, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme ve Mesleki Gelişim birimlerinin paydaşlarının 4C becerilerinin İngilizce sınıflarındaki öğretim uygulamalarına ilişkin algılarını keşfedici durum çalışması yaklaşımını uygulayarak araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, veri toplama sürecinde üç katılımcı grubuyla görüşmeler yapılarak ve doküman analizi yoluyla ikincil veriler toplanarak üçgenleme yöntemi uygulanmıştır. Bulgular, öğretim görevlilerinin 4C becerileri hakkında bilgili olduklarını ve bu becerileri dil sınıflarına entegre etme konusunda olumlu tutumlara sahip olduklarını, öğrencilerin ise beceriler hakkında kısıtlı bilgiye sahip olduklarını, ancak 4C becerilerinin kişisel, akademik ve gelecekteki mesleki yaşamlarına katkıda bulunacağına inandıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Öğrenciler iletişim ve eleştirel düşünmeyi kazanılması gereken en temel beceriler olarak algılamış ve bu becerileri öğrenmeye işbirliği ve yaratıcı düşünmeden daha fazla öncelik vermişlerdir. Benzer şekilde, öğretim

görevlisi ve öğrenci yanıtlarına göre iletişim ve eleştirel düşünme İngilizce derslerine en sık entegre edilen beceriler olarak bulunmuştur. Öğrenciler ve öğretmenler tarafından karşılaşılan zorluklarla ilgili olarak, müfredatla ilgili kısıtlamalar, öğrenci motivasyonunun ve yeterlilik düzeyinin eksikliği ve sınav odaklı yaklaşımlar en önemli engeller olarak bulunmuştur. 4C becerilerinin eğitim ünitelerindeki yeri konusunda ise bu beceriler eğitim süreçlerinin bir parçasıdır; ancak yine de daha fazla ve daha açık entegrasyona ihtiyaç vardır. Gelecekteki uygulamalar için öneriler arasında müfredat düzenlemeleri, daha gerçekçi ve ilgi çekici görevlerin entegrasyonu, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi öğretmen eğitimi fırsatlarında iyileştirmeler ve biçimlendirici değerlendirme yöntemlerinin teşvik edilmesi yer almaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: 21. yüzyıl becerileri, 4C becerileri, İngiliz dili öğretimi, öğretim uygulamaları, hazırlık okulu eğitimi.

To my beloved family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The current study aims to investigate the perceptions of the English language instructors, preparatory school students and the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units on the instructional practices of the 4C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and communication) in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms in a higher education institution in Ankara, Turkey. In this section, the background of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and research questions, and significance of the study will be presented.

1.2. Background of the Study

With the changing necessities of the era that we live in and the emergence of numerous new jobs and working fields as a result of the shift to the digital age, it has become inevitable to witness a number of changes in the teaching methods, strategies and techniques as well as educational goals in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes. To start with, as it is indicated by Higo (2016), we are not teaching in the classrooms that existed 20 years ago, we are not the teachers who taught the students who lived in those years, or we are no longer using the methods or techniques which were popular and believed to be correct at those times. Apart from these, many of the jobs in 2012, for instance, did not exist in 2002; just like many of the jobs that today's students will have in the future do not even exist today. Therefore, preparing the students for 21st century is not only about technology but the skills for global economy (Higo, 2016). Additionally, the skills, behaviours and dispositions that can be taught at schools are limited, and this initiates the necessity for the students to be

guided on learning to learn for 21st century (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). Thus, it urges us to educate and prepare our students in accordance with the necessary skills of the era that we live in for them to survive and adapt to the changing conditions in the future.

These essential skills are classified by providing a framework which represents a set of certain skills along with specific outcomes. Partnership for 21st Century Learning defines 21st century skills as “the skills, knowledge and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009, p.1). These are not separate skills which are taught in isolation, rather, they are a combination of subject matter knowledge, particular skills, expertise and literacies (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). In this framework, 21st century skills are categorised under three main groups as “Life & Career Skills”, “Learning & Innovation Skills”, and “Information, Media, & Technology Skills” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019a). It is also an obvious fact that these abilities are necessary not only for the 21st century, but in every era for good learning and achievement just like the interpersonal abilities, such as leadership, cultural competency, and life skills which were crucial in the past and will still be vital in the future (Kereluik et al., 2013).

Regarding the subsections of learning & innovation skills, the framework presents a set of four main skills which are referred to as the 4C skills; and they are identified as “creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). They can be regarded as “portable” skills which can be transferred from one occupation to another or from one task to another by the individuals (Pardede, 2020). These are also a core element of the life skills that the people should acquire in order to be able to pursue a successful work life. As we live in a world which urges people to adapt to the changing conditions and direct their careers accordingly, people may need to have different occupations during different periods of their lives. Therefore, only being educated in a specific field or only being equipped with a limited number of skills would not be enough. “The new social contract is different: only people who have the knowledge and skills to negotiate constant change and reinvent themselves for new situations will succeed.” (National Education Association, 2012).

In recent years, more and more countries have redesigned their curricula to adapt 21st century skills into their programs (Bedir, 2019). These adaptations have also a certain degree of impact on the instructional implications of the EFL classes. Besides teaching the fundamental language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary, today's classrooms aim at engaging students into more interactive, communicative and collaborative tasks where they are required to think critically, creatively and respond to these tasks by expressing themselves in a more effective way. The English classroom, therefore, must be a setting that can address and integrate a growing number of diverse modes of meaning formation, where the textual is related to the visual, the aural, the spatial, and the behavioural (Fandiño, 2013). To accomplish this, integration of the 21st century skills into the language courses is of utmost importance on the side of both the learners and the teachers.

Other than classroom implications, language learning and especially 4C skills integration necessitates the contributions of different educational parties with regards to curriculum development, testing and assessment units and the procedures supporting the professional development of the teachers in order to consolidate and standardize the education and assure efficient integration. Curriculum, as the most influential factor fostering the 4C skills integration, can be innovated to efficiently address these skills in EFL contexts. Elfi & Syarif (2021) suggest that innovation can be made in the planning, implementation, evaluation, and revision stages of the English syllabus by utilizing 4Cs skills. In addition, upon teaching the 4Cs, it becomes an inseparable part of teaching and learning processes to assess these skills; however, the literature reveals several challenges in assessing the 4C skills such as necessity of considering different variations influencing student performance on the 4Cs (Binkley, 2012) or the expense of designing assessment tools (Aldridge, 2010). Maryuningsih et al. (2020) develops an assessment instrument to evaluate student performance on the 4C skills in online discussion activities and they are found to be valid means of assessment. With the help of these types of improvements, there should be more explicit emphasis on the 4C skills evaluation in the systematic assessment systems of educational institutions.

As for another aspect, because the teachers play a significant role in fostering the 4C skills integration, it is almost an undeniable need to support their professional development in that sense. By this way, through professional development, EFL teachers must continue to update, upgrade, and refresh their ELT competencies, which comprise their professional and pedagogical competence (Nugroho, 2018).

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Despite the newest approaches to the language learning and teaching, when the literature is reviewed, it is revealed that there is still a lack of understanding, internalizing and applying certain methods into the EFL classes to integrate the 4C skills as an integral part of the learning & teaching processes. As suggested by Ağaoğlu & Demir (2020), the "transmission" model of compulsory education, in which teachers convey the factual knowledge to the learners via lectures and course books, is still the most often used strategy in much of the world which can also be a result of inefficient background knowledge of the teachers in this area along with lack of the necessary technological tools. Moreover, it is also indicated that assessing 21st century skills is more demanding than assessing the factual knowledge which leads to a reduce in the teachers' prioritization of these skills (Ağaoğlu & Demir, 2020). While these statements are shedding light to the current problems, there is still a need for further investigation on whether this situation only results from the teachers' dispositions and preferences or there are any other factors related to the other parties of the educational procedures such as the learners and institutional units which can also have an influence on this case.

In this regard, it is crucial to conduct a holistic investigation of the phenomenon by addressing different influential factors and different parties integrated in the instructional processes at a time. In the related literature, it is possible to witness a number of studies investigating the teacher attitudes and perceptions (Tsourapa, 2018; Tuzlukova et al., 2018; Şahin & Han, 2020; Akyıldız & Çelik, 2020; Tran, 2021) towards teaching the 4C skills as a whole or by focusing on specific skills namely critical thinking or creativity in English language lessons. These studies explored the perceived significance of the 4C skills for English language teachers, possible contributions of teaching these skills to learners' lives and how the 4Cs can

be beneficial to foster the academic success of the students during their language learning experiences. However, they were limited in revealing the instructional practices and teaching experiences of the teachers and explaining the methods and strategies that they adopt to effectively address the 4C skills. Similarly, again in relation to teacher experiences, in the studies by Saleh (2019), Fajriah & Septiyanti (2021), the researchers dwelled upon the challenges experienced by the language teachers while integrating the 4C skills as components of English lessons. Besides, Kurt & Önalın (2018) and Bedir (2019) turn their focus to a different point by investigating the perceptions of pre-service English language teachers in terms of the perceived significance of the 4C skills and how successfully they are prepared for integrating these skills in their future EFL classrooms. All these studies reveal quite comprehensive results in shedding light to the current situation of incorporating the 4C skills in English language lessons in different class levels by different teachers and highlighting the possible obstacles that can be faced during the time; but it is also possible to take these studies a step further by handling the issue more inclusively and by integrating the student perceptions and exploring their experiences and possibly challenges of learning the 4Cs in their language lessons.

Apart from instructors, despite being smaller in number, the literature also presents several sample studies conducted on the student perceptions and experiences with regards to learning and practicing the 4C skills as a part of language classes (Landon, 2019; Puangpunsi, 2021; Duong & Hoang, 2021, Ekizer & Yıldırım, 2023). Some of these studies enlightened the significance of learning the 4C skills in student perspectives, revealed the instructional practices and the opportunities of the learners to acquire the skills in their lessons. In addition to these, some studies such as the ones carried out by Monib (2023) and Ratama et al. (2021) aimed at putting together both student and teacher attitudes and perception in relating to 4C skills in language learning contexts, and they discover the frequency of integration, the skills that are most commonly integrated in the lessons and the challenges experienced by both participant groups. With the help of these studies, valuable findings are provided in the field in terms of the 4C skills integration. However, most of the pre-mentioned research dwells upon only a limited number of aspects in relation to the phenomenon.

Therefore, there is still a need for further exploration which can comprise more details about students' experiences such as their awareness and knowledge about the skills, their needs and priorities with regards to the skills included in the 4Cs, the challenges that they experience or the tasks or activities that they are favourable of while learning the 4C skills.

For the last facet of the subject matter having an influential impact on the integration of the 4C skills in EFL contexts, the aspects related to curriculum, testing and assessment procedures and professional development opportunities of the teachers during their in-service years are significant areas for research. However, the studies that are conducted with a direct connection to these areas are quite scarce in the literature. Among these three dimensions, curriculum appears to be the area which has a broader range of investigation. Tamela & Dwi (2021), for instance, put emphasis on analysing the distribution of the 4C skills integration in a 7th grade English course and Ataberk & Mirici (2022) also investigated the extent to which English language teacher training programs integrate the 4C skill into their curricula. On the other hand, testing and assessment area is less frequently explored in relation to evaluating the 4C skills of learners. The research by Marwa et al. (2023) compensates this gap by evaluating the level of the 4C skills integration not only in the course syllabuses but also in the test documents of eight different English courses at university. For the final branch of this category, professional development field is a crucial aspect worth searching for. There are numerous studies investigating teacher attitudes and experiences in relation to the 4Cs; and in these studies, they cover professional development as a point needing emphasis and support for the English language teachers; however, the research focusing directly on teachers' development opportunities in this field is limited. In that regard, Haryani et al. (2021), concentrated on teachers' resources such as training opportunities for implementing the 4C skills in their lessons, not specifically in language classes, but in lessons such as Chemistry, Physics and Natural Science in vocational schools.

As can be seen from the instances provided till this point, the related literature presents numerous studies in relation to the 4C skills integration in the English language classes with the contribution of different participant groups and by leaning on different aspects. However, there is still an urging need for further and more

comprehensive studies to investigate these different dimensions at a time and present a holistic overview of the instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms.

1.4. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The current study aimed to investigate the perceptions of the English language instructors, preparatory school students and the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units on the instructional practices of the 4C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and communication) in EFL classrooms in a higher education institution.

Initially, it was intended to examine the perceptions and experiences of English language instructors with regards to the integration of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms. To achieve this, the pre-existing knowledge of the English language instructors on 4C skills was examined; and their perceived significance of teaching these skills in English language classes was explored. Another focus of the investigation was on how and to what extent they can integrate 4C skills into the lessons along with providing some sample classroom-related materials that were used in their lessons to reinforce the 4C skills. This was followed by the challenges that they experience in their classes to teach the 4C skills. Upon this phase, their statements were classified and reported based on their teaching experience years in the field which were categorised as novice teachers, experienced teachers, and proficient teachers.

Additionally, it was also aimed to investigate the perceptions of the preparatory school students on whether they are informed about the 4C skills and how beneficial they find it to learn and practice the 4C skills in the English language lessons for their personal and academic achievement. Furthermore, their current opportunities to learn and practice these skills in their courses were reviewed together with their suggestions on possible activities that can be integrated into English language lessons. Then, the utterances of the preparatory school students, again, were reported in accordance with their proficiency level which will be classified as elementary level students, intermediate level students and upper-intermediate/advanced level students.

Finally, another purpose of this study was to dwell upon the place of the 4C skills in the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university. In order to inquire into these points, the English language instructors who work in the units of Curriculum Development, Evaluation & Measurement, and Professional Development at the university were requested to share their opinions and experiences in relation to the main objectives that are taken into consideration while designing a curriculum, developing testing and assessment tools and organising events, workshops, seminars regarding the professional development of the English language instructors. In addition, the perceived significance and the place of the 4C skills in these procedures and how and to what extent they are managed to be integrated into the unit procedures were investigated which were supported by their recommendations for the future implications improve the integration of the 4C skills in these procedures.

In order to brainstorm and develop the interview questions that were to be addressed to the participants, a focus group discussion was arranged with English language instructors who work in a preparatory school. In this session, they were requested to review the research questions of the study; and based on your experiences, perceptions and ideas, brainstorm and offer possible interview questions that can be directed to the participants.

In order to achieve the goals of the current study, this research aimed at providing answers for the questions that are stated below.

1. What are the perceptions of English language instructors who work in a higher education institution on the instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms?

1.1.What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?

1.2.How much importance do they attach on integrating these skills in their classes?

1.3.To what extent can they integrate the 4C skills into their English Language lessons?

- 1.4. What kind of materials, activities and tasks do they use?
 - 1.5. What are the challenges that they experience?
 2. What are the perceptions of students who study at a preparatory school about learning and practicing the 4C skills in English language classes?
 - 2.1. What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?
 - 2.2. How beneficial do they find it to learn & practice these skills in their English language classes?
 - 2.3. What are their opinions about their current opportunities to learn and practice these skills in their lessons?
 - 2.4. What kind of activities would they suggest to have in their lessons to practice the 4C skills?
 - 2.5. What are the obstacles that they experience?
 3. What are the perceptions of the other stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university with regards to the integration of the 4C skills?

1.5. Significance of the Study

There are a number of significant contributions of this study to the field. Initially, this study can provide a detailed situation analysis of the instructional practices of the 4C skills by comparing and contrasting different perspectives of the teachers, students and institutional units in a university by presenting quite comprehensive descriptions which would have similar reflections in other higher education institutions. By revealing these, this study can provide a chance to highlight any significant steps to be taken for a better future implication related to the instruction of the 4C skills.

In addition, it is also possible to reveal any obstacles to integrating the 4C skills in EFL classrooms. It is possible to come up with a number of difficulties that the instructors experience during in-class or out-of-class times, there could be certain

problems that the students face with during the language courses or there could be some limitations related to the incorporation of the 4C skills into the institutional processes. In that case, this study may serve as a road map to overcome these problems for more efficient future implications by detecting the obstacles and investigating the solution suggestions of the participants.

Moreover, as the preparatory school students' perceptions on the instructional processes were investigated, it makes it possible to explore their perspectives, identify their needs and preferences, look into their expectations and learn their suggestions which play a crucial role in the arrangement of the future implications as they are the inseparable part of this of the learning & teaching procedures.

Furthermore, as it is mentioned before, it was aimed to explore the English language instructors' the current practices of teaching the 4C skills in EFL classrooms, how they manage to work on these, how much room they create to emphasize these skills and what kind of activities, tasks, assignments and materials they benefit from in their lessons. This kind of an approach will provide an in-depth analysis on the classroom implications with regards to the 4C skills and the descriptions of all of these activities that are presented in the results section this research. By this way, it can light the way for the other teachers who are seeking for ideas to integrate the 4C skills in their lessons.

Finally, the results of this study can provide beneficial implications for the institutional units such as Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluations and Professional Development which arrange the educational processes at universities. According to the results, it is possible to pave the way for any regulations or adjustments which can be useful to ensure improvements on how to address and integrate the 4C skills both in the institutional and instructional procedures.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the 21st century skills and 4C skills, significance of acquiring the 4C skills, teaching 21st century skills in EFL classrooms, challenges in integrating the 4Cs in EFL classrooms and previous studies conducted on the integration of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms.

2.2. 21st Century Skills in Education

As indicated by Ataberk & Mirici (2022), “Each century brings along its needs and depending on those needs, people require contemporary, current, and recent skills.” With this urging change in the essential skills of the era, people need to be equipped with the new abilities that would enable them to be successful in their academic, professional and social lives. In the modernized world, current conditions are reforming the members of the society to become more autonomous, creative, productive, foresighted, and excellent team workers, proficient communicators, critical thinkers and problem solvers; and capable of adapting to the changes.

The reflections of this shift to more globalized and digitalized world have also become obvious in the ways to prepare the new generations for the future. In this regard, it has also become a necessity that education systems must provide young people with the new skills and competencies that are necessary to take advantage of the emergence of new socialization methods and to actively contribute to economic development in a system where knowledge is the primary asset (Ananiadou & Claro, 2009). These competencies are referred to as 21st century skills and several sources attempted to define and categorize them in order to be able to present a holistic approach to better address and assess these skills in the educational contexts.

The latest and the most accurate classification of the 21st century skills is offered by The Partnership for the 21st Century Skills Framework which comprises three main categories of the essential life skills of the century with a certain number of sub-categories where different subject areas are allocated into each category. At this point, Partnership for 21st Century Skills introduces the main categories as “Life & Career Skills”, “Learning & Innovation Skills”, and “Information, Media, & Technology Skills” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Figure 1 presents further details about the skills and implication areas.

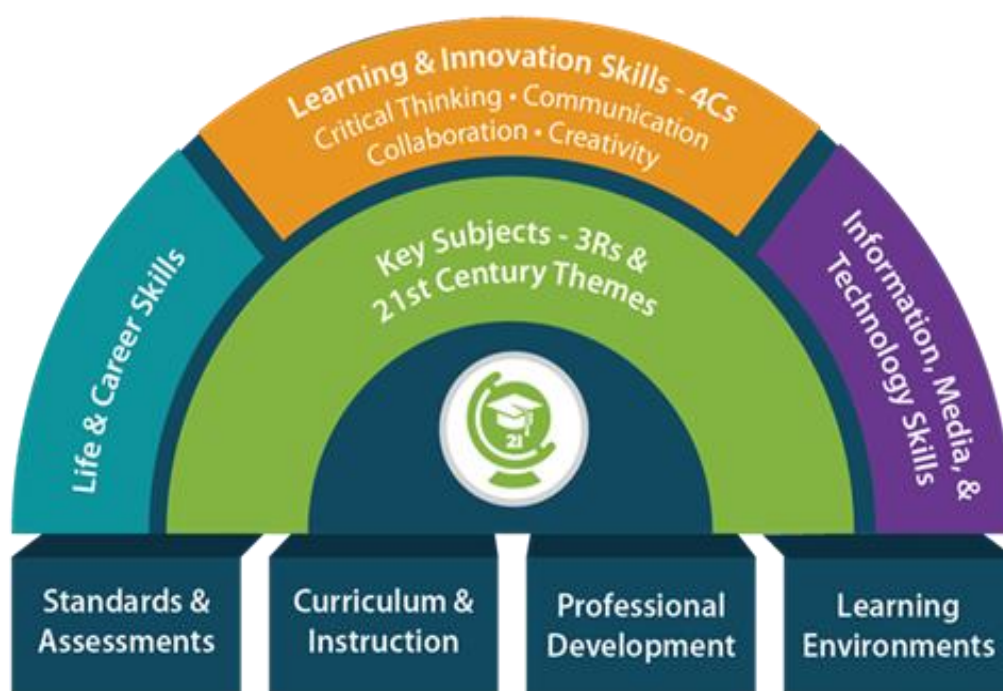


Figure 1 Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework for 21st Century Learning

2.2.1 Life & Career Skills

Life and career skills take the skills that the students need in order to handle the complex and environments both in their personal lives and in their workplaces as basis for improving thinking abilities, subject area knowledge, and abilities in social and emotional areas (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019a). These skills are categorised under five main competencies and these are listed and explained in the following parts.

a) Flexibility and Adaptability

Flexibility and adaptability primarily focus on the abilities of adapting to changes and being flexible. According to Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2019b), 21st century learners should be able to adjust to a variety of roles, professional responsibilities and environments along with performing still well in case of uncertainty and unexpected changes in the arrangements. Moreover, it is also crucial to be able to respond to feedback efficiently, deal with compliments, failures and criticism positively, and to manage diversity in ideas and perspectives especially while working in a multi-cultural environment.

b) Initiative and Self-Direction

Initiative and self-direction skill is closely related to arranging time and goals and working independently. This skill puts emphasis on setting goals with both concrete and figurative achievement criteria, balancing short-term and long-term goals, and effectively utilizing time and managing task. Additionally, being self-directed, moving beyond the basic competence in skills and expanding the learning opportunities to develop proficiency, accepting learning as a lifetime process and creating critical self-reflection by taking the past experiences as basis to form the future advancement are among the other vital abilities. (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b)

c) Social and Cross-Cultural Skills

This facet of the 21st century skills is particularly about the interactions with the other members of the society and management of diversity in teams. The framework suggests that individuals should be informed about the appropriate times to speak and listen, and be capable of presenting themselves in an honourable way in accordance with the professional etiquette (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). Similarly, minding cultural diversity in a team consisting of people from different cultural and social contexts, and welcoming and taking advantage of different opinions and values as an opportunity to boost creativity and efficiency are stated as the essentials of social and cross-cultural skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

d) Productivity and Accountability

In this aspect of the life and career skills, it is encouraged required for the individuals to establish and achieve goals despite challenges and competing demands, and to set priorities, make plans and manage tasks to produce the desired outcomes (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

e) Leadership and Responsibility

Leadership and responsibility principally generate the abilities of benefiting from inter-personal skills and analytical skills to produce solutions to the problems, utilizing the talents of others in order to achieve a shared objective as well as behaving responsibly while keeping the needs of the larger community in mind and promoting knowledge exchange within professional communities by using in-person, online and hybrid communications (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

2.2.2 Information, Media, & Technology Skills

In the last century, as the world has evolved into a more digital, technology oriented, globalized place, there has been a linear drastic change in the features of the era and Partnership for the 21st Century Skills Framework (2019a) defines the major characteristics of this century as “1) access to an abundance of information, 2) rapid changes in technology tools, and 3) the ability to collaborate and make individual contributions on an unprecedented scale. Therefore, 21st century people should possess certain skills to be able to better adapt to the conditions of this time.

a. Information Literacy

This aspect of the information, media and technology skill is constructed around two main themes: “access and evaluate information” and “use and manage information” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). In this regard, the main objective of gaining this skill is to be able to obtain information quickly and effectively from reliable sources and critically and accurately assess information, which should be followed by regulating the flow of data from a diverse range of sources while using information in an accurate and innovative way for a specific issue or concern (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

b. Media Literacy

As for the second focus of this 21st century skill, “analyzing media” and “creating media products” concepts are described as the sub-skills of media literacy in the framework (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009). It is highlighted that 21st century individuals should understand the reasons, purposes and ways of constructing media messages and investigate the various ways in which people interpret messages, the inclusion or exclusion of values and points of view, and the impact of media on attitudes and actions (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Furthermore, regarding the production of media, they are expected to recognize and use the most suitable media creation tools, features, and norms together with the most appropriate meanings and expressions in various, multi-cultural settings (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

c. ICT (Information, Communications, and Technology) Literacy

The last concept of the information, media and technology skills is ICT literacy and it basically targets the abilities to utilize technology to help you gather, arrange, analyze, and distribute information; and in order to successfully operate in a knowledge economy, apply digital technologies, social networks and communication/networking tools with a certain level of competence in the ethics of accessing and using information technologies (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

2.2.3. Learning & Innovation Skills

The skills that are categorised as learning and innovations skills target the abilities which would enable the individuals to perform better under the difficult and complicated conditions both in their personal or professional life. As Stauffer (2021) suggested, when the students apply for jobs and begin their careers, these skills frequently have the most impact on how they stand out in the competitive world. At this point, Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework puts forward a set of four main skills, also named as the 4C skills, which will also be the main focus of this paper to compose the perceptions of teachers, learners and institutional units to evaluate the current instructional practices around this concept. This category

comprises of the elements that are called creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019a).

a. Creativity and Innovation

Despite a common misconception of creativity talents as being only relevant to the visual arts and other forms of art, the ability to innovate in many fields, share new ideas with others, and be receptive to new viewpoints are all aspects of creativity (Fajriah & Septiyanti, 2021). Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework constructs the creativity and innovation skill around three main objectives: “think creatively”, “work creatively with others” and “implement innovations” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). In this regard, the learners are required to employ a variety of strategies to create ideas, as well as developing, improving, examining, and assessing their own concepts to enhance creative efforts (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Besides, sharing the new ideas with others effectively, showing originality in work and being open to new opinions, and treating failure as a teaching opportunity, recognizing that creativity and innovation are long-term, cyclical processes of modest achievements and repeated failures are stated as the fundamental competencies of creativity and innovation skill (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b).

b. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

The other skill that is classified under the same category, critical thinking and problem solving skill, is a combination of different cognitive abilities and reasoning skills like imagining, understanding, analyzing, synthesizing, innovating and generating ideas. “Problem solving is often conceptualized as the use of critical thinking skills toward the effective resolution of a specific problem or toward a specific end goal.” indicates Thoughtful Learning (2016) as an attempt to explain the essence of problem solving skill. Therefore, rather than merely understanding an issue or a problem to produce solutions, the learners are to make judgments and decisions by analysing how components of a whole work with one another to achieve overall results, and critically reflect on their educational experiences and processes (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Additionally, critical thinking

encompasses all types of knowledge and signifies genuine student involvement in the process of knowledge building through reflection and in-depth thought (Saleh, 2019).

c. Communication

Communication skill mainly emphasizes the abilities to successfully express ideas and thoughts in a range of environments and formats by using oral, written, and nonverbal communication abilities for a variety of purposes including informing, persuading, and motivating along with adapting effective and active listening strategies to be able to interpret information in terms of knowledge, beliefs, values, intentions and attitudes (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Communication skill is also viewed as an artwork when it is used to express thoughts, queries, or instructions, and to send messages in a clear and convincing manner during the learning process (Selman, 2020).

d. Collaboration

The last focus of the learning and innovation skills, collaboration, is related with the individuals' abilities to effectively work with others, to collaborate with varied teams in an effective and polite manner, to be flexible and willing to help when it comes to making the compromises necessary to achieve a common objective, to share responsibility for teamwork, and respect each team member's unique contributions (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Similarly, collaboration is when participants work together on a single task rather than concurrently on different parts of the same assignment, and it can significantly improve student learning, especially for underachievers (Lai 2011, as cited in Erdoğan, 2019). Reinforcing collaboration skill also provides the learners with the chance to adopt certain characteristics such as being sensitive and fair in work division, accepting and offering support, understanding one another's duties, lending help and guidance (Selman, 2020). This way, it enables the individuals to improve their abilities to work effectively in a group.

In order to provide a holistic overview of all these skills, Table 1 presents and summarizes all the 21st century skills and competencies in three groups in the related columns.

Table 1 *21st Century Skills and Abilities*

Life & Career Skills	Learning & Innovation Skills	Information, Media & Technology Skills
Flexibility and Adaptability	Creativity & Innovation	Information Literacy
Initiative and Self-Direction	Critical Thinking &	Media Literacy
Social and Cross-Cultural Skills	Problem Solving	ICT (Information, Communications, and Technology) Literacy
Productivity and Accountability	Communication	
Leadership and Responsibility	Collaboration	

2.3. Significance of Acquiring the 4C Skills

As being one of the core elements of the 21st century skills, learning & innovation skills, 4C skills, in other words, has been the main focus of many studies and articles. Numerous studies have revealed that acquisition of these skills have significant contributions for the individuals to improve themselves to become more qualified members in the professional, academic and social environments.

2.3.1. Contributions to Employment Opportunities

“We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another.”, says Schwab (2016), and these alterations will lead us to experience more drastic changes in the future, especially in the workplaces.

As previously mentioned, the future employers are not looking for graduates who merely have excellent literary or arithmetical skills; rather, they are seeking for people who are strong communicators, creative at a certain degree, good at adapting to and participating in collaborative work, and able to think and evaluate the situations critically (Ruminar & Gayatri, 2018). When these requirements are taken into consideration, it becomes obvious that possessing the 4Cs is vital to leave a good impression in the employment processes for the future candidates.

Another important point in relation to the significance of collaborative work in the business world is remarked by Chiruguru (2020) with the idea which claims that a

broad, diverse group of people will produce more accurate predictions and wiser choices than even the most experienced decision maker. In this respect, gaining the essential collaborative skills prior to graduation from colleges will enable the employees to perform better and make difference among others in their careers. Besides, teams with creative skill sets are needed to assist organizations overcome obstacles and seamlessly adapt to any unforeseen circumstances. These abilities turn people into crucial contributors to an organization (Bhattacharjee, 2021).

Additionally, Ratminingsih (2021) highlights that in order to become an effective employee, an individual must have problem-solving skills in order to be able to make wise decisions at work and this calls for critical thinking skills. This way, individuals can develop the ability to critically evaluate the circumstances, figure out the possible solutions to overcome a problem and take action accordingly.

2.3.2. Contributions to Academic Achievement

Apart from the contribution of these skills to the possibility of acquiring favourable job positions and standing out from other candidates, several studies have proved that the 4C skills provide significant contributions to the academic achievements of the students at different grade levels.

Initially, as reported by Alcantara & Basca (2017) who questioned the relationship between academic achievement in Mathematics and critical thinking skills along with problem solving skills of 341 7th grade level students from five different secondary level public school; and student proficiency in Mathematics was found to be positively related with the students' critical thinking and problem solving abilities.

Moreover, as a result of their study with control and experimental groups of tenth grade high school students, Sipayung et al. (2018) found out that when collaborative inquiry model, which is a learning process of discussion of the problem, obtaining and evaluating the evidence, and sharing and celebrating, was adapted to the Physics lessons, it boosted the learning processes of the experimental group students by decreasing the gap between the high achievers and low achievers. It also enhanced the comprehension of complex concepts, and also reinforced the acquisition of other 4C skills when compared to the control group students who were taught only with the conventional learning model.

Similarly, Supena et al. (2021) examined the effect of 4C learning model and first-year university level students' academic capability on their learning outcomes in the Philosophy of Science lessons by working with control group (36 students) and experimental group students (38 students) where the 4C learning model was implemented as a part of the lessons in the experimental group of the study. They benefited from multiple choice tests, essay assessments, observations, and documentation to collect data; and they revealed that learning 4Cs has a significant positive impact on the students' affective and psychomotor learning outcomes in the course that is previously stated above.

Additionally, Yuanita et al. (2021) also investigated the relationship between 4C learning model and academic outcomes of the 8th grade level students by means of integrating student worksheets, which are named as "LKPD", that were specially prepared based on the 4C skills. In order to achieve this, they studied with control and experimental classes of students where they integrated these specific worksheets throughout the term in the lessons of the experimental group; and compared and contrasted the results of the higher order thinking skills tests. As a result of these difference tests, the worksheets designed specifically on 4C skills were revealed to be effective in improving the high-order thinking skills of middle school students.

Finally, Limna et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study with 512 higher education level students and aimed at investigating the relationship between 1) the 21st century learning model (4Cs), 2) Student satisfaction, which is defined as students' evaluation of the educational services provided by the university, and 3) Student performance by applying pre-test and post-test at the beginning and at the end of the research. With this study, they explored that there is a significant relationship between critical thinking, creativity collaboration, and communication learning and student satisfaction. Moreover, it is indicated that communication (as the most significant element), collaboration, and creativity learning have a significant impact on student performance.

As can be seen in these instances, integrating 4C skills into the lessons, reinforcing these skills as a part of the learning processes and providing students with the chances to practice them through different tasks and activities produce quite

favourable results in the academic achievement of the learners. Therefore, in order to enhance student performance, to ensure academic achievement and to reach the desired outcomes, the 4C skills can be incorporated into the course contents.

2.3.3. Contributions to Personality Traits Development

Besides the advantages of the 4Cs in relation the academic achievement, it can also be noted that teaching and learning the 4Cs would provide significant contributions to the personality traits development of the learners and help them create a better version of themselves by becoming more qualified members in the society and pursuing a fruitful academic, professional and personal life in many areas.

a) Improvements in interpersonal skills

The initial gain is related to the abilities to conduct positive and healthy relationship with the members of the society. To achieve this, putting emphasis on collaboration builds the learners' capacity to work collaboratively and demonstrate leadership in a group (Putri et al., 2020, as cited in Aben, 2022). Also, it encourages them adopt various roles while collaborating well with others, respect others' different viewpoints and put responsiveness in their environment (Aben, 2022).

Moreover, it is also crucial to acknowledge that effective communication is the key to any achievement, whether it is in the classroom or in the daily life which is also an inseparable part of the 4Cs (Weng, 2022). In this perspective, having improved communication skills enable individuals to interact well with different people from different contexts with a variety of purposes and in various registers. Therefore, especially in this globalization age, which is characterized by the frequent interactions and meetings of individuals from many cultures, all educators should encourage their students to improve interpersonal skills of collaboration and communication by giving them the space and chances to do so (Liliane & Colette, 2009 as cited in Nganga, 2019).

b) Improved decision making skills

It is almost an undeniable fact that the abilities related to making correct decisions at critical points in professional or personal lives are quite crucial in the 21st century.

Therefore, when children have strong critical thinking abilities, their decision-making and problem-solving abilities also improve (Samaroo, 2019). This enables the individuals to develop different perspectives and approaches to the issues, evaluate each of them to propose a convenient solution and apply. While making decisions, those who have advanced level of critical thinking skills can also evaluate all of the potential outcomes of these decisions including moral and ethical ones (Turan et al., 2019). By this way, it can be assured that improving critical thinking and problem solving skills of the individuals would result in enhancement in their decision making processes by helping them avoid being mistaken due to false judgements.

c) Global Mindedness

With the drastic advancements in the technology and improvements in the media tools which have enabled the individuals to contact with different people from diverse contexts, intercultural communicative competence has reached its utmost importance. This urged people to become more global minded; and in line with this need, the main objectives of global education should be to assist students in understanding the interconnectedness of countries in the modern world (Banks, 2001). To accomplish this goal, students' critical thinking abilities can be developed by teachers and this may enable youth to access global viewpoints, question ingrained norms and beliefs, and create connections with individuals all around the world (Halterbran & Strahler, 2013). Moreover, Nganga (2019) also reveals as a result of her study with pre-service teachers that when collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication abilities are utilized in instruction, teaching for global awareness and social justice is more likely to be effective.

d) Higher level of self-esteem

Individuals of this modern age need to be enterprising, social and active members in the society. As communication and collaboration are inseparable parts of the human interaction, their contributions to improve self-confidence are undeniable. Therefore, it is also obvious that advancing in communication and collaboration skills can directly contribute to the development of self-confidence of the students. It is also proved by Hyun & Park (2008) with their research that self-esteem and interpersonal

relations of the students were positively impacted by communication and interpersonal relationship education. Similarly, this claim was also supported with the findings of the research that was conducted by Sun et al. (2021) which indicates that preferring to be engaged in cooperative works improved the self-esteem of the participants who have lower level of state self-esteem a lot more when compared to choosing to abandon their studies and work individually (Sun et al., 2021). As can be seen, these arguments reinforce the opinion that point to a compensating link between cooperation & collaboration in social interactions and self-esteem.

e) Being adaptable to changes

With the constant and rapid developments especially in the digital areas, it is inevitable that new technologies will require new abilities, and people will need to constantly adapt them. Because of this increasing dynamism, persons and society need to learn to adjust to changes, rather than only to adapt to one environment (Laukkonen et al., 2019). In this aspect, Laukkonen et al. (2019) also proposes that social organizations and educational systems must promote abilities that encourage transferable and general learning skills if society is to be generally adaptive to change. This can be achieved through initially learning and fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills which enable individuals to immediately comprehend the requirements of any new situation or conditions, to analyze the circumstances and act accordingly. Similarly, in relation to the contribution of creative thinking ability to being flexible and adaptable, Noh (2017) found out in her study that participants' flexibility improved significantly after receiving training in creative thinking.

f) Increased level of learner motivation & engagement in academic studies

A number of critical studies in the field reinforce the idea proposing that the emphasis put on the integration of the 4Cs in the classrooms may result in greater student participation and increased level of learner motivation. In this aspect, Samuelsson (2010) states that peer collaboration is more beneficial than conventional and independent work for students' internal motivation. Additionally, the use of creative methods is very successful in fostering learner creativity and related traits like internal motivation, enjoyment, and self-assurance (Dineen & Niu, 2008). Apart from these, communication among the peers is another key point to trigger

motivation. As also indicated by Stefaniak & Tracey (2015), in the communications course, learners who participated in learner-centred activities showed higher levels of motivation and were more actively engaged in their learning. Therefore, a combination of collaboration, communication and creative task designs is a convenient way to encourage learner motivation towards their lessons.

2.3.4. Contributions to Professional Development and Occupational Benefits

The benefits that can be gained through acquiring and practicing 21st century skills and specifically the 4C skills can also assure professional development by helping individuals attain competence in addition to their field knowledge during their in-service practices. A number of studies have confirmed that individuals who are excellent collaborators and/or who can communicate effectively with other members in their workplaces, manage to think critically and produce creative works have achieved better efficiency in their careers.

Collaboration, initially, can function as an initiative for a company or a workplace to make a progress with almost all the members. Saxena (2013) approved with her study that when the teachers collaborated with other colleagues and mentors to improve their teaching practices, it was revealed that they benefited by reviewing and reflecting on their teaching experiences by focusing on learning 21st century skills. As in this instance, collaboration holds the power to give instructors the chances for professional development in a school setting, ultimately boosting their confidence in their teaching skills (Bantwini, 2018). Likewise, it is also possible to for people from different disciplines to support each other in various ways through multi-professional collaboration where they exchange knowledge with people from different departments but continue to maintain their work in their own groups (Collin et al., 2015).

Since effective communication is the key factor to improve efficiency in a team or in a workplace, equipping the employees with necessary communication skills like empathy, friendliness, respect, confidence, being selective about communication strategies, active listening and responsiveness (Northup, 2023) would result in enhancement in their performances in their profession, too. In this regard, Carvalho et al. (2011) confirms this argument in their study with health care professionals. In

their research, they observed that a 6 month-communication skills program improved the professional skills of the participants in different aspects including the abilities of interviewing with patients, which is also closely related to interpersonal skills as well as their self-confidence; and it also promoted their performance in their work places (Carvalho et al., 2011).

Similarly, critical thinking functions as a vital skill for advancement in numerous professional areas where people often need to understand complex situations, analyze the conditions, and find and evaluate convenient solutions before taking action. Therefore, especially for professionals who must make decisions in dynamic, complicated, and highly cooperative situations, training programs should include critical thinking (Helsdingen et al., 2010), and it should be regarded as an essential outcome of these programs (Finn, 2011). By this way, when it is learned and applied, critical thinking can foster the comprehension of the fundamental concepts of the field and contributes to development of strategies in decision making processes (Helsdingen et al., 2010).

As for creativity, it is possible to expand its basic definition in a workplace context and regard it as a tool that could facilitate well-being through flexible reaction to stress (Helzer & Kim, 2019). It means that when people are in a creative mindset, they may be able to come up with alternative perspectives, options, and answers to the challenges that might not be noticed as they are not thinking creatively (Helzer & Kim, 2019). Besides, creative professionals also acquire psychosocial support that fosters endurance in addition to developing professional abilities that are consistent with their field by involving in creative practices (Goodwin, 2019). Moreover, people who are successful and creative in any field use their creative tendencies to improve their professional ideas (Henriksen & Mishra, 2015).

2.4. Teaching the 4C Skills in EFL Classrooms

The objectives of ELT have shifted from concentrating only on language skills development and imitating native speakers of English to encouraging a perception of social accountability in pupils (Erdoğan, 2019). Eaton (2010) also signifies that the language classroom of today is quite different from the one in the middle or late 20th century indicating that the emphasis is now on using language and cultural

knowledge to interact with people around the world rather than memorizing rules of grammar and rote learning. Therefore, at schools, especially in EFL classrooms, students should be exposed to activities and procedures that are aimed at helping them learn and develop abilities like creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, self-direction, and cross-cultural awareness (Fandino, 2013). In order to achieve these aims, language classes are ideal environments where the students can learn and practice these skills when integrated with the four main language skills along with communicative and intercultural competence which are also inseparable part of the process of learning languages.

Upon being informed about the significance of the 4C skills and their place in language learning processes, it is also of utmost importance for the language teachers to acknowledge, design or find suitable activities and tasks to integrate in their lessons in order to reinforce these skills. At this point, numerous resources have put forward several methods and techniques to work on each of these skills in language lessons and these were also confirmed to be convenient by a number of studies.

2.4.1. Critical Thinking

EFL teachers must help their students develop critical thinking abilities while learning English because success in a society that relies on knowledge increasingly depends on higher-order thinking abilities (Liaw, 2007). To do this, the initial step can be encouraging students to question and brainstorm.

Vdovina, & Gaibisso (2013) suggest the *ABCD model* which can be utilized as a framework while designing lesson plans with an integration of critical thinking aspect. In this model A stands for Audience, namely students, B stands for Behaviour, as classroom activities, C stands for Condition, the prerequisites for the tasks, and D stands for Degree which can be regarded as criteria to evaluate student performance. By this way, objectives gain specific, observable, results-oriented, and measurable characteristics through the use of quantitative or qualitative criteria. To clarify it, the authors provide the following example as a reading & critical thinking lesson objective:

Given one of the two following parts of the story for skimming and scanning (C) students divided into two groups (A) will interpret and explain to each other the fallacies of logic they learned about in their parts (four fallacies per group) fostering understanding by asking questions for clarification; and elaborate a clear definition of a fallacy (B) in less than 30 words (Vdovina, & Gaibisso, 2013).

Moreover, activities which aim at promoting debates and encouraging learners to approach issues from different perspectives, and problem-solving tasks that include dilemmas can be integrated into the lessons to enhance critical thinking skills of the learners (Itmeizeh & Hassan, 2020). What is critical at this point is that the themes and topics should interest the students; they should be exciting, relevant to learners' levels, and also controversial to stimulate discussion and engagement of the learners who have different opinions and would like to convince the others (Itmeizeh & Hassan 2020). Similarly, Kembara et al. (2019) suggest that research-based learning can enhance 4C skills of students. As students successfully produce solutions to existing problems, they demonstrate their proficiency in the 4C abilities.

Perspective taking tasks are also stated to be beneficial activities where the learners are asked to put themselves in another person's shoes and comprehend what and how they could be thinking and feeling. While doing this, they must have an open mind, a thorough comprehension of a situation or issue and the desire to be vulnerable (Carter, 2020). As Carter (2020) suggests, this activity can be combined with a writing task where students can rewrite a story from the perspective of a different character or with a role play activity which helps students to understand how a specific character may response and react in a specific situation (Carter, 2020).

Lastly, reading activities can also be enriched by inducing some critical thinking techniques to practice reasoning skills of the students. By this way, learners can go beyond basic reading & comprehension skills. Starkey (2010) mentions five points to work on for a critical reading session:

- 1) Inference: understanding what a text implies rather than saying and drawing conclusion
- 2) Persuasion techniques: evaluating arguments and analysing the rhetorical devices utilized in persuasive writing.

- 3) Deductive & inductive reasoning: identifying the organisation of logical arguments and then producing one's own arguments.
- 4) Logical fallacies: recognising and explaining poor and unreasonable arguments.
- 5) Judgement calls: coming up with a judgement in case of insufficient evidence to make a definite decision.

2.4.2. Creativity

Many teachers have the misconception that creativity is limited to the production of works of art, the creation of famous works like Shakespeare, Mozart, or Edison, or the encouragement of pupils' artistic abilities. Such a misconception undermines instructors' efforts to be innovative (Xerri & Vasallo, 2016). As for the ELT textbooks, Bouzid (2016) even indicates the dearth of exercises fostering ICT and creative thinking abilities expressing that there were few exercises to develop creative thinking skills after analyzing three different ELT course books which are used in a high school. Therefore, there is a need to gain awareness about alternative techniques to foster creativity in EFL classrooms.

As a sample creative thinking activity, Oncu (2016) presents a group activity where the students are encouraged to consider alternative applications of a glass bead. Their objective is to come up with original ideas as well as develop an advertisement to market their beads to other groups. In an EFL classroom, depending on the theme of the unit, this kind of an activity can be adopted in various ways which can be concluded with a brief presentation for students to practice their communicative skills. Another activity designed by Oncu (2016) again can be utilized in a vocabulary teaching lesson. In that task, the students are asked to create a poem by using three odd objects that are rarely used together. Alternatively, students may be asked to use three or five of the newly learnt vocabulary items in their poems after covering and completing controlled practice activities.

Read (2015), additionally, introduces *random association* activity. This activity aims to prompt children to establish relationships between items that may not appear to be related at first glance. For this game, the teacher needs to write a number of words that students have learnt on small pieces and put the cards in a bag. Then, one by

one, students take out cards from the bag and create a sentence or/and then a story by using the words written on the cards.

It is also possible to benefit from literature and literary texts to enhance creative thinking in an EFL classroom. In contrast to a regular reading lesson, in the task described by Zaker (2016), students will not receive the entire literary text. Instead, the teacher provides a literary text with a missing final section. EFL learners will then be tasked with creating a new and original final section to present to the class. Additionally, it would be fun to ask students to add a new character to the story, change the attitude of already existing characters by giving a different flow to the story, or rewrite the story as if it was taking place in a different period of time, in the 1800s or in 2050, by keeping the plot the same but changing the details. This will also contribute to the students' creative writing skills.

Apart from these in-class activities, Aytug et al. (2018) emphasizes the role of multicultural interactions by indicating that intercultural interactions—rather than exposures—are linked with improved creative thinking, and this supports flexibility at the cognitive level as the mediating factor. For these reasons, maybe on the basis of a school project, students can be encouraged to take part in multicultural experiences either through online tools or with exchange programs if applicable.

2.4.3. Communication

For students to succeed in their future personal and professional lives, communication teaching is essential, and there is an urgent need for communication instruction in school systems at all levels of education (Morreale & Pearson, 2008). In this regard, EFL classrooms are one of the most convenient places to learn and practice this skill as communication is an integral part of language learning by its nature. The most essential point to consider is that the main goal of ELT is to equip language learners with the necessary skills to communicate effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, rather than pressuring them to attain native-level proficiency in English (Ambele, & Boonsuk, 2020).

The initial step of improving communication skills is to be able to listen effectively and understand the spoken language to conduct a healthy dialogue. Therefore, Abdikarimova et al. (2021) suggest working on active listening skill which urges

understanding rather than just replying. To promote good listening skills, students should be encouraged to ask clarifying questions to fully comprehend the message. This can be done through the activities where the students work in groups or pair to describe details and give directions and expect an action to take place in return. Information gap activities can be given as an example for this type of activities where one of the students should listen carefully to understand the other and ask clarification questions in order to complete the task properly.

Similarly, organizing class discussion and debates would also be helpful as students are expected to produce convincing arguments to support their view, express themselves effectively by adjusting their register accordingly (adopting a persuasive tone, for example) to convince the audience as well as to understand the counter arguments that are put forward by the other group to defend their perspective well. This kind of an activity gives students a real purpose to communicate.

Another significant aspect is emphasized by Sayera (2019) clarifying that in communicative language teaching, authentic contents should be integrated into the tasks since it is crucial to provide students with opportunities to understand how language is utilized in real-life situations because authentic, real-world projects that demand pupils to employ 21st century abilities and emotionally engage students promote learner engagement cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects (Cox & Montgomery, 2019). If students are about to graduate from university, for example, the content can be a job interview. It will enable them to familiarize with professional etiquette and formal register in speaking. Moreover, if there is a trend topic recently, a class survey can be arranged to gather information about the opinions of the people about the current issue which can be followed by a short presentation with visual aids like charts and graphs if time allows. The questions to be included in the surveys can be determined by the students or they can be guided by the teacher depending on the conditions. In that way, the activities would gain a meaning for the learners to communicate, and it will make it easier for them to transfer the skills out of the class.

Moreover, learning a language cannot be done by simply memorizing words or in isolation; the best way to learn a language is through social interaction, says Sayera, (2019) and adds: To effectively communicate in the language, one must struggle

with the language. When these are taken into consideration, role-play activities can be an appropriate option which should not necessitate advanced acting skills or memorizing each and every line to perform a play, but provide role descriptions, problem statement as the plot and the main actions to take place. It is the students' responsibility to improvise and lead the play to come to a conclusion. By this way, they both enhance their creative skills, get engaged in a highly interactive and communicative activity where they have the chance to practice their active listening skills to respond correctly depending on the context and really struggle with the language to express themselves considering what they will say and how they will say. The content again should be authentic to motivate the students and make the activity meaningful. If time is limited, the students may perform it with their partners or in their groups on their own simultaneously, only the volunteer one group or two groups the show their performance on the board.

2.4.4. Collaboration

Collaborative learning has emerged as a prominent aspect of modern education and a crucial element of successful teaching and learning (Saleh, 2019). As it is discussed previously, it enhances learning processes in many aspects, and has favourable outcomes in the individuals' personal and professional lives.

When it comes to the integration of collaboration in EFL classrooms, just like communication skills, it is also the nature of learning a language to interact and collaborate with others to improve oneself. As the first alternative method, online blogs can be utilized as an innovative way for writing tasks by giving and receiving feedback among the pers. Utilizing online personal blogs is a great way to reflect on the learning process. Not only is it a helpful monitoring tool, but tutors can also give quick feedback while promoting peer reviews and comments (Mesh, 2009). Likewise, the writing tasks themselves can also be assigned as a pair work activity through online web tools which enable learners to simultaneously work on a text by creating linguistic patterns; enhancing/applying strategies; and coming up with suggestions to support the major points that are particularly written in the context in question (Erdal & Seferoglu, 2017). Additionally, by taking turns, correcting errors, and making an effort to clarify their ideas, the peers are able to increase the success

of their online collaboration. They urge one another to work together and responsibly to do the chores in the allotted time (Erdal & Seferoglu, 2017).

Other than writing based activities, reading sessions can also be differentiated and enriched by integrating numerous collaborative activities; and jigsaw method is one of them. In this method, the students are put into groups of the same number of paragraphs in the assigned reading text. If there are four paragraphs, there should be four people in the group. After that, each student in the group is assigned a letter like A-B-C-D and so on. Student A will be responsible for the first paragraph of the text, student B will be responsible for the second one and rest of the paragraphs will be distributed in the same way to other members. Following this stage, all the students who are labelled as A in the class will come together, read the first paragraph and discuss the main and significant points to be able to successfully summarize it. Meanwhile, student Bs and student Cs will be doing the same in their own groups with the second and third paragraphs. When all the groups are done with their discussions, the students will go back to their original groups as A-B-C-D and share their notes about the summaries of the paragraphs they worked on with the other members in the group. By this way, rather than reading the whole text on their own, all the students will only read a paragraph but be informed about all the significant details of the passage by collaborating.

Lastly, task-based activities have a greater probability of involving collaborative behaviours more frequently than topic-based activities, and can therefore be more suitable for fostering a collaborative learning environment (Erten & Altay, 2009). Reasoning gap activities, as suggested by Mao (2012), can be integrated in EFL classroom where the students must infer new information from previously given material, it can be a pair or group work activity. As an example exercise, students could receive a timetable of a railroad and be tasked with finding the most efficient route between two cities, or they could be challenged to solve a riddle.

2.5. Challenges in Integrating the 4Cs in EFL Classrooms

Along with its potential benefits and favourable outcomes, adopting an innovative approach to language teaching processes and integrating these skills into the EFL classes brings a number of challenges in relation to both teachers and learners,

together with a number of obstacles in the instructional designs such as curriculum and assessment fields.

2.5.1. Challenges in Relation to Teachers

In order to be able to efficiently address the 4Cs in language classes, it is of utmost importance for the instructors to be informed about these skills and competent in alternating their teaching strategies in line with the requirements of teaching these skills. In this regard, knowledgeable teachers can greatly aid their students in cultivating critical thinking skills by exposing them to challenging scenarios and urging them to examine these situations from multiple angles (Saleh, 2019). However, it also creates a barrier for teaching 4C skills as a part of language lessons if the instructors are not competent enough to reinforce these skills.

As an initial obstacle, competence of the teachers plays a significant role in reinforcing the 4C skills in EFL classrooms. Devkota et al. (2017) state that finding qualified teachers who have the necessary knowledge and abilities to effectively use this content knowledge in the classroom instruction is quite challenging. Even the instructors who had masters or PhD expressed not to be very knowledgeable about the numerous evolving trends and concepts in ELT. This may result from not taking a class emphasizing a systematic strategy for fostering professional growth for the integration of the 4Cs and the activities in the classes or inefficiency of the MA or PhD courses in covering the learning outcomes and goals of pre-service teacher education for the twenty-first century (Bedir, 2019). Similarly, lack of competence in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) may challenge the teachers in this aspect as it is one of the most convenient apparatus to reinforce the 4C skills. Use of ICTs is reported to be among the common difficulties involved in acquiring these 21st century abilities in university classes (Liesa-Orús, 2020). Therefore, these kinds of deficiencies may result in challenges in choosing the most effective methods of learning that promote the development of 4C skills, creating a lesson plan focused on enhancing 4C skills, a lack of sufficient infrastructure and engaging the students who have lower level of confidence (Fajriah & Septiyanti, 2021).

Apart from competence of the teachers, teachers' personality traits and teaching style can also be another obstacle to the integration of 4C skills in language classes. In

order to be able to teach 21st century skills effectively, the typical personality qualities are reported to be self-assurance, flexibility towards new experiences, emotional sensitivity, ambition, doubting the social norms, imagination, nonconformity, interest in complexity, aesthetic orientation, having a flexible mindset and being open to taking risks (Horng et al., 2005). Moreover, in comparison to teachers who preferred a teacher-centred classroom, teachers who adhere to a more student-centred approach to teaching were more successful in implementing a 4C-rich curriculum (Harshbarger, 2016). On the other hand, even those in favour of student-centred approaches know that the use of these methods results in difficulties for teachers in maintaining control over the classroom. When learners work together, there will probably be some uproar in the classroom, which in the hands of inexperienced teachers could turn into chaos. These approaches also require that instructors possess a broad variety of subject-matter expertise and be equipped to make quick decisions as the lesson plan develops (Aldridge, 2010). Therefore, effective application of the 4Cs may require teachers to put a certain amount of effort both personally and professionally.

In order to efficiently integrate the 4C skills in language classes, it is essential for the teachers to give place to explicit instruction in their lesson plans. Organizing student groups, negotiating peer-feedback, and encouraging students to work on a final project to be presented to a specific audience (Stehle & Peters-Burton, 2019) are among the alternative ways to address these skills during the instruction, which necessitates allocating more time and effort than a regular instruction-based lesson to reinforce 21st century skills. When their already existing work load is taken into consideration, it could also be challenging for teachers to find motivation to create some room in their lessons for these activities unless it is already a part of their teaching strategies and it is not a new objective for them.

As a final note, language teachers' motivational status might be another obstacle to overcome. Integration of 21st century skills can be perceived as an extra component of a language class demanding extra preparation and effort to create some room for 4Cs related activities (if they are not already a part of the lessons) beside conventional language learning practices while instructors are struggling with extracurricular issues. Purba et al. (2022) reinforces this claim indicating that this

kind of circumstances may pose another barrier as instructors might not be keen on updating or training themselves while they are facing difficulties in receiving their salaries at the end of the month, as an example.

2.5.2. Challenges in Relation to Learners

Integration of the 4C skills challenges the traditional role of the learners where they mostly possess the role of recipients in the knowledge transformation process which is led by teachers. Learning 21st century skills demands certain level of learner autonomy which urges students to leave their comfort zone and take initiatives. Therefore, learning habits of the students as well as issues such as students' inexperience and the strong dependence on direct instruction (Martínez, 2022) can function as an obstacle to acquire these skills, as well. Especially for critical thinking skills, learning traditions and habits, as well as lack of energy or time (Fajriah & Septiyanti, 2021) are among the difficulties that may be faced by the students. The same aspect can pose further barriers to implication of critical thinking skills in the lessons, and among these barriers, along with customs and habits of the learners, time and energy constraint, classroom environment and challenges in comprehending the subject matter can be the main reasons why learners (Runco, 2001).

On the other hand, lack of competence in a foreign language can be listed as another challenge that impedes the process of teaching and learning of the 4C skills. Initially, speaking skills can be regarded as one of the prerequisites of practicing the 4C skills to exchange ideas, to collaborate, to contribute. Similarly, proficiency in both oral and written communication is essential for collaboration (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019). However, when it comes to expressing their opinions in speaking class, students' limited vocabulary prevents them from speaking with fluency (Fajriah & Septiyanti, 2021). Moreover, critical thinking requires a certain level of higher-order thinking skill which necessitates using newly acquired knowledge and manipulating it to arrive at potential solutions in novel situations (Warmadewi et al., 2019). Therefore, before engaging in tasks requiring higher-order thinking skills, learners should have a solid foundational comprehension of the material they are covering (Berg, 2004). In that sense, readiness of the students plays a crucial role and creates the basis for teaching the 4C skills; and lack of competence in the language

or cognitive abilities would also limit the learner engagement and participation in the tasks aiming to develop critical and creative thinking skills.

Apart from these, learner personality and classroom dynamics can be a determinant in reinforcing 4C skills. As stated by Athifah & Binti Aliumar (2019), fear of failing, criticism from others and complacency can be regarded as some of the barriers related to fostering creativity in EFL classes. Similarly, lack of self-confidence, having an introvert personality, fear of making mistake or fear of being judged can be among the major challenges that affect the learning experience of EFL students by holding them back from further engagement in the beneficial tasks that aim to address the 4C skills.

2.5.3. Challenges in Relation to Institutional Procedures

Other than the factors related to the instructors and students, additional aspects in relation to the institutional procedures may significantly influence the integration of the 4C skills in English language classes, and assessment is among the most influential factors. The goal of traditional assessments is to assess each person's performance individually. Therefore, to assess collaboration, for instance, when addressing a group project, the most crucial concern is how to offer credit to each group member and take into consideration group variations that could influence a particular student's performance (Binkley, 2012). Additionally, in order to assess critical and creative thinking skills, a student's use of conceptual techniques in problem-solving should be made clear by assessments. In order to do this, it is necessary to analyse not just the responses from the pupils but also the attitudes that prompted them (Binkley, 2012). Designing assessment tools can propose a solution to overcome these obstacles; however, cost of developing assessment tools may create another barrier. Carefully designed multiple-choice tests can evaluate higher-level skills like critical thinking and analysis, but a prosperous assessment system would include tests that promote greater creativity, demonstrate how students ended up with their answers, and even permit collaboration. However, the expense of these measures exceeds what governments have often been prepared to pay for evaluation (Aldridge, 2010). This will indirectly affect the implementation of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms in that when these skills are not assessed on exams with high stakes

for certification or accountability, the teachers have the tendency to prioritise them less in the classroom instructions (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012).

Another obstacle can be related to a broader aspect which cover and determine the ways and the extent to which these skills are addressed in language classes, and it can be referred as curriculum as an umbrella term. Saavedra & Opfer (2012) argues regarding the 4Cs that students would not acquire these skills unless they are explicitly taught as separate courses. Therefore, they should learn these skills as discipline studies. Kundu & Bej (2022) touch upon the same issue indicating that because the curriculum does not adequately match with the necessary skills (4Cs), students are required to complete an excessive number of course modules in a given semester which urges them to memorize the material for the majority of the class time which also results in less emphasis put on the 4C skills as exclusive skills. Apart from this point, such a situation also leads teachers to prioritize the themes and skills targeted in the curriculum and ignore or insufficiently address the 4C skills as they are not the concrete elements of the curricular objectives. Also, in the study conducted by Ullah et al. (2022), insufficient emphasis on developing critical thinking skills in the current curriculum along with lack of appropriate course book was found to be among the major obstacles that are faced by English language teachers.

2.6. Previous Studies on the Integration of 4C Skills in EFL Classrooms

The previous research conducted on the integration of the 21st century skills and the 4C skills are based on different aspects of the educational processes; and they are mainly related to the perceptions of teachers, students, and institutional aspect.

2.6.1. Teacher Perceptions

When the literature reviewed, it is possible to encounter a large number of studies focusing on the teacher perceptions in relation to incorporation of the 21st century skills and 4C skills in EFL classrooms. In the study conducted by Tsourapa (2018) with 121 teachers, teacher attitudes in relation to teaching 21st century skills in EFL classes were aimed to be explored by specifically identifying the skills that were perceived to be necessary and the appropriate tools to develop these skills. The scope

of the study also included the barriers to benefiting from educational technology in teaching processes and the possible solutions overcome this issue. The researcher revealed that the teachers adopted a positive approach to integrating educational technologies such as social Networks, digital story-telling, blogs, Webquests, wikis, e-mail, and the Word processor in their classes to foster 21st century skills. As for the obstacles, lack of training and time or insufficient technological equipment were among the main barriers to the integration of educational technology in teaching 21st century skills.

Similarly, Seliem et al. (2019) investigated teacher experiences related to teaching critical thinking in EFL classes along with exploring their strategies to address these skills in their lessons, the challenges that they faced during the time. The data gathered from 20 English language teachers from four different secondary schools initially revealed that while teachers may use specific strategies to foster critical thinking in language learners, their understanding of critical thinking is limited. When they were asked to define critical thinking, it was stated that while some of the definitions indicated principles relevant to critical thinking; others showed a lack of comprehension of the idea. It was also found noteworthy that because the word "critical thinking" is vague, half of the participants said they were unable to define it precisely. The strategies implemented by the teachers to teach critical thinking included posing controversial queries encourage debates, employing wh- questions to develop students' critical thinking, brainstorming and discussion, problem-solving tasks, team-based learning, collaborative learning, role-playing, and flipped learning. Beside their efforts to integrate critical thinking into their lessons, the teachers stated a number of challenges related to students' level of proficiency, the lack of time allotted to teaching critical thinking because of the need to cover an extensive amount of subject matter, the resistance of learners to active learning and expectations of lecture-style instruction, the lack of suitable educational materials, the difficulty of evaluating student work that demonstrates critical thinking, and the lack of preparation for teaching critical thinking skills. Finally, to overcome these barriers, possible suggestions were listed as cooperative learning, role-playing, problem-solving, flipped learning, team-based learning, question-answer sessions, discussions and additional training for teachers on how to foster critical thinking in their pupils

In a similar vein, Saleh (2019) aimed at exploring the thoughts, applications, and obstacles of teaching critical thinking in foreign language classrooms by collaborating 24 foreign language instructors. As for the instructors' understanding of the concept, it was indicated that some of the definitions proposed by the instructors demonstrated a lack of knowledge about the idea, but others suggested pertinent critical thinking principles. Regarding their methods of incorporating critical thinking, they reported to be benefiting from utilizing wh-words, specifically "why" and "how", posing some thought-provoking questions to elicit discussions, exchanging ideas, critically evaluating both well-written and poorly-written work and reading and critically reflecting on what is learned. For the challenges of teaching critical thinking, the problems listed in the article were inability of the students to handle this type of thinking, students' inefficiencies or lack of awareness of various critical thinking issues; lack of time; measurement difficulties; ineffective communication; inadequate problem-solving skills, and lack of resources to support the implementation of learning activities for fostering critical thinking in language lessons. As for the effective ways of addressing this skills, teachers suggested encouraging students to consider the logic behind the lessons, any hidden signals, and potential applications, promoting collaboration, using less direct queries and more indirect, critical, and deep inquiries, brainstorming to generate creative ideas or find solutions to problems, allowing adequate time to put critical thinking into practice, using compare and contrast exercises to foster critical thinking.

In another study on implementing critical thinking in language classes, Zhang et al. (2020) carried out research with 336 Chinese, university EFL instructors from 24 provinces on their perceptions of critical thinking and teaching it by means of a mixed method study. In the scope of this research, they found out that the instructors had a clear vision of what critical thinking means, but they showed only a partial comprehension of critical thinking in their attempt to present the idea of "a good critical thinker" by covering only one or two aspects of critical thinking. Furthermore, they needed additional educational opportunities, resources, and contextual support in this area because they lacked relevant theoretical knowledge and pedagogy for teaching critical thinking.

Also, the participants' opinions about critical thinking teaching and their actual classroom practices diverged; they neglected to properly incorporate critical thinking into their EFL lessons and gave the dispositional factor little consideration while facing the challenge of both improving the language proficiency of the students and familiarizing them with this competence due to lower level of language proficiency of the students

Additionally, with the aim of examining EFL teachers' opinions and preferences on pedagogical competency for the 21st century, Siregar et al. (2021) conducted a case study with EFL teachers teaching at a university for 7 to 30 years by adopting a qualitative approach. Regarding the results of the study, the researchers indicated that teachers believed that the main component of 21st-century learning was the quick advancement of knowledge and technology, which helped to provide more thorough instruction. Furthermore, because there are so many accessible information sources that improve students' competency, they believed that the term "21st-century pedagogical competence" primarily centred on how educators integrate technology into the classroom and support students' creativity. The writers also expressed that to keep teachers informed about any changes and innovations in education, it is advised to progressively offer more courses and training regarding addressing 21st-century education.

To investigate the integration of 4C skills in different English literacy activities, Ratama et al. (2021) collaborated with 120 students and 3 language teachers by utilizing several methods of data collection such as interviews, observations, document analysis, observations, pictures and video recording. By focusing on five different activities, the researchers concluded that critical thinking and collaboration were among the skills which were addressed successfully in all the programs and they were followed by collaboration which was utilized in four of these programs. As additional information, it was indicated by the teachers that they faced challenges in teaching critical thinking, collaboration and communication which were related to a number of reasons such as problematic student attitudes, duplicating information without comprehending the texts, unwillingness to contribute to collaborative tasks, lack of self-confidence and lack of language competence. Creative thinking skill was, on the other hand, expressed to create no challenge for the teachers.

In another mixed method study by Tran (2021), whose purpose was to examine how high school EFL teachers view the importance of the 4Cs for students and to analyse their suggestions for helping students improve these four skills, 50 EFL teachers from different high schools who teach English were the official study participants with nine of them taking part in the interview sessions. Among the major findings of the study, initially, the participants held the belief that the 4C skills can have a significant impact on fostering the development of responsible global citizens and successful citizens in the future, particularly in the era of knowledge-based economies and international economic competition as they possess an indispensable role in the future career progression of learners. Besides, the teacher suggestions with regards to the current issue included pedagogical approaches and methods to foster the 4 Cs in high school students, integrating the 4Cs in hands-on activities in EFL Classrooms, incorporating the 4Cs in every particular lesson, curriculum development using the 4Cs, professional development using the 4Cs, using assessment in learning and teaching to develop the 4Cs, creating a learning environment to boost experiential effectiveness, utilizing sources of teaching materials consistent with the 4Cs.

Apart from these, Fajriah & Septiyanti (2021) aimed at exploring the challenges faced by EFL teachers in improving 4C skills of the students in 21st-century education by working with four English teachers teaching in different high schools and conducting a qualitative research. The study results revealed that all the teachers experienced similar challenges in this issue which included the difficulties in comprehending certain effective learning strategies that promote the 4C skills integration, creating appropriate lesson plans, motivating learners, lack of infrastructure and facilities and difficulties in building students' confidence and ensuring engagement.

2.6.2. Student Perceptions

In addition to teacher perceptions on integrating the 4C skills in language classes, student perceptions were also a matter of investigation in the literature with a fewer number of studies when compared to the teachers based research.

In this regard, initially, Landon (2019) focused on 792 high school students from 13 different institutions and investigated the importance of the 4C skills and whether they have the chances to learn the skill in majority of their classes by utilizing a reaction survey. The findings of the study offer interesting results in that although the students showed positive attitudes towards the 4C skills and find them significant to learn even for their lives after the high school, when the results related to their experiences were analysed, the scores of this section were much lower than the part related to the students' beliefs especially for critical and creative thinking skills. Even though 89.3% of students said that creativity was an important 21st-century ability, just 39.2% of stated that they have engaged in the majority of their classes involve creativity. Critical thinking is similar, accounting for 79.9% of pupils concurring that it's crucial for the 21st century ability, yet only 40.9% concurred with observing it being taught and/or practiced in most of their classrooms.

Additionally, in the study carried out by Puangpungsi (2021), investigating the improvement of English language skills and the 21st century skills of the students through the use of project-based learning was the primary focus of research by combining qualitative and quantitative research designs. In this regard, the main participant group constituted of 104 young adults, English language learners at university level. Initially, they were engaged in a small group in order to develop a project for a 15-week period where they followed certain stages to complete the project such as identifying the problem, producing solutions, organizing the project, carrying it out, controlling and monitoring the process, and finalizing the project. In the end, the students were provided with a questionnaire evaluate the contribution of this process to their language skills and 21st century skills separately. The findings indicated that implementing project-based learning enhanced the students' collaboration and team work skills. Moreover, it was also stated that during the project work, they improved their critical thinking abilities, media and technology literacy, problem-solving abilities, flexibility and adaptability, information literacy, and communication abilities.

Following this, Duong & Hoang (2021) investigated to what extent the 4C skills are perceived as important for learners by conducting a quantitative study with 204 third-year students who are majoring in English. As the results revealed, all the skills are

crucial for their learning processes. More specifically, communication and collaboration skills were perceived highly important especially for utilizing communication skills for various purposes, expressing ideas by using non-verbal ways, and also for valuing the individual effort and showing the ability for respectful listening.

In another study which was conducted by Monib (2023), the researcher attended to review both student perceptions and the lecturer perceptions in the same study investigating the integration of the 21st century skills in language lessons in three different universities. In order to investigate to what extent 21st century skills are addressed in the EFL classes, Monib utilized a questionnaire to detect the frequency of integration. As the findings suggested, all the skills were integrated in the lessons but in different rates ranging from a few times in a semester to 1-3 times in a month. In that sense, collaboration was found to be the most integrated skills with technology as a way of reinforcing learning and communication. On the other hand, critical thinking, global and local connection, and self-direction were rated the least incorporated skills by the teachers and students. Creativity & innovation, however, was rated differently by the participant groups where teachers expressed to integrate it 1-3 times in a month while students stated the frequency as a few times in a semester.

2.6.3. Institutional Aspects

Apart from student and teacher perceptions, institutional aspects about the curriculum related situation or testing and assessment based conditions exploring the circumstances and occurrences of the 4Cs in these areas are also highly crucial and they are worth investigating. However, the research conducted in this field is quite limited in the literature.

As the first instance that can be related to studies investigating the place of the 4C skills in the curriculum, Tamela & Dwi (2021) aimed at exploring how the 4C skills are integrated in the 7th grade English lessons by analyzing the lesson plans that were gathered from private and public junior high schools. In order to achieve this, they utilized a framework consisting of seven to ten indicators for each skill examining how these skills were addressed in the activities. For example, utilizing peer

feedback and incorporating role play were the two indicators of communication skill whereas integrating problem-based learning, adopting strategies for group discussion and applying concept maps were the indicators of critical thinking skills. The results of the study indicated that all the 4C skills were a part of the lesson plans; however, there was an inconsistency in the frequency of indicators appearing for each skill. That is, for collaboration, as an example, there were indicators that more dominantly appeared in the activities while there are some others that were not addressed at all address the target skill. Therefore, the researchers concluded that despite being integrated in all the lesson plans, the lesson plans needed further fulfilment to achieve more efficient 4C skills integration.

To dwell upon this point, Marwa et al. (2023) conducted a study for the sake of analyzing the syllabuses and test documents of English courses and identifying the incorporation the 4C skills in these teaching documents. To achieve this, the researchers gathered eight different course syllabuses and eight test documents from eight instructors teaching English courses. To evaluate the integration, a 21st century skills rubric was utilized indicating four levels of integration: “Exceeds Competency” scored as 4 (100% integration), “Approaching Competency” and “Meets Competency” scored as 2-3 (50-75% integration) and “Not Yet Reached Competency” scored as 1 (less than 25% integration). It was concluded in the study, in course syllabuses, that all the 4C skills were integrated at the “Achieving Competence” level (M=3.11) presenting communication as the most included skill with a mean score of 3.25 and collaboration as the least integrated skill with a mean score of 3.02. As for the assessment documents, integration of the skills followed a similar ranking with the course syllabuses with communication as the most assessed (M=2.25) and collaboration as the least evaluated (M=2.08); but the mean scores indicating the integration of the 4C skills were lower in the test documents, it was in “Approaching Competence” level with an overall mean score of 2.23.

As to the last aspect, professional development needs and opportunities, Haryani et al. (2021) investigated the resources that teachers can benefit from in terms of improving themselves in integrating the 4C skills into their science lessons. They utilized various data collection methods such as audio recordings, surveys and group discussions with the teachers and evaluated various resources including teacher

collaborations, professional development programs, open resources and curriculum guidelines and their access to these sources. The findings revealed interesting results in that until they are qualified to participate, not all the instructors have equal access to the teacher training program. In addition, the benefits of collaborating as team and exchanging knowledge on innovated education practices and policies with other educators have been recognized by educators as another beneficial way for professional development when it is supported by the departments and the school leaders.

2.6.4. Previous Studies in Turkish Context

Similarly, to explore teacher perceptions on the importance and the place of 21st century skills in language classes in higher education institutions, Tuzlukova et al. (2018) especially focused on critical thinking skill and investigated the teachers' content knowledge about the skill, their perceptions of implementing critical thinking skills in English language lessons, and the aspects related to professional development in terms of critical thinking. As revealed in the study, although they recognized the value of using critical thinking techniques in their instruction, instructors often faced obstacles in putting these abilities into practice. Also, there is space for improvement in the ways that critical thinking is integrated into English language classrooms, instructional strategies, and teaching resources, both institutionally and in terms of professional development.

In another research investigating ELT pre-service teachers' beliefs and perceptions on 21st century learning and innovation skills (the 4C skills particularly), Bedir (2019) demonstrated that pre-service teachers perceived 21st century learning to be the incorporation of technology into classroom instruction. Despite having a very favourable opinion of the 4Cs, they were slightly aware of them and actively engaged in them. Additionally, the terms and phrases they used to define critical, creative thinking, cooperation, and communication were linked to their meanings in the educational contexts while 21st century abilities may have distinct or specialized meanings in different settings. Finally, pre-service teachers expressed negative opinions about the national curriculum's and assessments' emphasis on the 4Cs, but they had positive opinions about the 4Cs' role in professional development.

The next study conducted on the perceptions of EFL teachers on creativity and creative teaching was designed by Akyıldız & Çelik (2020) as a qualitative research where the researchers worked with 15 EFL teachers teaching in different secondary schools. According to the research, most teachers did not use a creative approach in their instruction and were unaware of the fundamental principles of creativity. Nonetheless, to promote creativity, it was mentioned that they employed a variety of techniques in their classes, including games, snap-words, storytelling, and brainstorming. It was also underlined that a number of elements, including a curriculum which is heavy on content, an exam-oriented education, students, time limitation of the lessons, and technology, impeded creativity and innovative teaching approaches. However, additional elements were also indicated to foster creativity, such as students, technology, and motivated teachers.

In a similar vein, Kurt & Önalın (2018) were also the ones focusing on pre-service English language teacher perceptions about creativity by first exploring their existing knowledge and perspectives about creativity, then moving on to possible instructional practices to foster creativity and role of the teachers on this issue. It was concluded after the interviews that pre-service English language teachers' impression of creativity was being distinct and remarkable, possessing extraordinary ideas and the capacity to generate creative results. According to the participants, creativity was partly innate and developed later in life as a result of environmental influences such as familial environment, cultural background, and educational attainment. To encourage student creativity in English classes, they recommended implementing collaborative, communicative, and open-ended assignments. They thought of themselves as somewhat creative as aspiring instructors, but they didn't feel prepared to teach creativity. Ultimately, they all concurred that teacher education plays a crucial role in assisting pre-service teachers in becoming more creative teachers and in developing competence on how to teach creativity.

Moreover, Şahin & Han (2020) also investigated the attitudes of 56 EFL teachers who taught at different types of schools in Turkey towards implementing 21st in their classrooms by utilizing a mixed method study. As claimed by the study result, the teachers had a positive attitude towards teaching these skills in EFL classes; they signified the importance of acquiring 21st century competencies for the students and

also expressed that they benefited from these skills in order to increase learner attention and curiosity, to collaborate and communicate as well as to foster the process of teaching lesson contents.

As another sample study, through the use of a mixed method descriptive case study, Demirkol-Orak & İnözü (2021) targeted to investigate Turkish English language teachers' knowledge, motivation, institutional experiences, and real classroom practices in terms of 21st century learning and innovation skills (4Cs) with a participant group comprising 26 English language instructors who work at Foreign Language Department, at university. The study's conclusions revealed that instructors' understanding of the theoretical foundation for 21st century skills and its branches as applied to classroom practices was inadequate. In terms of their classroom practices, when asked which 4Cs skill they thought should be practiced in the classroom the most, most interviewees said that they focused on practices relating to collaboration and communication. Additionally, regarding the challenges that they experienced for implementing the 4C skills in their lessons, the instructors expressed that the institution was restricting the instructors to teaching only the predetermined syllabus units. For this reason, the curriculum placed time constraints on practicing the 4Cs of the 21st century without considering punctuality for the teachers. However, provided that teachers receive instructional assistance to address their knowledge gaps regarding 21st century 4Cs and organizational support in the form of syllabus customization, they would be ready to implement the 4Cs in their classes. In this aspect, although educational parties recognize the importance of 21st century learning and innovative capabilities, instructors are not inclined to support them. Finally, the most frequently utilized activities to stimulate 21st century learning and innovation abilities were found to include storytelling exercises, brainstorming sessions, group and pair works, and discussion sessions.

Similarly, Ataberk & Mirici (2022) conducted a study with the purpose of comparing the viewpoints of academics and students in English language education programs, finding out how much emphasis was placed on 21st century skills in the related programs, and evaluating how successful the programs were at fostering the development of these skills. The findings show that all of the participating ELT departments use the Council of Higher Education's curriculum, which tries to equip

pre-service EFL teachers with the 21st century abilities at a certain degree. The curricula in those departments, however, only cover a small portion of the abilities that could compromise the integrity of the 21st century skills in professional life reflections. Both the participating academics and the students feel that their course materials only cover a portion of the 21st century abilities. Also, the students lack confidence in their ability to use 21st century abilities in practical settings.

Another study by Ekizer & Yildirim (2023) dwelled upon English Language Teaching students' perceptions about 21st century skills by conducting qualitative research where they interviewed 62 ELT students. As they revealed, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and effective communication are viewed by students as crucial 21st century abilities. Additionally, they think that these abilities may be nurtured in dynamic, interesting classroom settings that use technology, project-based learning, and real-world applications.

Finally, the study carried out by Eker Uka & Bedir (2023) looked into how English language instructors viewed and applied 21st-century learning and innovation skills in their classrooms. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect data, with 105 English teachers in the quantitative phase and 10 teachers in the qualitative part. The study's findings showed that the participants understood the value of 21st-century abilities in teaching and learning English. They need support from their supervisors and the government even though they are aware of them. Both their perspective and their comprehension of when and how to apply these skills need to be expanded.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this section, the research questions of the study, research design, research context and participants, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and assumptions of the study will be presented.

3.2. Research Questions

The main research questions along with the sub-questions that the current study aims to answer are stated below. Table 3.1 presents the research questions, data collection instruments to answer the related research questions and methods for data analysis.

1. What are the perceptions of English language instructors who work in a higher education institution on the instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms?
 - 1.1 What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?
 - 1.2 How much importance do they attach on integrating these skills in their classes?
 - 1.3 To what extent can they integrate the 4C skills into their English Language lessons?
 - 1.4 What kind of materials, activities and tasks do they use?
 - 1.5 What are the challenges that they experience?
2. What are the perceptions of students who study at a preparatory school about learning and practicing the 4C skills in English language classes?
 - 2.1 What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?

- 2.2 How beneficial do they find it to learn & practice these skills in their English language classes?
- 2.3 What are their opinions about their current opportunities to learn and practice these skills in their lessons?
- 2.4 What kind of activities would they suggest to have in their lessons to practice the 4C skills?
- 2.5 What are the obstacles that they experience?
3. What are the perceptions of the other stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university with regards to the integration of the 4C skills?

Table 3.1 *Research Questions, Instruments, Research Methods and Analysis*

Research Questions	Instrument	Method	Analysis
1. What are the perceptions of English language instructors who work in a higher education institution on the instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms?	Interview (Teachers)	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
1.a. What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?	Interview (Teachers) Questions 1, 2	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
1.b. How much importance do they attach on integrating these skills in their classes?	Interview (Teachers) Questions 3, 4	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
1.c. To what extent can they integrate the 4C skills into their English language lessons?	Interview (Teachers) Questions 5, 6	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
1.d. What kind of materials, activities and tasks do they use?	Interview (Teachers) Questions 7, 9	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis + Document Analysis

Table 3.1 *Research Questions, Instruments, Research Methods and Analysis*
(continued)

1.e. What are the challenges that they experience?	Interview (Teachers) Question 8	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
2. What are the perceptions of the students who study at a preparatory school about learning and practicing the 4C skills in English language classes?	Interview (Students)	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
2.a. What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?	Interview (Students) Question 1	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
2.b. How beneficial do they find it to learn and practice these skills in their English language classes?	Interview (Students) Questions 2, 3	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
2.c. What are their opinions about their current opportunities to learn and practice these skills in their lessons?	Interview (Students) Questions 4, 5, 7	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
2.d. What kind of activities would they suggest to have in their lessons to practice the 4C skills?	Interview (Students) Questions 6, 9	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
2.e. What are the obstacles that they experience?	Interview (Students) Question 8	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis
3. What are the perceptions of the other stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university with regards to the integration of the 4C skills?	Interview (Unit Members) Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Qualitative	Constant Comparative Analysis

3.3. Research Design

The current study was constructed by taking qualitative study design as basis by specifically adopting case study research approach. According to Yin (2009), case study is an “empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in depth and its real-life context”. Additionally, the case study enables an investigation to preserve the comprehensive and significant aspects of occurrences related to real life, including individual experiences, management and organizational processes, neighbourhood alternation, international relations, and the development of industries (Yin, 2014).

Creswell (2013) indicates that “a case can be concrete entity, such as an individual, a small group, an organization, or a partnership.” Similarly, a single case or a number of instances may be studied in a case study research (Priya, 2020). In the scope of this study, three groups of participants are investigated as three different cases: English language instructors who work at a higher education institution, English language learners who are studying at a preparatory school and the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development Unit, Measurement & Evaluation Unit and Professional Development Unit. In that sense, this research aimed to explore the perceptions and experiences of the cases in relation to teaching and learning 21st century skills as the phenomenon, in the context of a preparatory school at a private university.

Yin (2018) puts forward three types of case studies to adopt in accordance with the research goals as descriptive case study, explanatory case study and exploratory case study. Descriptive case study is defined as “a case study whose purpose is to describe a phenomenon (the “case”) in its real-world context” (p.238), explanatory case study aims to “explain how or why some condition came to be (e.g., how or why some sequence of events occurred or did not occur)” (p.238), and an exploratory case study is described as “a study whose purpose is to identify the research questions or procedures to be used in a subsequent research study, which might or might not be a case study” (p.238). Under the lights of these categories, this study adopts an exploratory case study approach to reveal the perceptions of the participants about teaching & learning 21st century skills, their instructional attitudes and experiences related to this issue in the classrooms and the university as well as their perceived

obstacles together with their recommendations to overcome these in order to reinforce the integration of the 4C skills in the English language classes.

In a case study research, multiple methods of data collection are used, as it involves an in-depth study of a phenomenon (Priya, 2020). That is why; the data gathered through the interviews with the participant groups were supported with secondary data which were the documents of sample instructional activities that are utilized by the instructors to reinforce the 4C skills in English language classes.

3.4. Research Context and Participants

This research was conducted in the preparatory school context of a private higher education institution in Ankara, Turkey, in the spring term of 2022-2023 academic year. The university offers a compulsory English language education program which initially urges students to take a preliminary placement exam and TOEFL-ITP at the beginning of an academic year to determine their proficiency level and decide whether they can proceed with their departmental courses without attending the English courses in the preparatory school.

Initially, all the students take a preliminary placement test where they are evaluated based on their grammar and vocabulary knowledge as well as reading and listening comprehension skills in English. The students who score 65+ in the placement exam are allowed to take TOEFL-ITP. On the condition that they get a score over 500 in TOEFL-ITP, the students can directly start their education in their departments. Those who are unable to get that score have to attend English classes in the preparatory school. Based on their grade in the placement exam, the students are allocated into different classes in different levels. The ones who score 60 and below in the exam attend AF level classes during the fall term while those who take 60-69 are placed in A level classes. The students who get over 70 in the placement exam and 400-455 in TOEFL-ITP attend B level classes and the ones who score over 70 in the placement test and 456-512 in TOEFL-ITP are placed in C level classes. AF level students attend 30 contact hours per week which consist of 20 hours of main course (generally based on grammar and vocabulary teaching), five hours of reading and five hours of speaking courses while A, B and C level students have 25 contact hours comprising 15 hours of main course, five hours of speaking and five hours of reading

courses. In the spring term, however, B and C level students attend five hours of TOEFL writing courses instead of reading classes.

Throughout the first term, students are required to take quizzes and exams, make presentations, improve themselves in academic writing by handing in weekly writing tasks in accordance with their level to collect points from each of these tasks as well as take a final exam to receive an overall score of their performance of the term. At the end of each term, they take a final exam; based on their score of the term and final exam grade, the classes are reshuffled to place the students into their new level classes by either enabling them proceed with the higher level classes or repeat in their own group level.

As aforementioned, present study was conducted in the spring term of the 2022-2003 academic year, after the students had completed their first term attending their English classes and started the second term in their new level classes. To obtain comprehensive results in relation to the instructional practices of the 21st century skills in the English language classes, three groups of participants were interviewed in this study as preparatory school students ($N=9$), English language instructors ($N=9$) and unit members ($N=3$) of the university by utilizing convenience sampling and purposeful sampling methods. The students were selected on the basis of their proficiency level and there were three students from A level, three students from B level and three students from C level classes. Moreover, the instructors were also grouped depending on their years of experience in the field. According to Melnick & Meister (2008), instructors who have not completed their first three years of teaching after being certified are classified as novice teachers. Gatbonton (2008) also describes these teachers as having less than two years of experience, and interprets experienced teachers as those having at least four or five years of experience. Finally, the teachers possessing at least ten years of classroom experience are classified as expert teachers by Wolff et al. (2021). In the light of these categorizations, in the current study, three of the instructors were novice teachers who had 1-2 years of experience, three of them were experienced teachers with 3-10 years of teaching experience and three of the teachers were grouped as proficient teaches having more than 10 years of experience in their profession. Lastly, regarding the unit members, one member from three different educational units took

part in the study as Curriculum Development Unit, Measurement & Evaluation Unit and Professional Development Unit.

The students who took part in the study were chosen according to their group levels in the spring term and three students from each level (A/AF, B, C) attended the interviews. Six of the students were male while three of them were female; gender distribution of the students can be seen in Figure 3.1.

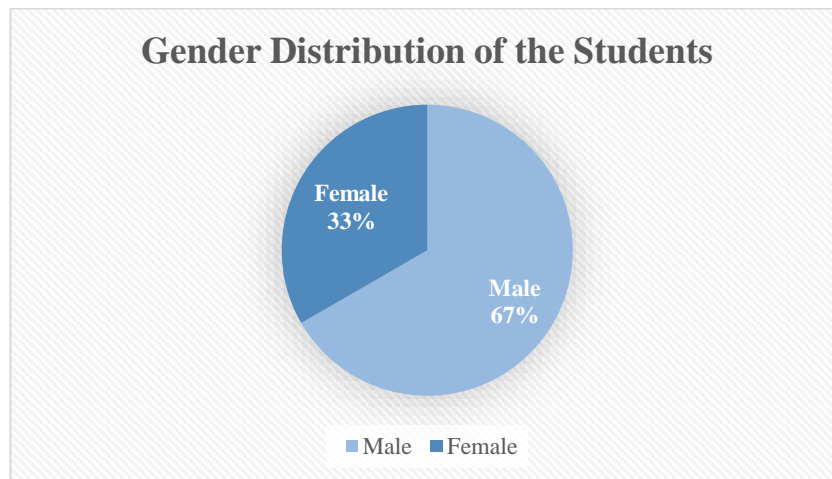


Figure 3.1 Gender Distribution of the Students

Additionally, the ages of the students ranged between 18 and 22; and majority of the students were at the age of 19. Figure 3.2 clearly presents the details related to age distribution and the number of the students.

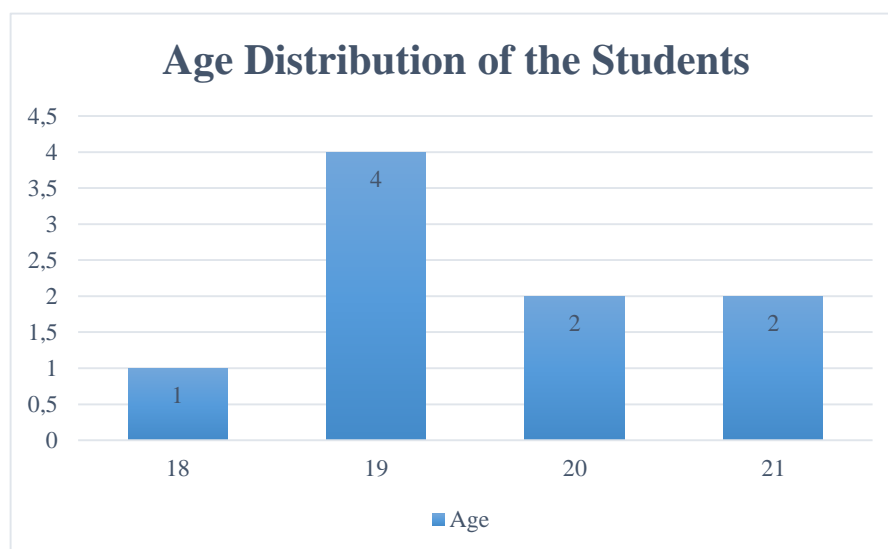


Figure 3.2 Age Distribution of the Students

Another point that was taken into consideration was the students' rankings in the university entrance exam in Turkey. In that sense, the highest ranking was 656 with the lowest one as 93.000. Lastly, the students were also asked about their latest GPA (the one that they got at the end of the first semester); it was reported that their GPAs ranged between 45 and 90, 02. Table 3.2 presents the university entrance exam rankings and the current GPAs of the students.

Table 3.2 *Graduated High Schools, University Entrance Exam Rankings and Current GPAs of the Students*

Students	Graduated High School	University Entrance Exam Ranking	Current GPA
Student 1	Private College	61.000	74
Student 2	Anatolian High School	2.358	45
Student 3	Anatolian High School	579	67
Student 4	Private College	1.445	88
Student 5	Anatolian High School	12.600	77
Student 6	Anatolian High School	8.400	90
Student 7	Anatolian High School	93.000	85
Student 8	Anatolian High School	656	87
Student 9	Anatolian High School	16.500	89,5

As for the instructors, two of the participants were male and seven of them were female (see Figure 3.3) and their ages varied from 21 to 50.

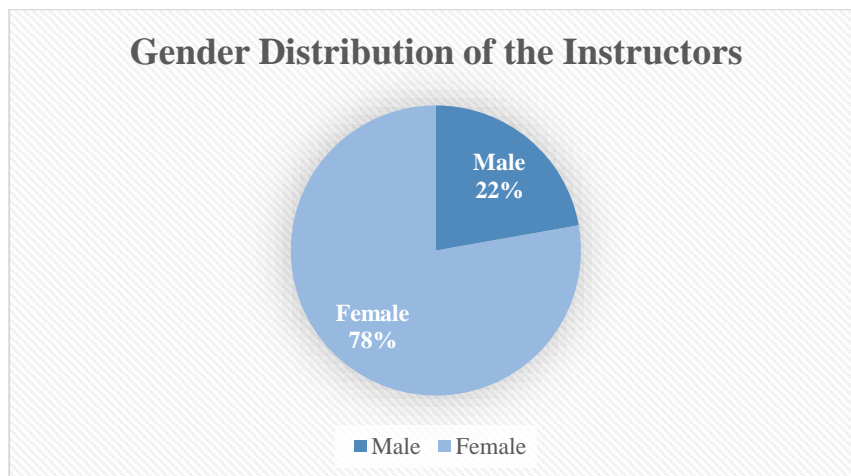


Figure 3.3 Gender Distributions of the Instructors

When the instructors were asked about their educational background, it was indicated that majority of the teachers had a bachelor degree in Foreign Language Education

($N=7$) and one of these instructors stated to have another bachelor degree in Biology. Apart from these instructors, one of the other two teachers completed her degree in Linguistics and the last teacher had a B.A. degree in American Culture & History. Figure 3.4 can be referred for the details about these fields and the number of instructors.

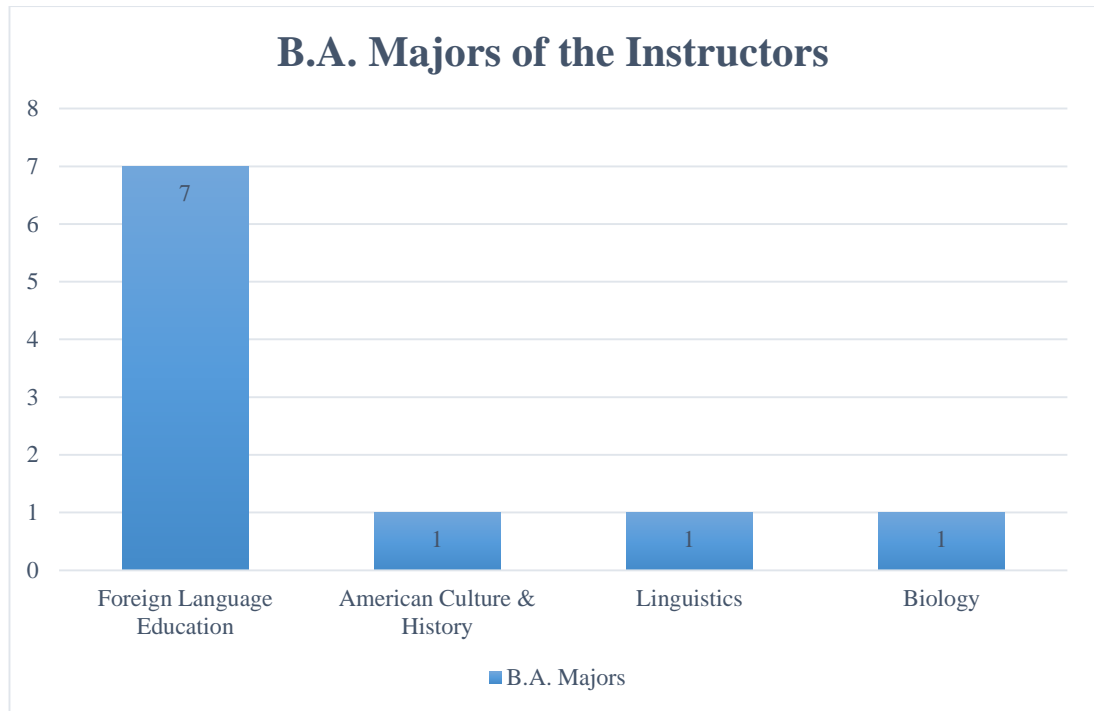


Figure 3.4 B. A. Majors of the Instructors

Regarding their M.A. majors, two of the instructors completed their Master's education in English Language Teaching and one of those teachers had a second M.A. degree in Computer Education & Instructional Technologies field. In addition, one of the teachers had her M.A. degree in Curriculum & Instruction department. Similarly, at the time of current study, four of the instructors were still pursuing their M.A. education in English Language Teaching field and the last instructor was doing her M.A. in Translation & Interpretation. The final participant, however, stated not to have done Master's yet. Figure 3.5 summarizes the details about completed and ongoing M.A. majors of the instructors by departments and number of instructors. Besides the M.A. degrees, it was also recorded that none of the instructors taking part in this study was recorded to have a PhD degree or perusing their PhD education.

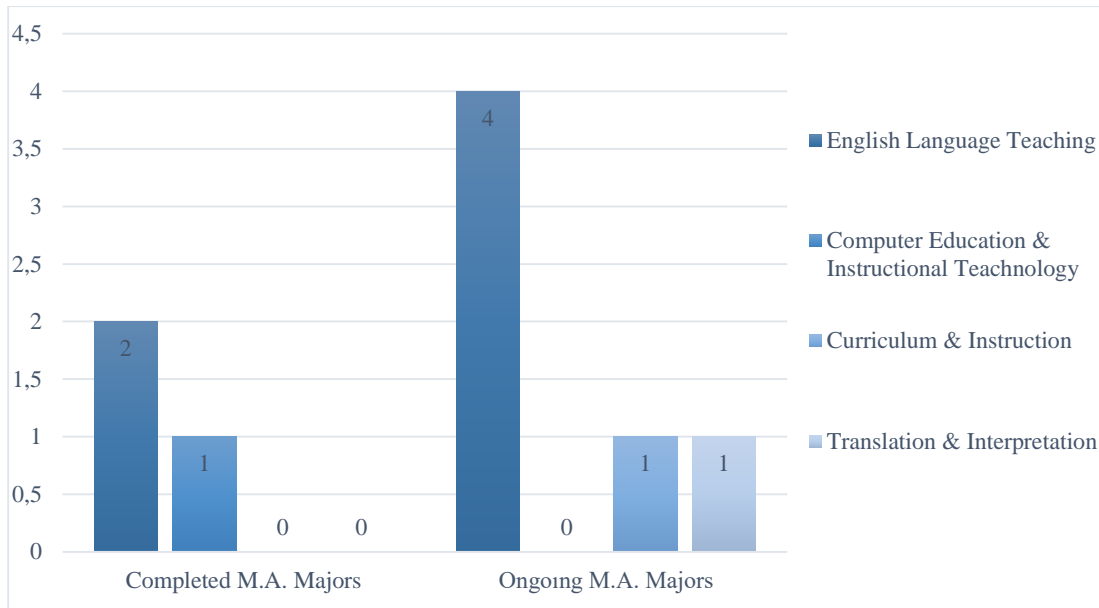


Figure 3.5 M.A. Major Distributions of the Instructors

Concerning the instructors' experience years in their profession, as can be seen in Figure 3.6, the most experienced teacher declared to have 25 years of teaching experience, 9 years of which was in the current university whereas all the novice teachers seem to have started their profession in this institution. Besides the total years of experience, the same figure shows the comparison of the instructors' total years of experience in their profession and their years of experience in the current institution.

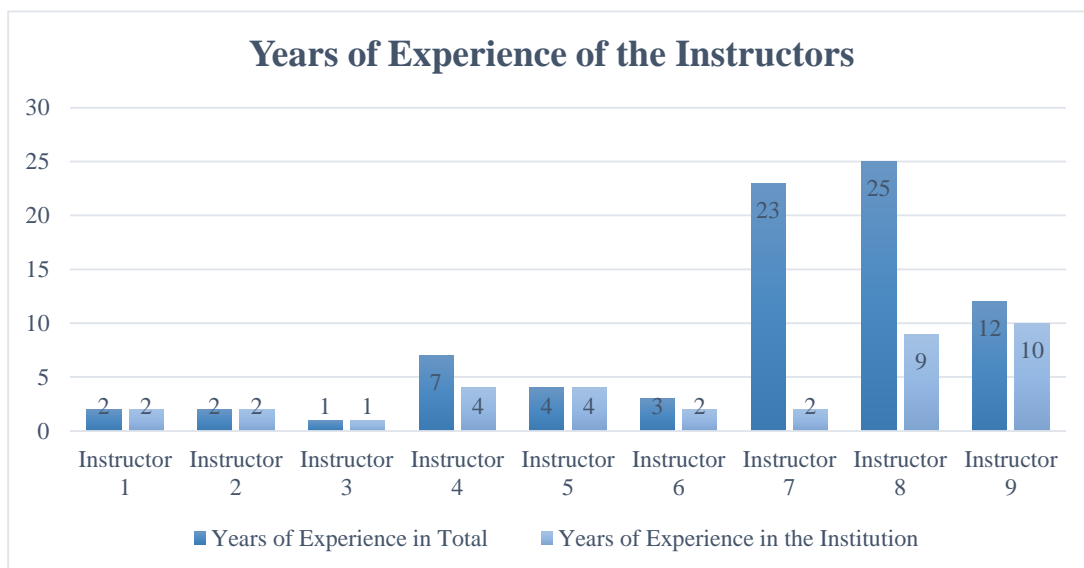


Figure 3.6 Years of Experience in Total vs. Years of Experience in the Current Institution

With regards to their educational background, the instructor working in the Curriculum Development unit completed her bachelor education in Foreign Language Education department and did her M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction field along with having a PhD degree in English Language Teaching. The instructor in Measurement & Evaluation unit had a B.A. degree in English Language & Literature and he pursued his Master’s education in Educational Management and Curriculum & Instruction fields. The member of the Professional Development, lastly, studied in Foreign Language Education department in her Bachelor’s which was followed by Master’s degree in Curriculum & Instruction and PhD in English Language Teaching fields. In relation to their teaching experience, differently from the language instructors, unit members were also asked about their years of working experience in their units. Figure 3.7 shows that all the members had at least 10 years of experience both in their profession and in the current institution together with at least six years of working experience in their units.

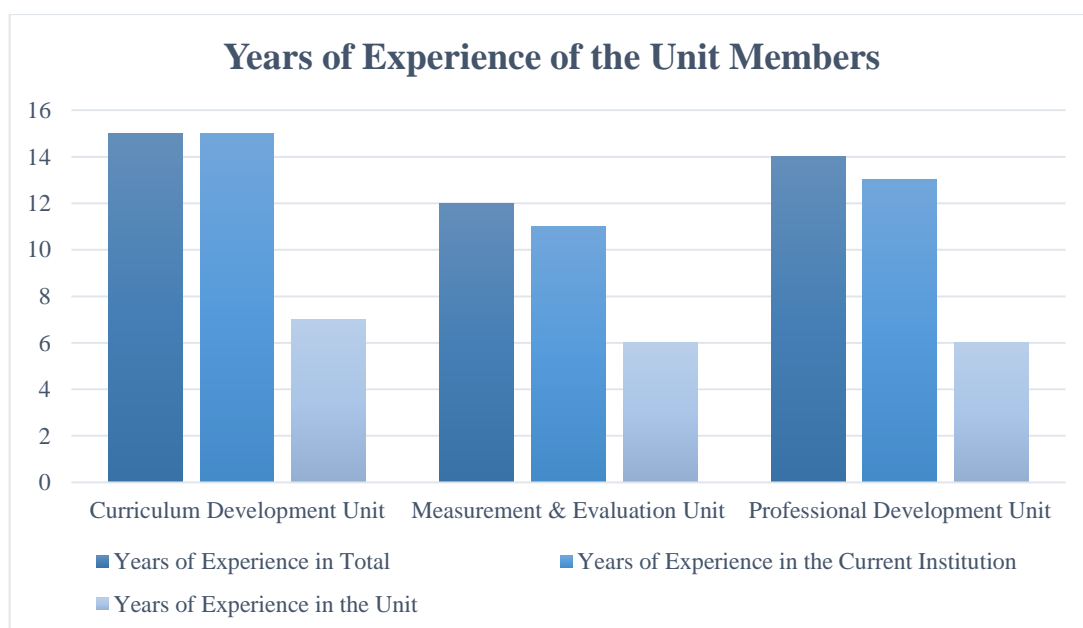


Figure 3.7 Years of Experience in Total, Years of Experience in the Current Institution and Years of Experience in the Unit

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

In this research, qualitative data was the main source of information which was obtained through semi-structured interview sessions. To increase the credibility of the study, data triangulation method was employed where researchers apply a variety

of sources, approaches, investigators, and hypotheses to produce supporting data (Creswell, 2013). In that sense, the students, English language instructors and unit members of the university were interviewed separately to ensure validation. In addition to the data gathered via interviews, to reinforce variety and ensure participant triangulation, documents about sample activities that the teachers benefit from in order to cover 21st century skills were also collected at the end of the interviews with the instructors. In this way, data triangulation was also assured.

Ahead of the interviews, an informed consent form was provided for the instructors taking part in the focus group to determine the interview questions (Appendix B). Also, for the participants taking part in the study, a different consent form was provided for the instructors, students and the unit members (Appendix C).

To start with the first participant group, for preparatory school students, a demographic information form (Appendix D) was prepared which consisted of questions about the participants' age, gender, proficiency level, the high school that they had graduated from, their ranking in the university entrance exam and their current GPA which they had received at the end of the fall term. Regarding the interview questions, there were nine questions in total to be directed to the students (see Appendix E for English version and Appendix F for Turkish version). The initial question aimed at exploring their pre-existing knowledge about 21st century skills, mainly critical thinking, creative thinking, communication and collaboration, and what they bring to their mind. Following this part, upon receiving their opinions, regardless of how knowledgeable they are, a one-page-long document including two visuals was utilized both in English and Turkish versions (see Appendix G for Turkish version and Appendix H for English version) to summarize the main concepts and skills that would be the main focus of discussion during the time. It was aimed to raise awareness if the students had never come up with the concept before or to expand their perspectives if they had certain amount of knowledge, as well as to prepare the participants for the discussion and make the interview more meaningful and valid. After that, next questions required the students to express their opinions on how beneficial they find learning these skills for their personal and academic improvement and then their academic achievement in English language learning more specifically. Later, they were urged to evaluate their learning experience in the

preparatory school English courses by discussing to what extent they have a chance to learn and practice these skills, what kind of materials and activities they cover in their lessons for this purpose, their preferences or perceived importance of these skills, that is whether they attach more importance to any of these skills to learn and practice. Other than these points, they were requested to evaluate their role as a learner in the process of learning and practicing these skills by indicating what they do personally for this purpose. Lastly, the students were invited to question the possible obstacle to teaching and learning the 4C skills in their classes along with their suggestions to overcome these and reinforce the integration of the 4Cs in EFL lessons.

They were also preceded with informed consent forms and demographic information forms where the instructors were required to state their age, gender, the departments that they studied in their B.A, M.A., and PhD programs, their years of experience in the field and years of experience in the institution (Appendix I). The set of questions that were designed for the instructors also consisted of nine items (Appendix J for English version and Appendix K for Turkish version) covering the similar aspects with the ones in students' questions. The initial part aimed at discovering the instructors' background knowledge about 21st century skills, more specifically the 4C skills which was followed by an encouragement to reconsider and evaluate the university education that they received in terms of teaching these skills in their language lessons. After this phase, the document covering the essentials related to 21st century skills were integrated to equip the instructors with the necessary details to discuss their perceptions and instructional implications about the integration of 4C skills in a healthier and meaningful way afterwards. In the later parts, the teachers were asked about the significance that they attach on teaching these skills in EFL classrooms, possible impact of learning and practicing these skills on student achievement regarding language learning and to what extent they can integrate the 4Cs into their lessons either equally or by prioritizing any of them. Additionally, in this part, the teachers were required to provide a description or a sample of the materials and activities that they adopt and find beneficial to address the 4C skills in their lessons. In the last part, teacher perceptions related to possible obstacles to the integration of these skills in language lessons were investigated which was led by

teacher recommendations that can be remedy to these challenges and function as reinforcement for future implications.

The last group of interview questions was designed for the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units. The same informed consent form which was used for the students and teachers were utilized for the unit member. In the demographic information form however, in addition to the basics like age, gender, their educational background, namely their B.A., M.A., and PhD degrees, their experience years in the field and in the institution, another point that was recorded was their experience years in their current unit (Appendix L). There were five questions to be directed to each member addressing similar points of discussion for different units (Appendix M for English version, Appendix N for Turkish version). The stakeholders needed to respond to the questions on behalf of the unit that they represent rather than approaching the issues personally. Firstly, the unit members were requested to explain the main objectives that are taken into consideration while planning a curriculum for an academic year/developing testing and assessment tools for the preparatory school education/arranging events, workshops or projects for the professional development of the teachers. Then, each member was asked to evaluate the significance and place of the 4C skills in their unit clarifying how they manage to apply and integrate them in the instructional procedures which was followed by a critical analysis of whether these skills are equally addressed and emphasized or any of them are prioritized over the others. In the closure part, their opinions and recommendations were asked about the alternative implications to improve the integration of the 4C skills in the curriculum, in the assessment procedures and professional development areas in the preparatory school.

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

The current study was conducted with three groups of participants and these three groups of interviews were carried out simultaneously in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Prior to conducting the interviews, as mentioned previously, a focus group was formed with four English language instructors including the researcher for the sake

of brainstorming and determining possible interview questions after informing the participants about the aim and scope of the research along with the research questions. Two of the participants had previously worked in the preparatory school of the institution and the other instructor was still working the same position; therefore, she did not take part among the interview participants. The meeting was conducted online and took approximately one and half an hour. After this, the meeting notes were arranged to organize the interview questions for students, teachers and unit members separately. Upon this phase, by taking the literature and previous research in the field and meeting notes as basis, three groups of interview questions were formed for the participant groups; and the final form of the interview questions, informed consent forms together with demographic information forms were reviewed and approved by the thesis advisor. Following this phase, ethical commission application procedures were conducted and the research was ethically approved by Middle East Technical University, Human Research Ethics Committee in March, 2023 (Appendix A). Figure 3.8 summarises the steps followed during this procedure.



Figure 3.8 Process of Determining Interview Questions

To start with, in order to explore the perceptions of the preparatory school students in relation to teaching and learning 21st century skills in English language classes, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the contribution of nine students. For this

purpose, convenience sampling and criterion sampling methods were utilized to reach the participants. Initially, the study details such as the aim and procedures were shared with the students either in the classes by making an announcement at the beginning or at the end of the lesson or by reaching them via their contact information and sharing the study details. Meanwhile, the participants were selected on the basis of their proficiency level; that is, three students attended the interviews from each three different class levels (A/AF, B, and C). After this stage, meetings were scheduled with the voluntary students at a period of time when they were available.

The interviews sessions were carried out face-to-face and in Turkish with all the students either in the researcher's office or in a class. The sessions took approximately 40 to 75 minutes and each session was recorded to be transcribed and analysed later. Table 3.3 presents the details about the participants, their class levels and the duration of the interviews. At the beginning of each interview, the participants were informed about that participation in the study was on voluntary basis, no personal identification information would be shared with third parties, the results would only be used for scientific purposes and they can withdraw from the study at any time.

Table 3.3 *Student Class Levels and Durations of the Interviews*

Participants	Class Level	Duration of the Interview (minutes)
Student 1	AR	49:21
Student 2	A	51:22
Student 3	A	1:03:01
Student 4	B	1:14:02
Student 5	B	40:55
Student 6	B	51:30
Student 7	C	46:04
Student 8	C	42:37
Student 9	C	1:08:53
Total		8:07:45

The interviews conducted with the instructors also aimed at revealing their perceptions and experiences in relation to instructional practices of the 21st century skills in EFL classes. As the same with the students, convenience sampling and criterion sampling methods were benefitted from while reaching out the instructors. They were contacted individually either face-to-face or via e-mail to share the research and invite for participation. The teachers who volunteered to take part in the study were grouped in three categories. As indicated before, they were selected on the basis of their teaching experience by having three instructors in each category; the categories were as follows: novice teachers, experienced teachers and proficient teachers. Eight of the nine interviews were carried out face-to-face in the institution and one of them was conducted online via Zoom. Three of the instructors preferred to have the sessions in English and other six of them were interviewed in Turkish. Again, all the participants were informed about the ethical considerations and confidentiality of the research was ensured. Duration of the interviews ranged between 22 and 64 minutes and they were all voice recorded for data analysis. Table 3.4 can be referred for further details about the interview durations and groups of instructors in terms of their experience years.

Table 3.4 *Instructors' Experience Groups and Durations of the Interviews*

Participants	Experience Group of Instructors	Duration of the Interview (minutes)
Instructor 1	Novice	1:04:42
Instructor 2	Novice	35:35
Instructor 3	Novice	35:47
Instructor 4	Experienced	22:13
Instructor 5	Experienced	28:08
Instructor 6	Experienced	57:27
Instructor 7	Proficient	35:24
Instructor 8	Proficient	35:24
Instructor 9	Proficient	26:37
Total		5:31:37

As the last group, stakeholders of the of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units were interviewed to go further in detail with the institutional approach to teaching 21st century skills in the preparatory school. The members of the units were individually contacted via e-mail to invite them to participate in the study and arrange a suitable time period for the interviews. There were no specific criteria that were looked after while selecting the members in the specified units, therefore, participation was based upon the convenience of the instructors. The interviews were all conducted face-to-face and in Turkish in the offices of the instructors, and they were all voice recorded. All the pre-mentioned ethical aspects were ensured with the unit members and their consents were taken before starting the sessions. The interview with the Curriculum Development unit member took 22:18 minutes; it was 19:24 with the member of the Measurement & Evaluation unit and 34:25 minutes with the instructor working in the Professional Development unit.

3.7. Data Analysis

Throughout the process of data analysis in qualitative studies, rather than following a linear pattern, a researcher moves in analytical circles, claims Creswell (2013). “One enters with data of text or images (e.g., photographs, videotapes) and exits with an account or a narrative. Regarding the method of analysis, constant comparative method was employed which is based on the process of comparing the coding of an incident with those of related incidents that have already been coded in a specific category (Glaser, 1965). In this method, Glaser (1965) defines four specific stages for qualitative data analysis, and they are stated as follows:

- 1) Comparing incidents relevant to each category,
- 2) Integrating categories and their attributes,
- 3) Delimiting the theory,
- 4) Writing the theory.

As to the stages of data analysis for a case study, Creswell (2013) indicates seven stages to follow which starts with organizing data files, and then reading through the

data in the form of text to create the initial codes. Then, the researcher describes the case and the context, interprets the data, makes generalizations and creates tables and figures to present the findings. Figure 3.9 demonstrates the stages in more detail.

In the current study, a similar process was applied: initially, all the interviews were transcribed, organized into different folders as interviews of the instructors, students and unit members, and they were reviewed for several times for any potential connection among the perceptions of the participants belonging to the same group by taking notes in the margins to form the codes.

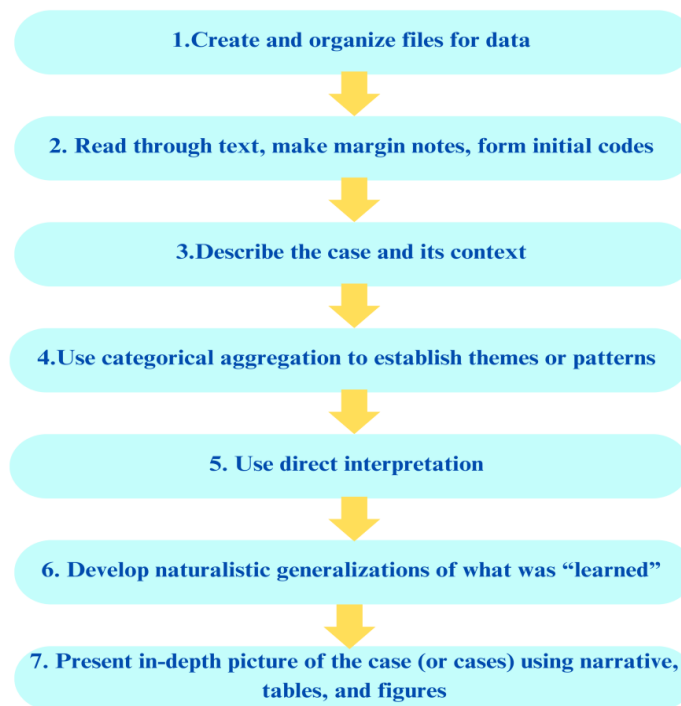


Figure 3.9 Data Analysis Stages for a Case Study

Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th Edition, SAGE Publications, Inc., London.

In this stage, Strauss & Corbin (1996)'s data coding method was applied which proposes three stages of coding. In the first step, open coding as conducted which is defined as "the interpretive process by which data are broken down analytically" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and fundamental codes are created. In the second phase, axial coding was applied by forming categories to meaningfully link the pre-existing codes. Finally, in the selective coding step, which is described as "the process by

which all categories are unified around a "core" category” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the categories are incorporated to create broader concepts and come up with concluding findings. For the analysis of the instructor and student perceptions, specific codes, categories and themes were created to be compared and contrasted to highlight the significant indications in the findings of these two participant groups. Regarding the analysis of the unit member perceptions, on the other hand, only themes and categories were utilized as there was only one participant for each group. In addition to analysis of the interviews, for the sample tasks and activities of the instructors that were incorporated in language classes, document analysis processes were conducted.

3.8. Trustworthiness

In order establish trustworthiness in the current study, a number of strategies was adopted during the research process. Initially, prior to conducting the interviews, a focus group was formed with three English language instructors except from the researcher to brainstorm and determine the interview questions to be directed to the participant groups. Upon determining the interview questions, advisor review was obtained on these interview questions. In addition to these, for the sake of increasing trustworthiness of the study, triangulation method was applied during data collection processes. Initially, participant triangulation was assured by investigating the 4C skills integration in EFL classrooms from three perspectives by exploring the perceptions of English language instructors, preparatory school students and educational unit members. Also, data triangulation method was applied regarding the forms of data utilized in this research. In that sense, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participant groups and these data were supported with the documents of sample materials and activities that the instructors integrated in their English language lessons and found convenient to reinforce the 4C skills. During the data analysis stages, after the interviews were transcribed and coded by the researcher, in order to ensure inter-coder reliability, the data were separately reviewed and coded by an external audit, a research assistant who was pursuing her doctoral education in Educational Administration field. As the final step, thick descriptions of the research context, participants, data collection tools and procedures were provided in the related sections.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

In order to meet the ethical requirements in the current study, initially, ethical approval application procedures were conducted where all the documents related to research design along with research questions, target participants, data collection tools and sample consent forms were sent to the Human Research Ethics Committee at Middle East Technical University for revision. After receiving approval from the committee, during the data collection processes, the participants were informed about the research aims and procedures where they were also provided with the consent forms to certify their volunteer participation. In the documents related to the demographic information of the participants, no identification information was acquired and their participation was kept confidential. The recordings which were kept with the permission of the participants during the interviews were only used for scientific purposes and were not shared with third parties. During the data analysis stages, after transcribing the interviews, each participant was assigned a number without explicitly mentioning with their names in the documents to ensure anonymity.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, research findings related to the perceptions of the English language instructors, preparatory school students and stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university with regards to the integration of the 4C skills in the preparatory school English language classes will be presented.

4.2. Instructor Perceptions on the Instructional Practices of the 4C Skills

In order to investigate the instructor perceptions in relation to the instructional practices on the 4C skills, the first research question was taken as basis to seek answers. In order to obtain further details about teacher perceptions, five sub-research questions were utilized during data collection procedures which are stated below.

1. *What are the perceptions of English language instructors who work in a higher education institution on the instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms?*
 - 1.1 *What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?*
 - 1.2 *How much importance do they attach on integrating these skills in their classes?*
 - 1.3 *To what extent can they integrate the 4C skills into their English Language lessons?*
 - 1.4 *What kind of materials, activities and tasks do they use?*
 - 1.5 *What are the challenges that they experience?*

These five points that the sub-questions aim to address emerged as the themes in the analysis processes. This section, therefore, presents the findings related to teacher perceptions around these five points combining the 3rd and 4th questions under the same theme. Figure 4.1 can be referred for the themes regarding the teacher perceptions.

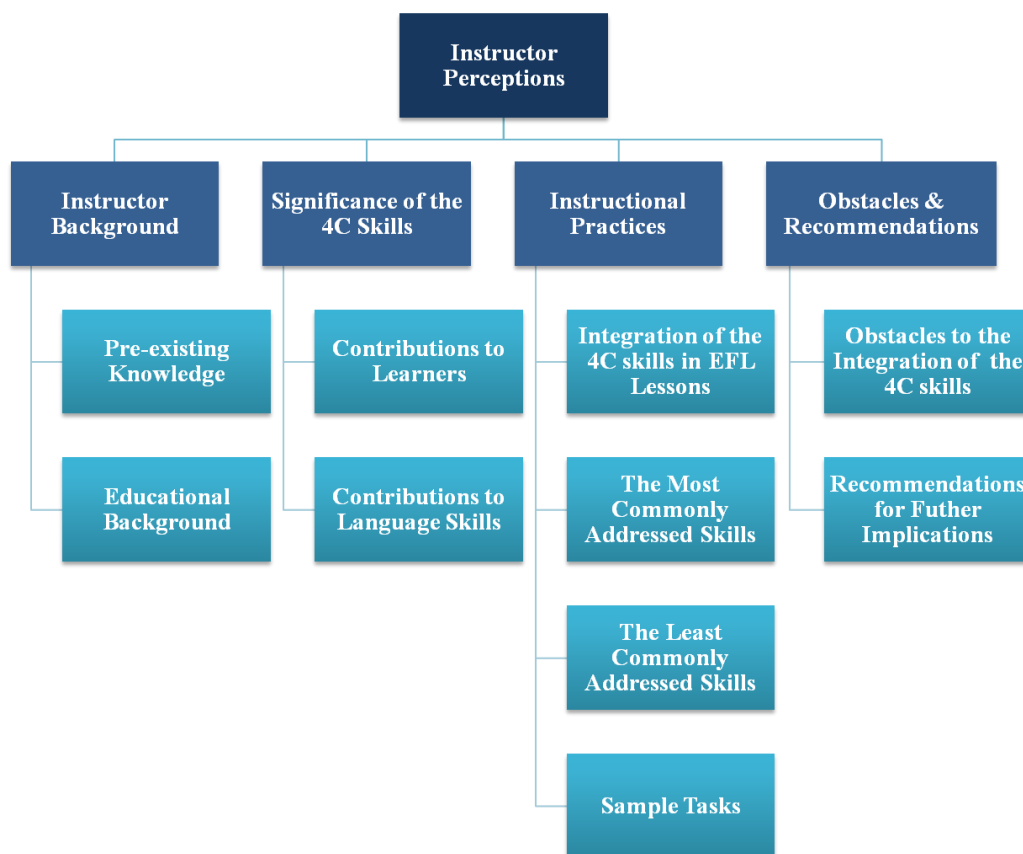


Figure 4.1 Themes and Categories for Instructor Perceptions

4.2.1. Instructor Background in Relation to the 4C Skills

The first sub-question aimed at exploring the instructors' background in relation to the 4C skills and it comprised two main categories emerged as pre-existing knowledge and their educational background including their bachelor degree, master's degree and in-service training. For pre-existing knowledge of the instructors, emerging codes were knowledgeable ($f=4$), limited knowledge ($f=3$), and no pre-existing knowledge ($f=1$). Regarding their educational background, instructors reported various responses such as no explicit instruction in B.A. ($f=7$), no explicit instruction in M.A. ($f=7$), in-service training ($f=5$), partial instruction in B.A. ($f=4$),

explicit instruction in B.A. ($f=1$), explicit instruction in M.A. ($f=1$) and partial instruction in M.A. ($f=1$). Table 4.1 can be referred for the emerging codes and categories along with the frequency details for instructor backgrounds.

Table 4.1 *Instructor Background in Relation to the 4C Skills*

Theme	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)
Instructor background in relation to 4C skills	Pre-existing knowledge	Knowledgeable	5
		Limited knowledge	3
		No pre-existing knowledge	1
	Educational Background	No explicit instruction in B.A.	7
		No explicit instruction in M.A.	7
		In-service training	5
		Partial instruction in B.A.	4
		Explicit instruction in B.A.	1
		Explicit instruction in M.A.	1
		Partial instruction in M.A.	1

a) Pre-existing knowledge

Regarding the pre-existing knowledge of the instructors, majority of the instructors were familiar and knowledgeable about the 21st century skills and the 4C skills. When they were asked to define and describe the individual skills, they provided comprehensive descriptions and explanations about them.

Critical thinking reminds me of this, I think it is something that expresses the students' ability to express different opinions other than the subject that is taught or to approach the subject from different perspectives even if it does not suit them, and creative thinking is something that means that they create new things themselves, add something from themselves, add their own life experiences, their own life views to these practices or these experiences, rather than the ready-made information or practices presented to them in classroom activities. Communication is an important thing, but our subject is also something that promotes interaction between different cultures, that is, it is necessary to teach

students that there is communication between cultures or between languages. This is a separate topic. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

I am familiar with all of them. I mean, it is not possible to work in this sector and be unaware of them at the moment. We all know how critical thinking can improve a student. When I do this in the texts I encounter in language learning, I know how important it is not only to know, to learn, to get information, but also to question it. (Instructor 9, proficient teacher)

b) Educational Background

As for the educational background of the instructors, the results indicated that most of the teachers did not receive any explicit instruction on the 21st century skills and the 4C skills as a concept either in their B.A. or M.A. education, but some of the 4C skills, as individual competencies, were a part of the courses.

I don't remember taking any classes in either of them (B.A. & M.A). I may have taken a course called critical reading, but I did not take any courses on teaching it. I took the course for myself; I mean to learn how I can improve it. But I don't remember taking any specific lessons on how to teach this, about teaching and learning. These skills do not exist in language courses at university education. So there was no such lesson. (Instructor 3, novice teacher)

No, no, I've never learnt it. I mean, we didn't see such a thing in undergraduate school until graduate school. I may not remember it. I don't remember any such information anywhere. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

There wasn't a separate course for them, but our instructor was mentioning the importance of critical thinking. For example, one of our instructors had an article about it, as far as I remember. So from time to time, they were mentioning it in some of the lectures, generally in elective courses. (Instructor 5, experienced teacher)

You know, we don't know the names of the concepts, but it was always in our lives. So communication was always in our lives, cooperation was always in our

lives. Critical thinking was already in our lives, but the name 4C didn't exist back then. (Instructor 8, proficient teacher)

It was also revealed that some of the instructors familiarized with the 21st century skills and the 4C skills together with their significance and place in the language classes during their in-service years through the conferences that they attended and the workshops that they took part which was organised by the university that they are currently working in.

When I first started to teach at a primary school, there were some conferences and some talk, speech, whatever, so I was attending them all the time. So I was learning besides the university education. (Instructor 4, experienced teacher)

I attended a conference about this concept. I remember this conference as it was promoted by –university name-. It was mostly about critical thinking and creative thinking, and there was also a seminar about how the course books we use can develop critical thinking and creative thinking. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

I am a '99 graduate, actually 1999-2000, whatever. After that, we learned these things by improving ourselves. (Instructor 7, proficient teacher)

4.2.2. Perceived Significance of the 4C skills

With regards to the significance of the 4C skills and how important the instructors find it to incorporate these skills into their lessons, all the instructors highly value these skills and believe that they can be beneficial for students in several aspects. In this regard, to present the findings about these benefits, instructor perceptions were classified in two different categories as the contribution of the 4C skills on learners in general and their contribution to learning and improving language skills. Contributions of acquiring the 4C skills were indicated as 4Cs as life skills for future ($f=6$), learner engagement ($f=3$), learner motivation ($f=3$), permanent learning ($f=2$), intercultural competence ($f=2$) and peer learning ($f=1$). For the specific contributions to language skills, instructors perceived these skills to improve writing ($f=4$), grammar learning ($f=3$), speaking ($f=3$), reading ($f=2$), vocabulary learning ($f=1$). Table 4.2 presents the details about the categories, codes and frequencies.

Table 4.2 *Instructor Perceptions on the Significance of the 4C Skills*

Theme	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)
Perceived significance of the 4C skills	Contributions to learners	4Cs as life skills for future	6
		Learner engagement	3
		Learner motivation	3
		Permanent learning	2
		Intercultural competence	2
		Peer learning	1
	Contributions to language skills	Writing	4
		Grammar learning	3
		Speaking	3
		Reading	2
		Vocabulary learning	1

a) Contributions to learners

About the contribution of the 4C skills to learners in general, it became clear that instructors perceived 4Cs skills as life skills as required competencies of the century for learners expressing that they need to be equipped with these skills to be prepared for their future.

Yeah, especially for the life skills that you say, apart from school. We also need these skills to survive. Yes, exactly. So this is a really needed skill even though you're a language learner or not. I mean this way, it will be not only beneficial for students to practise the language bits, but they would be helping them to, you know, practise these skills for their own specific life as well. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

Very important. Extremely important. I mean, as you said, we can't predict the jobs of the future anymore. This is like, this is the biggest motivation. So, because we don't know this, we don't know what we are preparing students for, preparing students for a whole unknown future should be our biggest motivation. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

Among the most commonly stated contributions of acquiring these skills for students, learner motivation and learner engagement codes appeared to be in the second place. Instructors believed that integration of these skills in the lessons can contribute to trigger learner engagement, to make the students active in their learning processes and to increase learner motivation for more efficient learning outcomes.

It can encourage language learning. In the same way, communication, collaboration can increase their interest in other languages. Now, cooperation, doing group work may increase their motivation in language learning. (Instructor 3, novice teacher)

I mean, I use collaborative education and cooperation a lot, especially in my departmental courses. It is not easy to motivate the students if you go on like this alone. When there is such an interaction, they are motivated more quickly. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

b) Contributions to language learning

Beside these, instructors also highlighted the significance of acquiring the 4C skills to improve English language skills of the students. In that sense, writing skill was the top competency that can be improved by working on the 4Cs. It was indicated that critical thinking, creative thinking and communication skills can contribute to writing skills by helping student to generate ideas to come up with strong arguments support a claim in the body paragraphs, to analyze, evaluate and organise ideas to effectively convey meaning in an essay for different types of writing.

I think of writing, actually, because we teach how to write essays in prep school and in academic English. And as I said, again, in order to develop an essay, they need to do critical thinking in order to develop body paragraphs. (Instructor 2, novice teacher)

Likewise, I think this is the same for writing skills because the student reads a few samples until he writes an essay, reads a few samples and tries to analyze these samples, and with this, I think he makes a judgment and passes it on to his own writing. (Instructor 8, proficient teacher)

Additionally, it was noted by the instructors that grammar learning can be reinforced by practicing critical thinking which enables learners to analyse language patterns to discover and learn grammar rules, sentence structures and word formations.

I think you can invite your learners to think more about a sentence and then, with this single sentence, you can even teach the language, sorry, like grammar points; what is the verb order in English and then compare it with your own language as well, and then discuss about what is the function of this adjective here. If I, you know, make it in another word, what could I suggest here instead of this vocabulary, this verb and then check it. There you can take single (word) from this one single sentence and then talk about its roots as well. And then when you are talking about the roots of this vocabulary, then not only you are talking about grammar, but you are also inviting learners to pay more attention to the details. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

Critical thinking may have a good impact on learning anything actually. But if the student is questioning for example when they are learning grammar, why is this rule in this way or if they try to make a rationale about the rules or, for example, in vocabulary, we have some prefixes and suffixes. Re, for example, if they learn the meaning of re, they can make logic and when I say re it means repeating something or doing something again so they can create these kinds of logic. (Instructor 5, experienced teacher)

Instructors also indicated speaking as another language skill which can be improved by incorporating the 4C skills in language classes.

Maybe they learn more formal features of the language, how to communicate a little bit more, I think they learn these things, like communication, cooperation, it can be beneficial for them. (Instructor 3, novice teacher)

4.2.3. Instructional Practices

Instructors' in-class practices related to the 4C skills were investigated in different dimensions such as their opportunities to integrate these skills into their lessons, their tendencies on prioritising any skill over the others and the sample activities that they benefit from to reinforce the 4Cs in English classes. As to integration of the 4C

skills, integration of all skills ($f=6$) and partial integration of the skills ($f=3$) emerged as the preliminary codes. For the most commonly integrated skills, instructors reported different competencies as communication ($f=4$), critical thinking ($f=2$), collaboration ($f=1$) and creative thinking ($f=1$). For the least commonly addressed skills, collaboration ($f=3$), creative thinking ($f=3$), communication ($f=1$) and critical thinking ($f=1$) along with the code addressing all skills equally ($f=2$). Regarding the sample tasks, instructors mentioned Authentic themes and materials ($f=4$), use of web tools ($f=4$), problem posing discussion topics ($f=2$) and role plays ($f=2$). Table 4.3 presents the findings.

Table 4.3 *Instructor Perceptions in Relation to Instructional Practices of the 4C Skills*

Themes	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)
Instructional Practices	Integration of the 4C skills in EFL lessons	Integration of all skills	6
		Partial integration of the skills	3
	The most commonly addressed skills	Communication	4
		Critical Thinking	2
		Collaboration	1
		Creative Thinking	1
	The least commonly addressed skills	Collaboration	3
		Creative Thinking	3
		Communication	1
		Critical Thinking	1
		*Addressing all skills equally	2
Sample Tasks Descriptions		Authentic themes and materials	4
		Use of web tools	4
		Problem posing discussion topics	2
		Role plays	2

a) Integration of the 4C skills

Majority of the instructors expressed that they can successfully address all the 4C skills in their lessons at different sessions throughout the term. Instructor 9, for instance, expressed to divide the skills into two to address at the same time in different hours.

I group the first two (critical thinking and creative thinking) and the last two (communication and collaboration) because the first two are closer to each other and the last two are closer to each other. (Instructor 9, proficient teacher)

Yes, yes, yes. I can, (integrate all of them) because I always want to have a classroom full of interaction. (Instructor 8, proficient teacher)

b) The most commonly addressed skills

When the instructors were to order the 4C skills from the most commonly addressed skills to the least commonly addressed one, communication was found to be the top skill which is commonly addressed by the teachers in the EFL classrooms.

In my ideal world, I aim communication more than other things because everything, you know, is built upon communication. (It is) my priority in my life and in my lessons, as well because if you do not have manners to communicate, and if you do not have language to communicate, you cannot be creative. You cannot collaborate. You cannot be critical. And this is why; I think communication is the most important of them. And then that's why I always try to provide space for my students to speak and communicate with me and among themselves in a meaningful way. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

c) The least commonly addressed skills

In contrast to these experiences, collaboration and creative thinking appeared to be the least frequently addressed skills among the instructors.

I think he's a little bit more in the background. Creativity, creative thinking, creativity and innovation... Yes, creativity innovation, so that's a bit, as I said, it is because students are not very willing, they don't want to create something new.

Students, or more precisely, maybe I haven't found something that can encourage them yet, I haven't found a way. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

Collaboration, as you know, I try to make them collaborate, but I am not a collaborative person sometimes, so sometimes I find the activities a bit boring, so I just skip them because I think that my students will also think like that, so I don't push them hard on that. So I sometimes skip them out at all. It depends on the class. If I don't get that vibe from my class, I don't push them hard because every class has its own style. (Instructor 4, experienced teacher)

Two of the instructors, however, stated to be able to equally address these skills without any prioritisation. Instructor 5, as an example stated that, depending on the aim and the examination periods, she prioritizes some skills over the others, but she can balance it.

If there's a quiz or there's a midterm or speaking jury, etc, for speaking, we prioritise communication more, collaboration less because they will be doing it individually. And critical thinking and communication, for example, becomes more important when I, when we have a speaking quiz or something in front of us. Or if there's any term, that will be listening and grammar and vocabulary. That's why we might focus on collaboration and communication, so it may change. Also critical thinking is important. They will give a presentation and if we are to prepare for it, creative thinking becomes more important. Yeah, try to do it equally. (Instructor 5, experienced teacher)

d) Sample Tasks

As for the sample tasks that are integrated into English language lessons to teach the 4C skills, the instructors either provided task descriptions or presented sample activities in the form of screenshots, pictures or Word / PDF document.

Task descriptions:

Use of web tools appeared to be the prominent category indicated as convenient means of reinforcing the 4C skills.

I was doing, for critical and creative thinking especially, Padlet activities in production. Even if I couldn't do it every week, I usually had at least one Padlet activity every 2-3 weeks. Padlet is an online application; on this application, students can share what they write interactively and give interaction to each other, they can interact at the same time in those Padlet activities, I think they were reinforcing both critical thinking, creative thinking, and communication, because after they did it, I reflected it on the board, they could interact with each other, they could give interaction to each other. For example, in this way, their communication increased. At the same time, they presented what they had done. Sometimes, these Padlet activities were group activities. Again, they were collaborating together. (Instructor 3, novice teacher)

For a similar purpose, Instructor 4 incorporates a different web tool to initiate interaction, communication and collaboration among the learners.

I sometimes use like Google, what was it? Jamboard or something, if I'm not mistaken. So they can write things and you can see everything on the screen. Something like that. So I use that Jamboard. If I'm not mistaken, Google Jam. (Instructor 4, experienced teacher)

Instructor 8 also suggested a number of interactive web tools which she found beneficial to exploit in her classes such as Chat PDF, Consensus, Elicit, Wisdolia, Eightify, Gama, Wiseone and Bonus.

Authentic themes and materials emerged as the second most commonly mentioned way to integrate to the 4C skills in language lessons. Instructor 1 described a sample task which deals with a real problem as follows:

The water is being scarcity and then there is lots of water pollution and so forth. Things like this. And then what is your solution? How can you stop this problem? Kind of things. Yeah, there were again, you know some pictures about how old clothes are created, how much water is used while creating a shirt or making a cup of coffee. And this kind of pictures and this kind of graphs were also meaningful because I learned from them as well. I didn't know that we used that much water in our life to produce meat, including that much gallons of water, I didn't know

that. So this kind of tasks, this book was I think very, very much interlinked with some related to this 4Cs. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

Instructor 8 indicated to benefit from interesting and fun facts about the target theme of the course by engaging learners in a preparation process which urges them to work on critical thinking and communication skills.

For example, there is one that comes to my mind first, let's say in our unit, let's say he tells about the pyramids in the speaking lessons. I immediately find fun-facts about the pyramids, for example. I ask the students or technology, I ask them to use their phones and write 2 right and one wrong, for example. Of course, this is also included in interaction. Or we immediately find the 10 most visited buildings in the world about them. They have pictures. Of course there are materials underneath. (Instructor 8, proficient teacher)

Instructor 2 also follows a similar path to attract learner attention by integrating real-life related materials. (Sample material is also presented in the upcoming section)

I try to find funny pictures and I try to find things that I see on social media that teach the language, you know, that don't aim to teach the language, but they make it funny and present it with caps, you know, things like that. (Instructor 2, novice teacher)

Sample Documents:

Regarding the sample materials utilized in language classrooms, Instructor 3 introduced a sample Padlet activity that enabled him to reinforce critical and creative thinking skills along with communication and collaboration skills of the students at the same time upon watching a video of the course book in the class. In the task, students need to work with a partner, choose a dream city in the world to live in and think of themselves as the principal of the city. With the permission of the instructor, the screenshot of the activity is presented in Figure 4.2. The instructor describes the activity as stated below:

In the video he was talking about the difficulties of living in Venice and he was talking about the price of rent in Venice and so on. Speakers, I also said here if

you are the Mayor, I have it on the slide, if you find it on the slide, I said imagine we are the Mayor, how do you improve the city you want to live in, I mean for example people want to escape from Rome. Or if you don't want to find a solution, you can write the city of your dreams. Here, for example, they say how they will solve the problems in Venice when they become prime minister.

In another activity proposed by the same teacher, utilizing the same web tool, the students are to collaborate to create their own TV program and decide on the type of the program (documentary, talk show or series), the content of the program, the place to record the program and even the channel to broadcast it; and write a paragraph to explain all the details. After completing these paragraphs, they can support their paragraphs with the pictures and post them on the web page where other members can also see and read their production. As the last step of the activities, they need to review the paragraphs written by other members and rate them by giving stars or write comments under their posts. Again, instructor permission was received to present the activity and it is shown in Figure 4.3.

Similarly, instructor 5 shared a critical thinking activity which she found effective; it is from the book *Pathways 2: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking* (Chase et al., 2018) and used as a follow-up activity in a unit introducing extinct animals and its impact on the environment. At the end of the unit, it encourages learners to personalize the theme, critically evaluate the issues based on their personal lives and brainstorm possible actions that they take in that respect. (Figure 4.4)

AFTER LISTENING

CRITICAL THINKING Personalizing

When you personalize information, you think about it in relation to yourself, your life, and your knowledge and experiences. Personalizing information helps you to internalize it and process it more deeply. You are also more likely to remember information that is connected to you in some way.

D Work in a group. Discuss these questions.

PERSONALIZING

1. Based on your knowledge, do you think the extinction of animal species is a major problem for human beings, or are there other problems we should be more concerned about? Explain.
2. How do you feel when you hear about an endangered species? Are there any species you care more about than others? Explain.
3. Is there anything you are doing now or plan to do in the future to help protect endangered species? For example, are there any products or foods you avoid? Other actions you can take? Explain.


Figure 4.4 Critical Thinking Activity

Finding Solutions / Dream City

1) Write at least 6 sentences. 2) Use at least 4 words from Exercise 2.


London

I want to live in London. It's very beautiful and popular. You can visit many places and maybe you can see all of the city with London Eye. But there are a lot of disadvantages. The city is very expensive to live in there. And the weather is so dark most of the year. But I would like to live London despite all the disadvantages.



Fethiye

If you go Fethiye you can see so much places the visit in short period of time. That places are generally old and traditional. But this places should be renewed. In Fethiye you can easily use transportation for most places but some places to go you should use more than one transportation. We can do more transportation for long distances.




Life in Sweden

Life in Sweden can be good I think. It has so much natural beauties and also the country has really good opportunity to live in there. It has really good education facilities to your children. And also have so much social places. The transportation is really good and job opportunities are also good. But if you born in different country it can be hard to live in there. Because you people are strict so if you born in friendly country like Turkey it can be hard for you to live in there.

Nomination Promises

I used to produce a special card for the living people. If you live here, you can get a discount with that card. If you are gondolier I would give 1000 euros every 3 months. I would prepare new projects for young people who want to move away here. Some months I prevent tourists from coming. If the weather is bad I would give a work break.



Dream City

In Tennessee, government doesn't interfere any trader and business. Who want to do something, he/she can do it freely. We can do more ads to attract the tourists. President of Tennessee everyday go shopping or meeting with traders. In our city Taxes decrease because more traders come there to do business, but we increase taxes for coming from abroad business.

I wish to live in Rome

Rome is very romantic city and architecture is very beautiful. Also Italian dishes are nearly the tastiest food. I guess the Italians are funny people. But there are a different culture and it can be a bit difficult.

Finding Solution

- Build factories outside the city
In this way, we can take younger population from other countries and prices can be cheaper.
- Certain periods and a certain number of tourists
In this way, crowded problem can decrease.
- Demolish some buildings
In this way, crowded problem can decrease again.

Adnan Will Come the problems Will go away.

I came from Turkey for you and I became president of Italy. Now lets solve Venice's problem. Young people face the challenge of finding a job. For this I have a gift for you. New workplaces will be opened by the government for you to work. Another problem is properties are so expensive. I promise, new law will come out for you and property will costs less money anymore.

2

I want live in barcelona because I love spanish people very much and I love the architecture of that place


advantages are :

- kind people
- good parties
- interesting culture
- good economy

and the disadvantages :


- another language
- dangereous cartels

despite these I still want to live there



ITALYYYY

I love Italy and I want to go there so much. I think I want live there but not a long time but maybe 2-3 years for understand their culture and I want to travel everywhere slowly because it's a big city. I didn't go there previously but I did a presentation for lesson and in the lesson we saw a video about Italy (Venice). In the video a person said it's a expensive city but I think Turkey expensive too that's why I will not to force in there if I want to see and live there it doesn't matter it's my dream country. Maybe transportation can be difficult but transportation with gondola is fun.



Paris

Cafe de Flore where I visited there.

Living in Paris is a lot expensive because this city is very crowded so more people want things so they can't provide things easily. (foods, drinks, bus fares, rent costs etc.) and Paris is advanced city so you can visit cafes, restaurants, museums especially Louvre Museum. And you can buy souvenirs from there. Restaurants are really good but a bit expensive in Paris. Unless you want to eat there. You can go cafes. Then Eiffel Tower is really good. If you pay 400€ per personal that's too much expensive.

Cairo

Advantages:

- There is so many job opportunities. You can live in side of pyramids. Also you can rowing in the river Nile. And I can live in ras el-tin palace.

Disadvantages:

- There is sometimes sand storm.
- And it is crowded city. There is very hot temperature.

Figure 4.2 Padlet Activity about Dream City

Your TV Program
Answer the five questions!

Habitat life of Eagles

I'm going to make programme which is Habitat Life of Eagles. We're going to make in Eastern Anatolia, Kars. I'll introduce short summary of Eagles, they lives in trees and high mountains and they make on high rocks and upper part of trees. Why am I choosing eagles? Because they means to me power, wealth... We have a difference from anyone else programmes. Firstly, we're going to do experiments on their mother fields. Ex. we make non-manned weapon drones fly on eagles' field. Or we think we'll send hawks who are educated to eagles and we'll make them fight.

★★★★ (4) Derecelendir

Anonim Bay
I have never read article like this one. But it's very great. I loved it. 🙌🙌🙌🙌

Anonim Bay
Would you like to write article together?

Anonim Bay
Please work with me

Anonim Bay
👍👍👍👍

Anonim Bay
Wow

Anonim Bay
Incredible

Anonim Bay
👍👍👍👍

Anonim Bay
Thank you for this

Anonim Bay
👍👍👍👍

Anonim Bay
👍

Anonim Bay
👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍

Winds of heaven

Firstly we will named it winds of heaven. Because while you ride horse, a wind blows. Arabian belief say This wind come from heaven. Then we are going to film in Arabian deserts. We are going to film to about Arabian horses. Arabian horses run 8 hours without stop. Arabian horses most resistant other horses. Arabian horses species of Equine family. Lastly 4k images to be shot with POV angle of view. We are going to touch horses closely different from the others.

★★★★ (6) Derecelendir

Anonim Bay


Anonim Bay
ARABIAN NIIIIIGHTS

Big Cats

We make a documentary about big cats and the differences between little cats. We are searching those animals' life. It's very interesting for many people. Those animals live in India. Although it was our first job, we worked very professionally.

★★★★ (7) Derecelendir

LOYAL SHEEP



I'm going to film my show in Akit tv. I'm going to share their lifestyle and their mental health. They have so many types like: Old sheep, Young sheep and sectarian sheep (they are the worst). They lives so many countries and they want to immigrate to Turkiye because their country are so bad but they can't because they have situated order in their country. My progam's different is show their true face

★★★★★ (8) Derecelendir

Anonim Bay
KOPTUM

Anonim Bay
DOBLO YE

Anonim Bay
Yağ kuyruğu vardı👍👍👍

Anonim Bay
Ameriganci İnönü Ülkeyi Amerigalılara sattı👍👍👍

Anonim Bay
👍👍👍👍👍👍👍👍

Swim With Dolphins

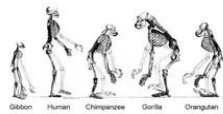
Today, we are going to the ocean because we are going to watch dolphins. Why did we choose dolphins because this time of year we can see them a lot and this season is if we lucky, we can see baby dolphins because we are in the season when they breed. We are going to swim with them, feed with them and watch them today

★★★ (5) Derecelendir

EVOLUTION

We are going to Avustralia rainforest for investigate to monkeys. We are going to make film about monkeys because we are thinking monkeys like humans. We will take them to camera and search how they

THE MONKEYS



Today, we're in middle of the Africa (In Kongo). We're going to film chimps gorillas and baboons! Thus, they're very active animals so sometimes they're very funny for us and actually, they're similar to the people genetically. Our programme is more different than the others thus, they are always fighting each other. Sometimes, gorillas look out to their kids even they're feeding kids' each other. People don't have any information about these monkeys. We're going to film their clan wars and their lives. You can learn about their war strategies, lives and loyalty in their clans. We're going to talk about their places in evolution and try to make a communication with sign language between the people and monkeys.

★★★★ (6) Derecelendir

Anonim Bay
BESTTT


Anonim Bay
oh my godd. After I read this, I become genius.

Anonim Bay
Amazing!!!!

Anonim Bay
good👍


Anonim Bay
It was greaat!!!!

Fall like superman



Firstly we are going to Japan for make film about squirrel. This animal has a more interesting character than the other animal. When they born they haven't any eyesight and fur. They can jump 10 foot when we look the size it's very exciting. Squirrels are actually super hero. They fall like superman. They are also actor. They have an interesting story. In 2007, in Iran, the state-sponsored news agency IRNA said, "In recent weeks, intelligence agents have arrested 14 squirrels within Iran's borders. The squirrels were carrying spy equipment from foreign agencies and were stopped before they could act, thanks to the vigilance of our intelligence services." made a

Atanan Stafford We are going to Suriname to make a TV programme. We are going to Suriname for Capybaras. Our Capybara is special for us it's name is Timo. It is the biggest mouse in the world. It is very hairy but so cute. It's lives in water and land. He usually lives in lake, rivers. It can moves fastly. It is good-swimmer. We are going to speak with Timo in our TV programme.



★★★★ (6) Derecelendir

Anonim Bay
So ugly

Anonim Bay
Creative but i didnt like it you know

Anonim Bay
Amazing

Lions Between the Life and Dead

We are coming with a another idea than others because we are not going to focus to one animal we will film them by other animals' eyes. We will manufacture the fake animals to get close them and with help of that we will be invisible for %100. We will film the lions because they have more interesting life than others. Our programme will be on the TVs for next year.

★★★★ (6) Derecelendir

Anonim Bay


Anonim Bay
yapıcı elestiri

Anonim Bay
uwu this was so good

Anonim Bay
Uğur bey TV sovu nuza çok iyi dedi

Figure 4.3 Padlet Activity about TV Program

Instructor 4 also indicated that she prefers initiating spontaneous questions in the middle of any course and theme to raise curiosity and question marks in the minds of the students and urge them to think critically. She also provided a sample document comprising a large number of questions to exercise critical thinking in the lessons. Although she did not directly adopt the document in the classes, she expressed to refer it from time to time to come up with effective questions. (Figure 4.5)



The Ultimate Cheatsheet for Critical Thinking

Want to exercise critical thinking skills? Ask these questions whenever you discover or discuss new information. These are broad and versatile questions that have limitless applications!

Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... benefits from this? ... is this harmful to? ... makes decisions about this? ... is most directly affected? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... have you also heard discuss this? ... would be the best person to consult? ... will be the key people in this? ... deserves recognition for this?
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... are the strengths/weaknesses? ... is another perspective? ... is another alternative? ... would be a counter-argument? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is the best/worst case scenario? ... is most/least important? ... can we do to make a positive change? ... is getting in the way of our action?
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... would we see this in the real world? ... are there similar concepts/situations? ... is there the most need for this? ... in the world would this be a problem? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... can we get more information? ... do we go for help with this? ... will this idea take us? ... are the areas for improvement?
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is this acceptable/unacceptable? ... would this benefit our society? ... would this cause a problem? ... is the best time to take action? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... will we know we've succeeded? ... has this played a part in our history? ... can we expect this to change? ... should we ask for help with this?
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is this a problem/challenge? ... is it relevant to me/others? ... is this the best/worst scenario? ... are people influenced by this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... should people know about this? ... has it been this way for so long? ... have we allowed this to happen? ... is there a need for this today?
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... is this similar to _____? ... does this disrupt things? ... do we know the truth about this? ... will we approach this safely? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ... does this benefit us/others? ... does this harm us/others? ... do we see this in the future? ... can we change this for our good?

Figure 4.5 Critical Thinking Check Sheet

Similarly, Instructor 2 also described an alternative method to first attract learner attention and urge them to think critically.

When I was teaching register and style, there is something of Winnie the Pooh, there is a picture of him, he is sitting on the sofa. They wrote something like Can I take your pencil. I'm making up the sentence right now. There's Winnie the Pooh's own version of it. Then, under, Could I, when I change it to Could, as the language becomes formalized, as it becomes formalized, they dress Winnie the Pooh in a bow tie, they dress him in smoking, they put on glasses. Then, when he changed it to able to, we see a very elite Winnie the Pooh, for example, I think that showing it first and asking what they understand, asking how the language changes and what they understand in the Winnie the Pooh visual and then moving on to the subject increases critical thinking and communication. (Instructor 2, novice teacher) (Figure 4.6)



Figure 4.6 Authentic Material of Winnie the Pooh for Critical Thinking

Instructor 9 shared the critical thinking exercises of the course book which she found beneficial to critically evaluate a text, analyse the tone of the writer and understand

his/her view. After that, the students are asked to personalize the topic and compare the facts presented in the text with their own lives. (Figure 7 and 8)

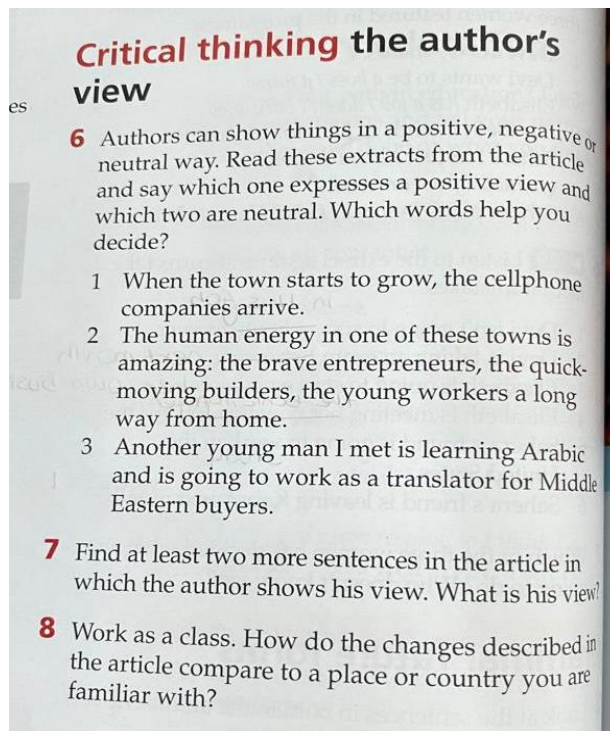


Figure 4.7 Critical Thinking Exercise-A

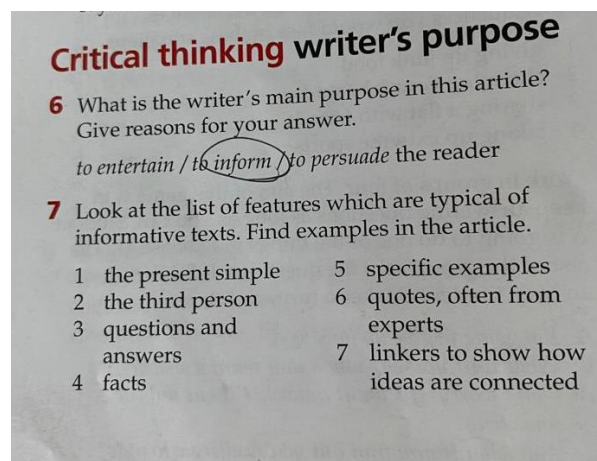


Figure 4.8 Critical Thinking Exercise-B

4.2.4. Challenges & Recommendations

Regarding the challenges and obstacles that the instructors face while integrating the 4C skills in their lessons, curriculum, especially obligation to follow a pre-determined curriculum ($f=7$), lack of learner motivation ($f=6$) and learner characteristics & attitudes ($f=6$) emerged as the most commonly mentioned

categories followed by student proficiency level ($f=5$), exam oriented approach ($f=3$), lack of confidence ($f=2$), time limitations ($f=2$), lack of teacher motivation ($f=2$), readiness of the students ($f=1$), previous learning habits ($f=1$), governmental policies ($f=1$) and classroom dynamics ($f=1$). For possible solutions, instructors recommended curriculum adjustments ($f=6$) and in-service teacher training ($f=3$) as the main codes together with more teacher autonomy ($f=2$), pre-service education ($f=2$), in-class practice adjustments ($f=2$), assessment procedures ($f=1$), improving teacher well-being ($f=1$) and integration of the 4Cs starting from earlier grades ($f=1$). Table 4.4 can be referred for the details explaining each category, code and the frequency values

Table 4.4 *Instructor Perceptions about the Challenges and Recommendations to the Integration of the 4C Skills*

Theme	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)	
Obstacles & Recommendation	Challenges to the Integration of the 4C skills	Curriculum	7	
		Lack of learner motivation	6	
		Learner characteristics & attitude	6	
		Student proficiency level	5	
		Exam oriented approach	3	
		Lack of confidence	2	
		Time limitations	2	
		Lack of teacher motivation	2	
		Readiness of the students	1	
		Previous learning habits	1	
	Governmental policies	1		
	Classroom dynamics	1		
	Recommendations for Further Implications	Recommendations	Curriculum adjustments	6
			In-service teacher training	3
			More teacher autonomy	2
Pre-service education			2	
In-class practice adjustments			2	
		Assessment Procedures	1	
		Improving teacher well-being	1	
		Integration of the 4Cs starting from earlier grades	1	

a) Challenges

Instructor 9 expressed the obligation to follow a pre-determined and strict curriculum as a barrier which limits her opportunities to integrate the 4C skills into lessons by urging her to make a choice between different focuses due to the rush she experienced throughout the lessons.

If we didn't have to worry about doing pages 101 and 102 in the first hour, there could be much more room for 4C skills. In fact, we could have much more space for them. Now, we can do it in a limited way because we are always racing against time here. There is an intense load and it is clear what you will do every hour. This is usually a long grammar (instruction) and this PTT (accompanying it), also it has 2 pages in it (course book). It (the program) says that these pages will be finished, for example. Now, in this case, considering that in a 45-minute class, after saying hello and taking attendance, I have the remaining 40 minutes. When I am given 2 pages to cover in this time, the vocabulary items, the vocabulary of the reading for instance, or the speaking related to it, etc, I always have to come to a distinction between speaking or critical thinking. (Instructor 9, proficient teacher)

Similarly, instructors 1 and 8 stated the same aspect as a restrictive factor in their lessons; as their primary aim is to complete the pages and tasks specified in the program to ensure standardisation among the classes, they cannot allocate enough time for additional focuses.

In our classes, we are mostly running over books and we're always trying to catch up with this book. We're always trying to be, you know, standardised with all these classes in that regard. Also, I think students might be bored with the book and then, they do not want to do something extra or more demanding things, as you suggested. I think problems are with the curriculum. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

Since we are racing against time and we follow a certain program, even though I would like to spare time, unfortunately, I cannot. The curriculum factor is very important. What should you do at what time? Sometimes, we can't keep up with

the existing program. So yes, this is a barrier for me. (Instructor 8, proficient teacher)

Following the curriculum factor, lack of learner motivation also emerged as the second mostly mentioned obstacle to the incorporation of the 4C skills in English language classes. Instructor 1 especially emphasized the demotivated and ignorant behaviours of the learners in the class.

They do not participate; they do not want to work in groups. I mean, I put them into groups, but just, just some of them work. Sometimes, if they, if they are in their moods, they work; but if not, they just ignore me, ignore the book. I go next to them and I ask what is the problem? And so they just do not answer me in a meaningful way. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

The expressions uttered by the instructor 5 indicated lack of motivation as a major barrier in the lessons to initiate learner engagement in the activities requiring critical and creative thinking.

Maybe the way of the students' motivation in terms of thinking critically or creating something, especially they may be a little lazy or maybe unmotivated about maybe participating in some of the exercises or activities. Student motivation in order to, it's maybe difficult to motivate them in order to make an effort. (Instructor 5, experienced teacher)

Apart from lack of learner motivation, certain type of learner characteristics and attitudes poses another obstacle and makes it difficult to apply necessary activities to reinforce the 4C skills. Instructors 3 and 6 indicated that learners hesitate to take part in these types of activities, to express their ideas and to approach issues critically due to fear of making mistake or being judged by others.

In the class where I did these activities, everyone could openly express their opinions, they could accept criticism, and there was no discussion. But I don't think that would happen in the other class, for example. I mean, if something creative, something critical came out in this way, they might find it offensive. That's why they might avoid it. So there may be a situation of closure. Not only because of the level. Critical, I mean, I think this is something that can be

developed, but some people are more ready for it. Some are not very ready to improve. Instructor 3, novice teacher)

Instructor 6 also mentioned the same challenge by emphasizing the need for creating a comfort zone in the classes.

He says, "Oh, I'm going to make a mistake," he withdraws and abstains, or he starts judging others, judging you, for example. Now, in order to prevent these, we need to teach them how to create a more relaxed environment, a more reliable environment, an environment where students demonstrate their full potential. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

Apart from these, Instructor 2 also touched upon that students who are not ready and who are new to the preparatory school and to the environment can show limited participation in the activities fostering 4C skills which also affects the other students' participation. The teacher states that this also leads the teacher to differentiate the activities to the ones which are more typical and less demanding in terms of learner participation.

Student profile, readiness... There can also be special needs. Especially students who are new to university, I encounter students who have a lot of anxiety during their preparatory year. This is also a big obstacle, so when one person or two people don't want to participate, it also affects the pairs. I try to normalize it so as not to embarrass them and try to find another common activity. (Instructor 2, novice teacher)

As the final major challenge, instructors mentioned student proficiency level as a major barrier preventing them from putting enough emphasis on teaching the 4C skills.

For example, at lower levels, let's say A1 students or A level students. In these cases, it becomes much more difficult to encourage critical thinking or include it in a course or to expect such production from the student because the students' speaking capacity is limited, his/her production capacity is limited. Okay, he thinks of them in Turkish, but precisely these are activities that require some cognitive processes. (Instructor 6, experienced teacher)

They do not have that much, you know, lower level of proficiency, let's say in English. So that and also they have barriers. (Instructor 1, novice teacher)

b) Recommendations

Regarding the possible and necessary adjustments to overcome these obstacles, curriculum adjustments and in-service teacher training emerged as the main categories.

When they were asked for their recommendations, majority of the instructors stated curriculum adjustments as the main focus of change. Instructor 2 recommended setting objectives for integrating the 4C skills into the lessons first, and then constructing a convenient curriculum around these objectives.

Curriculum, we actually need to change the system because if they need to learn (teach) how to write an essay, I have to go lecture-based in order to keep up with the time. However, if we go task-based... I mean, in other words, we should not create our program based on a book or the activities in the book, but we should go according to our outcome. We should go according to our objectives. (Instructor 2, novice teacher)

Instructor 4, on the other hand, found the existing materials efficient, but recommended to provide additional, more specific materials for the teachers to reinforce the target skills in their classes.

Maybe school can provide us some documents, but teachers' books are okay. They have tons of suggestions for these. But maybe school can provide something like critical thinking questions or something like that. (Instructor 4, experienced teacher)

Being in line with these, Instructor 8 also suggested working on critical thinking skills with the help of a separate critical reading course where learners can be engaged in activities to work on critical reading strategies. The instructor recommended this course to be designed by Curriculum Development unit as a part of preparatory school education, which was previously a part of the educational program.

There should be critical reading courses, we used to have in our department, and they should read books, they should read, and as a result of these readings, of course, they should answer open ended questions, which are very difficult now. They should make inference, they should paraphrase, they should summarize. They will eventually follow their path. So if they need to develop their critical thinking, they didn't do that. (Instructor 8, proficient teacher)

Apart from the curriculum, the instructors also suggested to cover these themes as the 21st century skills and 4C skills through in-service training to make the instructor familiar with the concepts and the ways to integrate them into their lessons.

I mean, of course, professional (development) is also important. I think there should be a conference, an event, something like that that promotes it all the time, that's how I met them. I met them because I work in technology. And also like this. I learned them through conferences. (Instructor 6)

I actually attended in the past, but I can recommend teachers to do such things, especially for novice teachers. Maybe it might be really helpful. But in time you also need to update your results. (Instructor 4, experienced teacher)

Instructor 1 also emphasized the significance of in-service training by sharing her experience of attending a conference provided by the authors of the books utilized in the preparatory school to imply the importance of these sessions to raise awareness about the purpose and scope of the specific tasks in the books and how to integrate and teach them in a more efficient way to reinforce the target skills.

These authors of these books were. You know telling what activities they design, why they designed this kind of activities? What are they rational behind, you know, creating such a task and how? And then they were also informing teachers how they can shape certain activities in the books. So maybe if the creators of the book provide such kind of, you know, details to the teachers either if we come together with book creators and then talk, discuss about them. Maybe it will be easier for us to utilise the book as one in a more meaningful manner so that instead of saying like more books at all, maybe we can also discuss about utilising the book in more meaningful way. (Instructor 1)

4.3. Student Perceptions on Learning and Practicing the 4C Skills

For the second phase of the current study, in order to explore the student perceptions in relation to the learning and practicing the 4C skills in English language lessons, the second main research question was taken as basis to construct the analysis and it contained four sub-research questions to support the main questions. The second research question along with the sub-questions related to the student perceptions is stated below.

2. What are the perceptions of students who study at a preparatory school about learning and practicing the 4C skills in English language classes?

2.1 What is their background knowledge about the 4C skills?

2.2 How beneficial do they find it to learn & practice these skills in their English language classes?

2.3 What are their opinions about their current opportunities to learn and practice these skills in their lessons?

2.4 What kind of activities would they suggest to have in their lessons to practice the 4C skills?

2.5 What are the obstacles that they experience?

The five aspects aimed to be addressed in the sub research questions were specified as the themes in the analysis of the student perception related to the learning and practicing the 4C skills. In this regard, the emerging themes for this phase of the current study were students' background knowledge, their perceived significance of the 4C skills, their experiences in relation the instructional procedures addressing these skills and the obstacles & recommendation in learning and practicing the 4C skills were specified as the themes. In contrast to the categories emerging in the instructor perception analysis, the theme in relation to the background knowledge of the students does not contain any categories. Only their pre-existing knowledge was discovered and the students were not questioned about their educational background or whether they received any instruction on these skills in their previous grade levels. In order to acquire further details, Figure 4.9 can be referred for the themes and categories that emerged in the analysis of the student perceptions in the related concept.

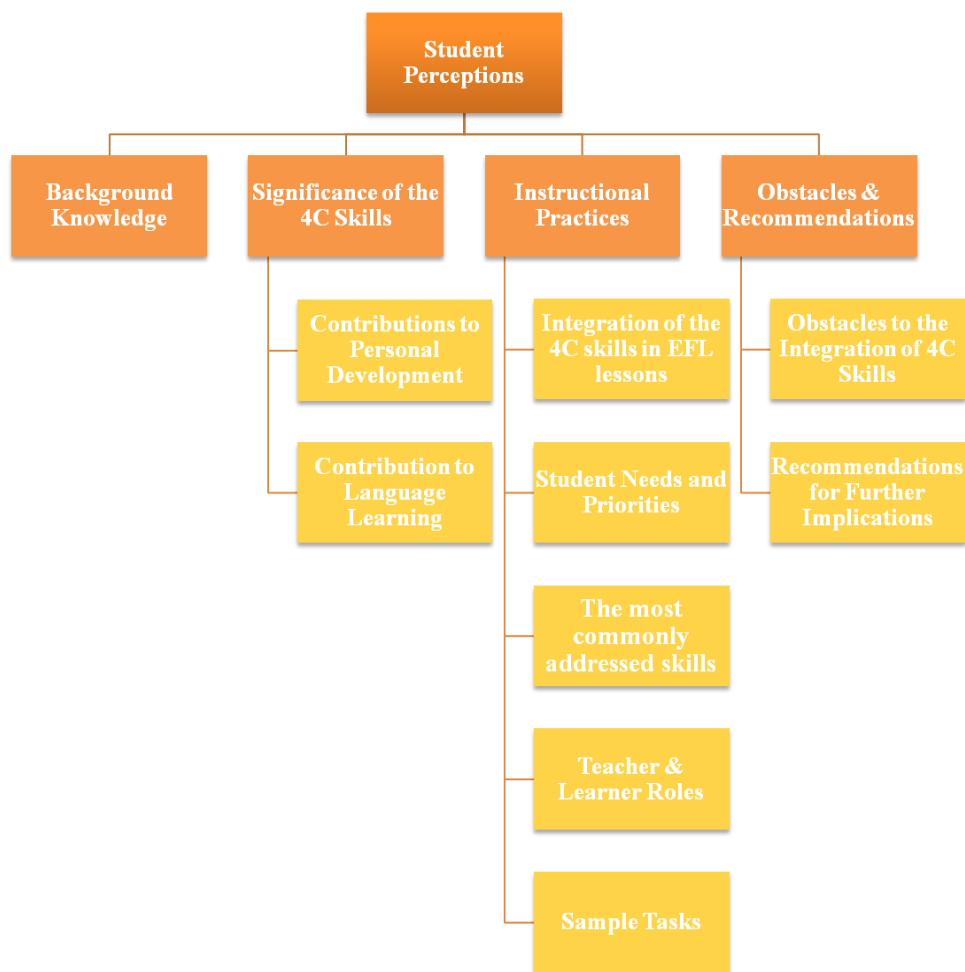


Figure 4.9 Themes and Categories for Student Perceptions

4.3.1. Background Knowledge of the Students

When the background knowledge of the students related to the 21st century skills and the 4C skills was investigated, only one category and two different codes emerges as limited knowledge ($f=7$) and knowledgeable ($f=2$). Table 4.5 presents the theme, category, code and frequency details.

Table 4.5 Student Background Knowledge in Relation to the 4C Skills

Theme	Category	Codes	Frequency (f)
Background Knowledge	Pre-existing knowledge	Limited knowledge	7
		Knowledgeable	2

For the learners' background knowledge, it was revealed that they had quite limited knowledge about the skills and they interpreted the 4C skills according to their

personal experiences and own perspectives. Student 1, for instance, focused on comprehension while describing what critical and creative thinking mean to her and took student-teacher relationships as basis while describing communication skill:

Critical thinking is about understanding a subject in many ways. I think we can look at an issue, I mean, you look at it from one perspective, maybe you can't understand it, and we can look at it from another place and understand it. That's why critical thinking is so important. Creative thinking, when people learn something, they usually have their own methods. In creative thinking, you learn everything new; you have to adapt it immediately in a creative way. That's why communication is so important. I think it is very important for the instructor and the student to communicate with each other and with their friends, and this is where cooperation comes into play, learning with friends because they have a memory of it. (Student 1, A level)

Student 6 also interpreted critical thinking and creative thinking as nearly the same competency. Communication and collaboration were also described only in the scope of classroom related aspects.

So, as far as I know or as far as I can interpret it, critical thinking can only be considered as thinking, that is, putting the pieces together or taking the pieces apart... creative thinking too, actually. You know, it's partly the same thing, but maybe it can be used at different points, or maybe grammar or other skills can be used, communication is already a well-known thing in today's society. You know, we can have relationships with our teachers or our friends in the classroom. In office hours, it can be easy and accessible. Collaboration is actually the same way, you know, after all, and rather than learning something on our own, you know, to ensure the development and in environments that can be created at school or outside of school. (Student 6, B level)

4.3.2. Perceived Significance of the 4C Skills

As for the perceived significance of acquiring the 4C skills, student perceptions were grouped into two major categories as their contribution to personal development and to their language learning process. The responses were categorised under two main

groups as contributions to personal development and contributions to language learning. For their personal development, students perceived the 4C skills as life skills ($f=8$) and they believed that these skills can contribute to peer learning ($f=5$), permanent learning ($f=4$), better comprehension ($f=3$), learner engagement ($f=1$) and personality development ($f=1$). For the specific contributions of the 4C skills to language learning, they found them beneficial for speaking ($f=6$), writing ($f=5$), grammar ($f=4$), listening ($f=3$), vocabulary ($f=3$) and reading ($f=2$).

Table 4.6 *Student Perceptions about the Significance of the 4C Skills*

Theme	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)
Significance of the 4C skills	Contributions to personal development	4Cs as life skills	8
		Peer learning	5
		Permanent learning	4
		Better comprehension	3
		Learner engagement	1
		Personality development	1
	Contributions to language learning	Speaking	6
		Writing	5
		Grammar	4
		Listening	3
		Vocabulary	3
		Reading	2

a) Contributions to personal development

Regarding the student perceptions on the possible contributions of learning the 4C skills, 4C skills as life skills emerged as the first category with permanent learning & easier retention as the second.

To start with, students perceived the 4Cs as life skills and necessary competencies not only for their daily lives but also for their future personal and professional lives. Student 2 did not limit the contributions of the 4C skills to only one scope, and expressed that these skills are beneficial for improving interpersonal skills relationships which could be beneficial in many fields.

You know, gaining these skills and being able to be in an event? When you enter any society, whether it's in business or social life, this is already very obvious, it contributes a lot to you and it has a very good effect on your interpersonal relationships, you know, in the eyes of people and so on and so on. So I think we should not limit it to academic or social life, they are effective in every field. (Student 2, A level)

Additionally, Student 8, who is going to study Law and would like to become a lawyer, perceived critical thinking as necessary and needed for her future career in order for her to approach the issues and cases from different perspectives.

In critical thinking, again, I am someone who can think through someone else's perspective, I mean, in general. I try to look objectively at who did what, what they did not do. At least I am good at this, and this will also be necessary in my academic life. I mean people in my cases. I mean, okay, he did something like this, he committed a crime, but what is behind it or did he really do it? You need to think about that. (Student 8, C level)

Student 6 also expressed critical thinking to be essential even in minor everyday related decisions although it seems unnecessary.

Critical thinking is actually the same way, you know, it seems like we don't need much, but maybe even when I'm walking down the street, you know, choosing the shorter way, if I go to that street, will I go shorter? Even that idea is actually a critical point. (Student 6, B level)

Additionally, peer learning was the next aspect that was stated by the students to be reinforced through learning and practicing the 4C skills especially through collaboration.

Collaboration may contribute in this way: my partner can verify whether I am wrong or what I have done wrong. In other words, he may point out that I am wrong and ask me to correct it. Maybe it could be helpful. (Student 3, A level)

When you speak alone, for example, you cannot get much efficiency, but when you speak to your friend etc., he/she can correct your grammar, he can correct

your speech, such as "You can say this in a different way". He corrects your speaking, and it can enrich the words you use. You might think like "I can use this, too." As a result, I think these pair work parts are extremely effective. (Student 7, C level)

Moreover, permanent learning & easier retention appeared as the second code in the analysis. Besides the benefits of these skills into their lives in general, most of the students also thought the 4Cs to foster their learning processes and indicated that when integrated into learning, critical thinking is highly beneficial to first comprehend a concept wholly and remember it even after a quite long time.

Whether in the books I read or in the tests I solve, especially in the grammar part. It is much more permanent for us when such interactive lessons are taught with critical thinking and when our comments are expected. You know, I can remember something that I would never remember from very small details. (Student 7, C level)

Without critical thinking, I can't grasp a subject. (Without thinking critically) it (the information) will not stay a very long time, maybe a year. After I take the exam, it goes away. If I criticize it and comprehend it, it seems to go on forever for me, no matter how far I can take it... I spend a lot of time thinking critically about a topic. This is my learning, the learning phase is long, but the permanence of the knowledge lasts for a long time, it contributes a lot. (Student 1, A level)

When we think critically, we are learning everything. So, we don't just learn one side of an example. Because we learn in multiple ways, we remember more and do better in exams. (Student 3, A level)

b) Contributions to language learning

Other than their contributions to students' personal development, it was revealed that acquiring the 4C skills contribute the students' language learning experiences by improving different language skills such as speaking, writing and grammar.

Students perceived the 4C skills as the effective ways to improve speaking skills by especially fostering collaboration.

I mean, it (collaboration) especially helps us improve the speaking part because when a speaker starts and he can't get it together, you have to get it together and you have to come up with something very suddenly. These improve quick thinking and also better speaking. (Student 7, C level)

In this way (by collaborating), no matter how much I don't like it, I can say that it has definitely improved. I mean, my friend says something, sometimes I don't understand it, he says it again, I don't understand it, he writes it down. Or words that we don't know the meaning of, I'm going to say something, but I can't remember it, we can do it when we look it up directly. When we are collaborating, we definitely need to practice speaking. (Student 8, C level)

Moreover, it was also expressed that creativity can function as an effective tool for improving writing skills. The students explained that as creativity helps learners to generate ideas to produce creative, strong topic sentences and successfully argue an opinion to support their position, it increases the quality of the written production.

Since the important thing in writing is to find that topic and explain it by emphasizing the important parts of the topic, of course, to be creative is one of the most important parts. So I think writing is to show this. (Student 7, C level)

Also, as another benefit of creative thinking on writing skills, students indicated that it enables learners to ensure diversity in terms of the words and structures they use in their writings.

Obviously, if we are a creative person, the words we use can be varied and the structure is especially varied, but the words, it ensures rich vocabulary. So if our creativity is developed, we can prepare a good writing with the variety of words we use. (Student 9, C level)

Lastly, grammar learning emerged as another significant code which can be fostered by working on critical thinking skills. Students claimed that by critically evaluating the grammatical structures and trying to discover the rationale behind the rules may help them learn and differentiate the grammar patterns more easily. In this way, it can contribute to easier retention of the previously learnt patterns for a later use.

Critical thinking, I can actually relate it to structure. When we study structure, we can think why this is wrong, why this is not right, or could there be a different tense here; and if we think like that, for example, our ability to distinguish between tenses improves. (Student 9, C level)

4.3.3. Instructional Practices

For their instructional practices of the 4C skills, student perceptions were grouped under five categories as integration of the 4C skills, student needs and priorities in terms of learning the 4Cs and the most commonly addressed skills, their perceptions about the role of the learners and the teachers and lastly the sample activities which they found beneficial to work on these skills. Regarding the integration of the 4C skills, partial integration ($f=5$) and integration of all skills emerged as the codes. For the students' need and priorities, communication ($f=5$), critical thinking ($f=3$) and creative thinking ($f=3$) were reported as the main skills worth improving. In relation to the instructional practices, they indicated communication ($f=6$) and critical thinking ($f=4$) as the most commonly addressed skills. As to learner and teacher roles different codes emerged as encouraging teachers ($f=4$), teachers having a major role ($f=4$), students having a major role ($f=3$), autonomous learners ($f=2$), guiding teachers ($f=1$) and strict teachers ($f=1$). For the sample beneficial activities, students reported group tasks based on creation & presentation ($f=5$), discussions & debates on culture ($f=1$), word description games ($f=1$), ice-breaker activities ($f=1$), role play activities ($f=1$).

Table 4.7 *Student Perceptions of the Instructional Practices of the 4C Skills*

Theme	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)
Instructional Practices	Integration of the 4C skills in EFL lessons	Partial integration	5
		Integration of all skills	4
	Student needs and priorities	Communication	4
		Critical thinking	3
		Creative thinking	3
	The most commonly addressed skills	Communication	6
		Critical thinking	4

Table 4.7 *Student Perceptions of the Instructional Practices of the 4C Skills*
(continued)

Instructional Practices	Teacher & Learner Roles	Teachers having a major role	4
		Encouraging teachers	4
		Students having a major role	3
		Autonomous learners	2
		Guiding teachers	1
		Strict teachers	1
		Sample activities	
Discussions & debates on culture	1		
Word games	1		
Ice-breaker activities	1		
Role play activities	1		

Majority of the students agreed on the partial integration of the skills in their language classes. As it was stated, from time to time, they find chances to practice specific skills in some kind of activities but they are not quite efficient to gain or improve these abilities.

We have the chance to practice work in pair work activities, but these activities do not involve much collaboration. Actually, the atmosphere is not created in the classroom. In fact, I think it may seem like the most unnecessary activity in the classroom. (Student 9, C level)

Some of the students also signified that due to the changing aims and priorities in the class levels, some of the skills remain the background and they do not sufficiently practice them.

But right now, maybe because we are more TOEFL focused, we are not doing anything creative or innovative. (Student 8, C level)

Regarding their needs and priorities, students also almost arrived at a consensus on that the most needed skills for their lives is communication. It was followed by critical and creative thinking and they were found to be equally mentioned competencies.

Communication is already important for learning a language, so I think it should be given more importance than anything else... I mean, even if you cannot speak fluently, communication improves a lot by practicing it, which is why people say, "I learn quickly anyway," which is a frequently used expression when they go abroad because communication is so important. (Student 1, A level)

Actually, of course, I would like to study all of them, but what is important for me right now is communication and collaboration because both of these affect speaking incredibly. Speaking, for me, if you are going abroad, is really important. (Student 9, C level)

What would I like to work on more? Which one? I think it's more about creative thinking. I would like to focus on this, because I love it. I love producing things and creating things. (Student 5, B level)

When the instructional practices were into discussion, it was revealed in the interviews that student needs in terms learning and practicing the 4C skills were in line with the classroom instructions focusing on these skills. Six of the students expressed communication as the most commonly addressed skill among all which was found to be among the student priorities.

First of all, teacher, communication is at its highest level, after all, we have speaking lessons in C level. You know, our teacher comes, what did you do today, what will you do when you leave? That's why communication plays such a big part in English language in English lessons. That's why we can really find the chance to implement it. (Student 9, C level)

I think it's more critical thinking. So it is the thing we do the most because at least on every page, because there is at least one such thinking-oriented activity on every page of the book. Or even if not, we go over grammar, think critically. (Student 7, C level)

In relation to the learner and teacher roles in fostering the 4C skills in EFL classrooms, students perceived the role of teachers as more significant than the learners' in introducing and initiating tasks that can be useful for learners in acquiring the 4Cs.

Of course, there are certain factors that depend on the teacher. If the teacher does not bring up a topic to discuss when he comes to the classroom, such as how was the day or what you are planning to do after class, no one can communicate. Or what do you think about this issue? If he hadn't said something like that, of course no one would have been able to say what they thought about it. They couldn't think creatively. Or if the teacher says, I think this issue should be solved like this, what are your opinions, are you against me? If he doesn't ask questions, we won't use critical thinking here again. (Student 9, C level)

Additionally, another code emerging related to the teacher roles was being encouraging. Students believed that teachers should be motivating, encouraging and supportive in the class for learners to be engaged in the beneficial activities to learn the 4C skills.

The student's mood may be generally low since it is already adolescence, but (when) the teacher comes saying let's do such lively activities, let's do these, it somehow brings the student to life, but it's something the student cannot do. You know, the student cheers up in this way. Even if he is reluctant, after a while he steps in. (Student 1, A level)

As to the sample tasks and activities that the students find enjoyable and useful to learn and practice the 4Cs, most of the students indicated tasks which share a number of common points. In these favourite tasks, students are first expected to collaborate, that means to work with a partner or in a group to create a product, a concept or an idea, to develop it in several aspects by brainstorming and thinking creatively. While doing this, they also need to communicate with their group members and also with the other groups in order to present and share their results and also, from time to time, to defend their product and convince the other in some aspects by critically arranging their arguments and speech. Some of example activities described by the students are stated below.

As a group, I designed something like a robot. It was a reptile; it goes and cleans etc... Explaining it in English. There was a voting phase there. When we explained what we did to the other groups, they asked questions and they criticized what we did. I made a counter statement, for example, we argued a lot with friends while

making it. Let it be like this, I say no, let it not be like that. I was into a lot of critical thinking. In order to communicate on this subject, it is necessary to defend one's opinion, to persuade, and to persuade while presenting one's opinion. (Student 1, A level)

For example, there was only one object. We were just writing down its features to sell it. We were writing down the price etc. Actually, I felt critical and creative there because it wasn't actually me there, but a marketer or something. Yes, yes, I was in a different role. (Student 4, B level)

I think we were studying a unit about starting our own business. What kind of business did you start at the end of the unit? You know, and what were you thinking about capital for the business, what would you think it was, what would you do in the business, and how much importance would you give to collaboration for that business? There were such questions and we were starting our own business. We were explaining it in 5 minutes. There was such an event. It was quite effective. (Student 9, C level)

4.3.4. Obstacles & Recommendations

As the last category of the student perceptions on the instructional practices regarding the 4C skills, students indicated major challenges that they face and also came up with possible recommendations to overcome these. In that sense, lack of learner motivation ($f=6$), exam oriented approaches ($f=4$) and curriculum ($f=4$) appeared to be the major obstacles to learn and practice the 4C skills along with competence of the teachers ($f=3$), lack of student language competence ($f=2$), teaching style of the teacher ($f=2$), previous learning experiences ($f=1$) and lack of student confidence ($f=1$). As possible remedies to those obstacles, emerging codes for student recommendations were integration of more engaging and authentic tasks ($f=4$), a separate contact hour to practice the 4C skills ($f=3$), teacher related improvements ($f=2$), raising awareness about the skills ($f=2$), creating a safe zone ($f=2$), extra-curricular activities ($f=2$), utilizing positive reinforcement ($f=1$), curriculum improvements ($f=1$), integration of the skills starting from earlier grades ($f=1$). Table 4.8 demonstrates the categories, codes and frequencies for this theme.

Table 4.8 *Student Perceptions on the Obstacles and Recommendations related to Learning & Practicing the 4C Skills*

Theme	Categories	Codes	Frequency (f)
Obstacles & Recommendations	Obstacles to the Integration of 4C Skills	Lack of student motivation	6
		Exam oriented studying	4
		Curriculum	4
		Competence of the teachers	3
		Lack of student competence	2
		Teaching style of the teacher	2
		Previous learning experiences	1
		Lack of student confidence	1
	Recommendations for Further Implications	More authentic & engaging tasks	4
		Specific course for practicing the 4Cs	3
		Teacher related improvements	2
		Raising awareness about the 4Cs	2
		Creating a safe zone	2
		Extra-curricular activities	2
	Utilizing positive reinforcement	1	
	Curriculum improvements	1	
	Integration of the skills starting from earlier grades	1	

a) Obstacles

At the very first place, student motivation was stated to be the biggest obstacle which hinders learner engagement in the meaningful tasks to practice the 4C skills.

I would go with motivation. For example, I come to class, if I am not psychologically fine, it will affect. Or I want to participate, but my pair doesn't want to, so that also matters. I would be down and I don't complete the task there.
(Student 3, A level)

Being related to motivation factor again, some of the students even expressed that motivation level of their peers or partners also has a significant impact on their participation especially in the tasks which requires them to collaborate and communicate with the other members of the class. As they indicated, having a demotivated partner decreases their performance, as well.

If I give an example from pair works. When we sit with someone else, you know, when you sit with someone who doesn't want to do that, the student doesn't talk; then, you know, he is 19 or 20 years old, I can't say anything to him anyway. In this case, an obstacle is actually placed. (Student 6, B level)

Some people don't want to talk at all. Or sometimes a person can be depressed. If he comes to class in such an emotional state, he may not want to talk at all. So emotional state can really be a barrier... If my friend doesn't talk at all or there is generally no energy in the classroom, it affects you too. As a result, the class has an aura, you are really affected by it, I can say that it hinders it. (Student 9, C level)

Following lack of learner motivation, exam oriented approaches to language learning also appeared to be one of the major obstacles to incorporation of the 4Cs in language lessons. As students perceive preparing for a language exam as a different concept than learning a language, it shapes their approaches, attitudes and tendencies in relation to the language learning activities. This situation was revealed to be more obvious in upper level classes.

It seems to me that we are working for the curriculum that comes our way. That's why, for example, I have TOEFL in front of me right now, it feels like I'm studying for TOEFL. It's not like learning English; I think most of my friends are like that. (Student 4, B level)

As for the last challenge, curriculum was also stated by the students to be inefficient in fostering the 4C skills appropriately because of the necessity of covering the target content determined in the curriculum in the specified times.

I don't find the curriculum sufficient. The curriculum should also do it, how would they do it if they didn't? I have no idea about that. It's very controversial. If they didn't say this topic has to end (this time), maybe it would proceed very differently. (Student 1, A level)

Currently, our teachers are trying to keep up with our curriculum and we cannot focus on different subjects. Generally, time is a bit limited right now. (Student 8, C level)

b) Recommendations

Students initially recommended integrating more engaging and authentic activities in the language lessons or in the program and they signified that there could be more space for discussion and debate activities in the classrooms to enhance the 4C skills as a whole.

I think the students could discuss it more, rather than using books. So this can improve both creative and critical thinking also communication and collaboration (Student 8, C level)

Doing an activity that covers all of these skills helps us to be more active. I don't know more motivating activities. It's like we're preventing you from learning something faster when we do a motivating activity with such thoughts. That's why I think we can change it. (Student 1, A level)

Topics can be chosen from more general things, for example. It's the same way with books. Let me give you an example from something I read: There was this one man. He escaped from Kenyan soldiers, okay, you are reading this anyway. You understand this, right, the teacher says. What does that matter to me? (Student 6, B level)

Apart from the activity designs, another recommendation of the students was on creating more room for practicing these skills especially in a different lesson or contact hour. In this way, they may find chances to build upon their grammar and vocabulary knowledge which is presented previously in other lessons and advance in these areas by means of creative and collaborative tasks.

In fact, the 5-hour period (skills based courses) can be reduced to 4 hours, the grammar topics can be lessened, it can be made more interactive (in the 5th hour), and as I said, we can give more importance to the critical thinking part, creativity part, and communication part. (Student 7, C level)

It can be designed directly with a separate course or club for critical thinking. Debate topics can be raised and debates can be held throughout the course. (Student 9, C level)

If there were classes like this (separate class for the 4C skills), the person would first advance in grammar (in other classes), and then take the creative class. Then, you try to think about these (skills) by reinforcing them with grammar. In the meantime, you talk, your speaking skills improve, and then you have to write, your writing improves. (Student 3, A level)

4.4. Institutional Perceptions

The last research question of the current study aimed at investigating the institutional perceptions with regards to the integration of the 4C skills in the curriculum development procedures, testing and assessment processes and professional development opportunities and implications of the instructors who are working at the university. The research question that was utilized for this phase of the study is stated below.

3. What are the perceptions of the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university with regards to the integration of the 4C skills?

In that sense, perceptions of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development unit members were separately analyzed and coded in order to reveal the place of the 4C skills in these educational units. The analysis of the data related to this phase of the study is presented in the following three sections.

4.4.1. Curriculum Development Unit

According to the analysis of the Curriculum Development unit member, five major themes were created in relation to incorporation of the 4C skills in the curriculum related practices of the preparatory school program. These themes are objectives of the unit, significance of the 4C skills in the academic programs, place of the 4C skills in the curriculum, distribution of the skills integrated in the curriculum and recommendations for further implications. The following figure, Figure 4.10, presents the themes that emerged in the analysis of the Curriculum Development Unit member.

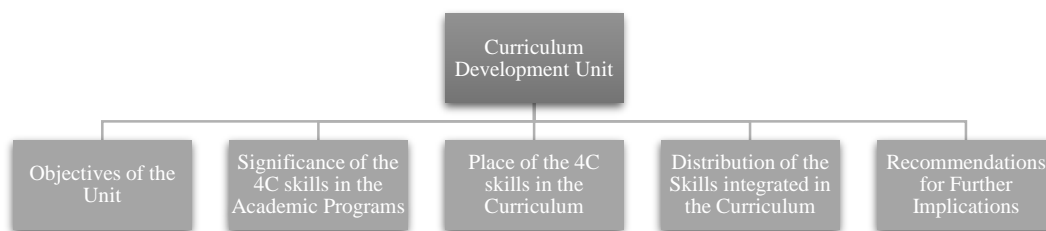


Figure 4.10 Curriculum Development Unit Perceptions

As only one participant from Curriculum Development Unit attended the interview, the codes corresponding to the themes were determined, but no categories and frequencies were created. Table 4.9 presents the themes and codes.

Table 4.9 Curriculum Development Unit Perceptions

Themes	Codes
Objectives of the unit	Achieving the outcomes prepared by YÖK Reaching B1/B1+ proficiency level Improving learner autonomy as university mission Improving critical thinking skills as university mission
Significance of the 4C skill in the Academic Programs	4Cs as crucial skills Reaching B1/B1+ proficiency level as an initial aim 4C skills as background competencies
Place of the 4C skills in the Curriculum	Books ensuring critical thinking & communication skills Portfolio tasks addressing collaboration skill Extra tasks and activities addressing creativity Activities offered by the instructors Activities offered by the extra-curricular unit
Distribution of the Skills integrated in the Curriculum	Critical thinking & problem solving as a priority Equal addressing of communication, collaboration and creative thinking
Recommendations for Further Implications	Student clubs for extra-curricular activities Project-based tasks Instructor initiatives for differentiated in-class tasks Integration of the skills starting from earlier grades

The first theme was constructed around the unit objectives and it was revealed that the outcomes prepared by YÖK are taken as basis while setting objectives which should applied in the universities offering compulsory preparatory school education and in the departments offering education at least %30 English. According to these outcomes, students are expected to reach B1, B1+ proficiency level in English at the end of the preparatory school year. In addition to the outcomes proposed by YÖK, as

a university mission, improving critical thinking skills and learner autonomy are two additional desired outcomes which influence the material selection and design procedures.

As for the second theme, significance of the 4C skills, these competencies were perceived to be significant by the unit; however, as the priority of the preparatory school education is more on enabling the students to reach a certain proficiency level in English at the end of the academic year, the necessary implications to foster the 4C skills are conducted in a limited way.

Most of the students come to the preparatory school with a very low level of English, and the level they need to reach is B1+, which is quite challenging for them. That's why I guess time is a restriction because the literature says that if the student starts at that level suddenly, he needs at least a year and a half to pass B1+. But we are trying to do this in about 9 months, so unfortunately it (4C skills) can sometimes remain in the background. (Curriculum Development Unit member)

Regarding the current place of the 4C skills in the preparatory school curriculum, stakeholder of the Curriculum Development Unit emphasized that they try to address these skills with the appropriate course book selections, with the activities suggested by the instructors and the activities offered by the extra-curricular unit. Besides, it was indicated that a special checklist is utilized for book selection processes which comprises specific items referring to critical thinking and communication skills.

First of all, when deciding on the curriculum and textbooks, we have a checklist, it is not just subject-based, but much like a booklet evaluating the books on how much it integrates technology, whether it includes critical thinking skills or develops communication skills. When we sift the books from the first stage, we include these in the first place before even piloting them. So I look at all of these skills, they are actually on our list one by one. (Curriculum Development Unit member)

Moreover, as stated by the unit member, throughout the semester, collaboration is ensured through portfolio tasks where the students are required to prepare

presentations with a partner and present it in the class. Creativity is addressed with extra tasks and activities. The unit also shares the weekly objectives with the teachers to follow and make sure whether the students work collaboratively in the class, think critically, develop autonomy.

For the distribution of the skills integrated in preparatory school curriculum, it was noted that critical thinking and problem solving skills have priority in the program as a school mission. Other three skills are addressed equally.

As to the recommendations that can be considered for further implications, the unit member expressed that extra-curricular activities such as student clubs can be beneficial for students to practice the 4C skills outside the lessons. To reinforce in-class integration, project-based activities can be developed with discussion and debate activities. As a final note, it was indicated to be also possible for the teachers to differentiate the in-class activities defined in the program to address these skills as long as they achieve the desired outcomes.

4.4.2. Measurement & Evaluation Unit

As the second phase of the analysis of the unit member perceptions, Measurement & Evaluation Unit was also analysed with the themes which were in line with the ones in the Curriculum Development Unit. That is, the major themes emerging in this unit were objectives of the unit, significance of assessing the 4C skills, place of the 4C skills in the curriculum, distribution of the skills integrated in the assessment procedures, and recommendations for further implications. In this respect, Figure 4.1 presents these themes.

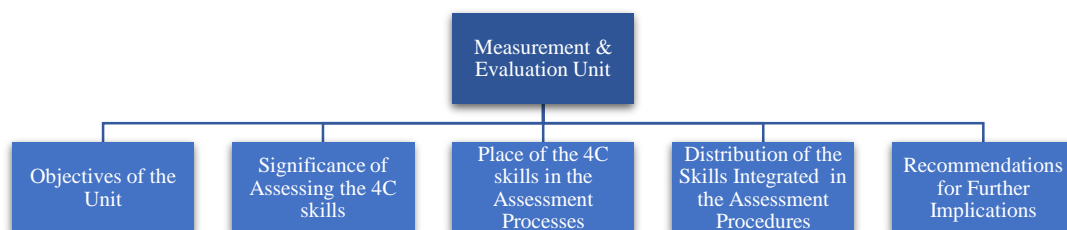


Figure 4.11 Measurement & Evaluation Unit Perceptions

Again, as it was with the Curriculum Development Unit member, there was only one participant from Measurement & Evaluation unit taking part in the study, and only themes and corresponding codes were created. For the emerging codes related to the Measurement & Evaluation Unit perceptions, Table 4.10 can be referred.

Table 4.10 *Measurement & Evaluation Unit Perceptions*

Themes	Codes
Objectives of the unit	Testing the objectives set by Curriculum Development Unit Testing course book outcomes Conducting test specification procedures Developing assessment tools in line with TOEFL ITP format
Significance of Assessing the 4C skills	Insufficient assessment on 4C skills Minor impact on the final grade
Place of the 4C skills in Measurement & Evaluation Processes	Portfolio tasks assessing critical and creative thinking Speaking exams assessing critical thinking, creative thinking, communication Writing exams assessing critical thinking, creative thinking, communication Inference questions of reading tests to assess critical thinking
Distribution of the Skills Integrated in the Assessment Procedures	Critical thinking as the foreground skill Limited assessment of creative thinking Limited assessment of communication No specific assessment for collaboration
Recommendations for Further Implications	More emphasis on formative assessment methods Increasing the grade percentage of 4Cs skills on student final grade Integration of the skills starting from earlier grades

As the initial theme, objectives of the unit were specified as testing the objectives which are taken as basis by the curriculum development unit in the examination procedures together testing the objectives of the coursebooks utilized in the class levels. Additionally, as the second objective, as an exam-based university, they also aim to develop assessment tools which are in line TOEFL ITP format to prepare the students for the exam, consisting of mostly mechanical, multiple choice questions.

For significance of assessing the 4C skills, the unit member indicated that even though they are a part of the final score of the students to pass the preparatory

school, they have a minor impact on the final grade of the students. Also, they do not have a large proportion in the testing and evaluation procedures.

Academic achievement is based on the final grade at the end of the semester plus the TOEFL score at the end of the year. Do these (4C skills) have a weight for this? As I said, as part of the weighting, of course we evaluate them in this context...they do not have a large proportion in the measurement and evaluation calendar. They do not have weight. (Measurement & Evaluation Unit member)

When the place of the 4C skills in the measurement and evaluation processes was investigated, it was found out that the students are assessed on several tasks which comprises elements related to the 4C skills such as portfolio tasks and speaking and writing exams which are graded tasks and and they have a direct impact on the final scores of the students. These tasks are described in detail below.

Writing portfolio: Students are given weekly tasks and themes to produce academic paragraphs throughout an academic term each of which are evaluated on the basis of critical thinking, creative thinking written communication to some extent and graded separately making up 5% (in total) of the student final grade.

Speaking portfolio: Students are required to work with a partner for 3 weeks to prepare a presentation by following specific stages such as researching and choosing an interesting topic, preparing an outline of the presentation, preparing the presentation and presenting it in the class with their partners. This task enhances students' creative thinking skills with the content selection and presentation design, critical thinking skills by critically evaluating and discussing with their partners to be selective about the information and details to be given in the presentation along with collaboration and spoken communication skills. During the presentations, students are evaluated on content, fluency, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and the task makes up 5% of the student final grade.

In addition to the portfolio tasks, speaking exam (9%) constitutes a specific section where students need to pick up a piece of card from a bag with an argumentative question on it and develop answers to think critically and creatively to produce answers. Writing exam (7%) also encourages students to brainstorm about a given

topic, argue and support an idea by adopting different communication strategies and tones such as informative, argumentative, evaluative or persuasive. Apart from these, the unit member also expressed that some parts of multiple choice questions in the reading section of the quizzes and midterms may assess critical thinking while making inferences.

For the distribution of the 4C skills integrated in the assessment procedures, critical thinking was found to be the most prominent skills while communication and creative thinking s assessed in a quite limited way. However, as stated by the unit member, there is no specific assessment for collaboration in the assessment procedures.

The most prominent one may be critical thinking. As I said, there is even a little bit of creativity in both speaking and writing tasks and, as you said, in reading. Apart from that, creativity can come to the forefront a little bit in portfolios, it can be tested a little bit more. But, for example, collaboration is not something that we have much. Collaboration is like, in the past, maybe there used to be more group assignments or something like that. Now it doesn't happen so much. Honestly, mostly students do it individually. Only in presentations, sometimes we make presentations for 2 people. There may be a need for cooperation here, but other than that, we don't have a task, an evaluation, an assessment, something that we refer to direct collaboration. As I said in communication, I think it is very limited again, I can say that it is only in presentations. So I can say that the critical thinking and creativity part of these four is a bit more dominant in our calendar..
(Measurement & Evaluation Unit member)

In order to increase the integration of the 4C skills in the assessment procedures, the unit member suggested to move away from classical testing formats and adopt formative assessment methods; especially with the group tasks and group assessments, all the 4 skills can easily addressed and tested. Moreover, the percentage of the tasks similar to portfolios can be increased creating a more significant impact on the final grade and these skills can be addressed in the earlier years, before the preparatory school.

4.4.3. Professional Development Unit

Professional Development unit was the last section related to institutional perception analysis and the themes that were previously mentioned in the Curriculum Development and Measurement & Evaluation Units were adapted in the analysis of the current unit. In that sense, the major themes emerging in relation to the Professional Development unit were objectives of the unit, significance of the 4C skills in the professional development of the instructors, place of the 4C skills in the professional development procedures, distribution of the skills integrated in professional development and finally recommendations for further implications. Figure 4.12 presents the the emerging themes for this unit.



Figure 4.12 Professional Development Unit Perceptions

Table 4.11 also presents the details related to the emerging codes for the Professional Development Unit member perceptions.

Table 4.11 *Professional Development Unit Perceptions*

Themes	Codes
Objectives of the unit	Professional development of the teachers Personal development of the teachers Taking action according to teacher needs
Significance of the 4C skill in Professional Development of the Instructors	No direct prioritisation of 4Cs Significant integration of critical thinking as university mission
Place of the 4C skills in the Professional Development Procedures	Induction program for newly hired instructors Instructor training on teaching critical thinking, creative thinking and collaboration

Table 4.11 *Professional Development Unit Perceptions (continued)*

Distribution of the Skills integrated in Professional Development	Collaboration as the most commonly considered aspect Indirect incorporation of creative thinking in teacher sessions
Recommendations for Further Implications	Workshops Classroom observations Awareness raising about teaching 4C skills

As for the first theme, the unit member indicated that Professional Development Unit aims not only professional but also personal development of the teachers. With the help of the individual meetings that are held with the instructors at the beginning of an academic year, the teachers are asked to set two goals for each year, one professional (it can be related to classroom experiences, the institution etc), and one personal (such as completing master thesis, completing M.A. B.A courses, becoming a yoga instructor etc.). In the following semester, based on the instructor needs, the unit guides the instructors by organizing workshops, meetings and collaborative projects to help them achieve their goals. That is, the process includes both voluntary and compulsory processes, every instructor has to attend the program but the point of improvement is up to the teacher.

Regarding the significance of the 4C skills, as the unit member expressed, all these skills, especially with the developing AI technologies, will provide benefits to the students. However, it was also noted that Professional Development Unit does not prioritize 4Cs as a part of professional development processes. Instead, they take action according to the instructor needs. If needed, critical thinking is prioritized as a university mission.

No, there is not a situation like emphasizing that 4C skills are very important, let's do a study on this subject, let's talk about creativity, let's do something related to collaboration or communication. We do not specifically address the skills separately, but as a result of the surveys we collected from our teachers, creativity is always an area that comes up as a priority. Communication is primarily an area that emerges as a need. (Professional Development Unit member)

For the place of the 4C skills in the professional development procedures, as previously mentioned, there is no specific focus of the unit to focus on creativity teaching or communication teaching; the content of the training events are shaped in accordance with the needs of the instructors. If any of these skills appears as a need in the instructor feedback, then the unit works on it and organizes meetings, workshops or seminars. In an induction program, however, which is organised at the beginning of an academic year for newly hired instructors, sufficient opportunities are created for the instructors to be engaged in the sessions where they evaluate and create lesson plans by focusing on critical thinking, learner autonomy, collaboration and creativity. By this way, the instructors become familiar with alternative ways of integrating some of the 4C skills into their lessons.

The unit member also evaluated the distribution of the 4C skills integrated in professional development activities. In that sense, collaboration was stated to be among the most commonly considered aspect in terms of peer-learning and learning from each other. It was also followed by communication and creativity which are indirectly incorporated in the sessions with the teachers.

In terms of professional development, especially in terms of professional development of the teachers, if you ask me, one of the things we take into account the most is collaboration. So learning from each other, especially in the teaching profession because teaching is a very lonely profession, when you enter the classroom, you are alone. Therefore, I think the more we can increase collaboration, the more beneficial it will be in terms of professional development.
(Professional Development Unit member)

In relation to the recommendations for further integration, Professional Development Unit member emphasized that raising awareness about the 4Cs can help foster their integration in the lessons; it can broaden the perspectives of the teachers while setting personal and professional goals at the beginning of the semesters to improve themselves in that area. Furthermore, again specific workshops or classroom observations can be arranged in relation to integration of 4Cs.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the current study are discussed in light of earlier research conducted in the field and they are presented in accordance with the main and sub research questions. Initially, an overview and synthesis of the findings for each participant group are presented. Following this, instructor perceptions in relation to the instructional practices of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms are discussed with reference to the literature; and it is followed by the perceptions of students who study at a preparatory school about learning and practicing the 4C skills in English language classes. Finally, the perceptions of the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university with regards to the integration of the 4C skills are compared and contrasted with the previous studies. Upon these parts, implications for future, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research are presented.

5.2. Overview of the Findings

In this part, instructor perceptions and student perceptions related to teaching and learning the 4C skills in English language classes in the preparatory school are compared and contrasted by synthesizing the findings. After this phase, perceptions of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation and Professional Development Unit members about the current issue are discussed by comparing and contrasting the common aspects with each department to demonstrate the significant incidences.

When the major findings related to instructor and student perceptions were reviewed, it became clear that there are several common points and also significant differences worth discussing about the instructional practices of 4C skills in English language lessons. Table 5.1 presents the major similarities and differences between the instructor and student perceptions.

Table 5.1 *Overview of Instructor and Student Perceptions*

Themes	Instructors	Students
Background Knowledge	Knowledgeable about the 4C skills	Having inadequate knowledge about the 4C skills
Significance of the 4C Skills	Contributing to learners' future lives Reinforcing learner engagement Reinforcing learner motivation	Contributing to learners' future lives Promoting peer learning Ensuring permanent learning
Contributions to language learning	Promoting writing Promoting grammar Promoting speaking	Promoting speaking Promoting writing Promoting grammar
Instructional Practices	Able to integrate 4C skills	Receiving only partial integration of the 4C skills
Student prioritisation among the 4C skills	(This theme was investigated only for the student participants)	Communication Critical thinking & Creative thinking
The most commonly integrated skills	Communication Critical thinking	Communication Critical thinking
Beneficial Activities	Authentic themes & topics Use of web tools	Group tasks based on creation & presentation
Challenges	Curriculum related constraints Lack of student motivation Learner characteristics & attitudes Student proficiency level	Lack of student motivation Exam oriented studying Curriculum related constraints
Recommendations	Curriculum adjustments In-service teacher training	More authentic & engaging tasks Specific course for the 4Cs

At the very first place, when the students and instructors were asked about their background knowledge about the 4C skills and 21st century skills, it was found out that instructors were aware of and knowledgeable about the target skills while

students' background knowledge was inadequate in terms of explaining and defining the 4C skills.

Upon investigating their pre-existing knowledge and informing both of the participant groups about the 21st century skills and the 4C skills, instructors and students were invited to evaluate the significance of these skills. At this part, instructors and students reported answers; and they were grouped in two categories for each participant group. Instructors perceived the 4C skills to contribute to the learners in general and also for their language learning experiences. Similarly, students believed that acquiring the 4C skills can make contributions to their personal development and to language learning. In the first categories, instructors and students shared the same point of view expressing that the 4C skills are life skills that are needed in many aspects in the personal, professional and academic lives of the individuals both in their current lives and for their future. Apart from this, instructors made it clear that these skills are beneficial for learner engagement and learner motivation whereas students believed that the 4C skills can contribute to peer-learning and permanent learning & easier retention. Apart from these, for the contributions of the 4C skills to language learning, instructor and student perceptions were exactly the same, both indicated the same language skills to be improved by practicing the 4C skills; it was revealed that the 4C skills can improve writing, speaking and grammar skills of the learners. The only difference occurred in the number of the participants indicating the specific skills. For instructors, writing was the most commonly stated skill followed by grammar and speaking while speaking was the most commonly stated skill by the students with writing in the second and grammar in the third place.

In the next part, instructor and student perceptions were investigated in terms of the instructional practices of the 4C skills. At this point, there occurred a significant difference between the students and the instructors in that even though majority of the instructors expressed that they can integrate all the 4C skills in their English language classes, students believed that some of the 4C skills are integrated in their lessons while some of these skills remain in the background. Moreover, when the students were asked about their personal opinions and preferences about learning the 4C skills, they mentioned communication and critical & creative thinking (both of

them are in the second place, they are rated equally) as the prioritised skills. When their actual opportunities to learn and practice these skills were investigated, their expectations and experiences were revealed to overlap; they learn and practice communication and critical thinking more frequently when compared to the other skills. This finding was confirmed by the instructor utterances in that they also stated to give more place to communication and critical thinking in their English language lessons when compared to other two skills. Regarding the sample activities that instructors and students found beneficial to practice the 4C skills, the two participant groups uttered different task descriptions which share some common elements. The instructors signified use of authentic themes and topics to engage the learners into meaningful tasks to exchange ideas and cooperate; and use of web tools requiring students to collaborate to complete and present a task or project. Student perceptions were partially in line with this point in that the activities that they described and found beneficial to practice the 4C skills require them to work with a partner or in a group, to create a product or project, and then to present it to the class.

Another aspect explored in relation to instructor and student perceptions was the obstacles that the participants experience while integrating the 4C skill into EFL classes. In this regard, curriculum and lack of student motivation appeared to be major challenges expressed by both the instructors and the students. Curriculum was defined as a restricting factor by the instructors making it difficult to create sufficient room and time to effectively address the 4C skills because obligation to follow a pre-determined curriculum leads the teachers to focus more on the objectives proposed by the Curriculum Development Unit and those of the course book. Meanwhile, students also perceived curriculum as lacking sufficient emphasis on the 4C skills. Apart from this, instructors indicated learner characteristics and attitudes as another challenge; they found it essential first to overcome student anxiety, fear of making mistake or being judged to effectively integrate the 4C skills and ensure learner participation. Similarly, proficiency level of the learners was found to be another obstacle for the instructors making it harder to work on the 4C skills with lower level classes. For the students, on the other hand, exam oriented studying created a challenge as they prioritise practicing language skills that are to be included in the exam and spend less time on creativity, collaboration or communication.

As the final facet of the instructor and student perceptions, recommendations for further implications were investigated and the participant groups reported totally different suggestions in this part. Instructors recommended making adjustments with the curriculum by creating more space and allocating more time to teach these skills in their lessons and also providing more autonomy for the teachers by not forcing them to follow a strict program defining each tasks and page to be covered in a specifically determined contact hour. Moreover, they recommended having in-service teacher training opportunities for the teachers to gain awareness about the skills, learn the efficient ways to integrate the 4C skills into language learning activities. Besides, as students recommended, more authentic and engaging tasks can be design to appeal to learner interest areas, to engage them into meaningful and real life related assignments. Additionally, a separated lesson or contact hour can be arranged just for practicing these skills because the students thought it could be more convenient and easier to actively practice the 4C skills than trying to allocate enough room and time among other language skills in other courses.

Other than the instructors and students, the perceptions in relation to the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation and Professional Development Units were compared and contrasted in order to synthesize the findings. Table 5.2 presents the details about this comparison.

In the first place, objectives of each unit were explored and only Curriculum Development Unit was found to be aiming at directly incorporating one of the 4C skills into the educational procedures. Although the preliminary aims of the unit are achieving the outcomes proposed by YÖK and ensuring B1+ student proficiency level at the end of the preparatory school year, as a university mission, it is also aimed to improve critical thinking skills of the students together with improving learner autonomy. Measurement & Evaluation Unit's objectives, on the other hand, are based on assessing the outcomes prepared by the Curriculum Development Unit and course book objectives while conducting test specification procedures and developing assessment tools in line with TOEFL exam. However, the unit does not possess evaluating the 4C skills among the main objectives.

Table 5.2 *Synthesis of the Unit Member Perceptions*

Themes	Curriculum Development Unit	Measurement & Evaluation Unit	Professional Development Unit
Objectives of the unit	Achieving YÖK outcomes Reaching B1+ student proficiency level Improving learner autonomy Improving critical thinking	Testing pre-determined objectives Conducting test specification processes Developing TOEFL type assessment tools	Assisting personal & professional development of the instructors Meeting instructor needs
Significance of the 4C skills	4C skills as background competencies	Insufficient assessment of the 4C skills	No direct prioritization
Place of the 4Cs	Course books (critical thinking, communication) Portfolio tasks (collaboration) Extra activities (creative thinking)	Portfolio tasks (critical thinking, creative thinking) Speaking & writing exams (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication) Reading & inference questions (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication)	Instructor training (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration)
Distribution of the skills integrated	1.Critical thinking 2.Communication, collaboration,	1.Critical thinking 2.Communication & Collaboration	1.Collaboration 2.Critical thinking
Recommendations	Student clubs Project based tasks	Formative assessment methods Increased impact of the 4Cs on student grades	Workshops Classroom observations

Professional Development Unit objectives, finally, include professional and personal development of the instructors through various steps and taking action according to the instructor needs. Again, it does not consist of explicit integration of the 4C skills in the professional development of the teachers.

When the significance of the 4C skills was a matter of question, it was revealed that institutional units have different approaches to the issue. Curriculum Development Unit valued the skills and found it important to address them in language classes; however, when compared to the main objectives, the 4C skills were stated to be integrated as background competencies. Measurement & Evaluation Unit also found the skills crucial for the learners to gain, but also indicated that these skills are not sufficiently assessed. Although they are a part of the assessment processes, they have a small proportion when compared to other language skills that are assessed and a minor impact on the students' final grades. About the Professional Development Unit, again, the skills were stated to be highly important not only for the students but also for the instructors themselves to be able to perform their duties effectively. Nonetheless, as the unit takes action according to the instructor needs, it does not directly prioritise the 4C skills development of the teachers unless it appears to be an area that lacks improvement among the instructor needs.

Upon examining the significance of the 4C skills in the institutional units, their exact places were also required to be evaluated by the unit members; and critical thinking and collaboration were revealed to be the skills that are an integral part of the studies in all of the units. To start with, Curriculum Development Unit found it significant to conduct book selection processes meticulously and signified the integration of critical thinking and communication as an inseparable part of the language lessons. Also, collaboration was valued and given place in the portfolio tasks where students are expected to work with a partner to follow certain stages together to prepare a presentation and perform their presentations in the class with their partners. Finally, creative thinking was stated to be included in possible extra activities. Measurement & Evaluation Unit specified portfolio tasks (presentation and writing portfolios) as means of evaluating critical and creative thinking skills of the students. Additionally, speaking and writing exams were stated to assess critical thinking, creative thinking and communication as a part of overall assignment grades. Apart from these, some of

the multiple choice questions included in the reading parts of the exams were indicated to require students to utilize critical thinking, creative thinking and communication strategies. Lastly, for the place of the 4C skills in the Professional Development Unit, it was found out that instructor training processes included especially critical and creative thinking through the induction program where the instructors are required to work on lesson plans and how integrate these skills into language learning activities. Besides, collaboration was also stated to be among the most frequently emphasized and practiced skills, especially in terms of collaboration among the colleagues.

As for the next aspect dealing directly with the integration of the 4C skills in the institutional units, distribution of these skills was under investigation. As it was previously mentioned, critical thinking was found to be among the most frequently integrated skill in all of the units. In the Curriculum Development Unit, critical thinking was revealed to be the foreground skills as it is proposed as a university mission. Rest of the skills, communication, collaboration and creative thinking, were reported to be addressed equally in the academic program of the preparatory school. In the Measurement & Evaluation Unit, again, critical thinking was found to be assessed the most frequently which is followed by communication and collaboration as stated by the stakeholder of the unit. For Professional Development Unit, collaboration was in the first place as the most commonly practiced and integrated skill in the personal and professional development implications of the instructors; and it was followed by critical thinking in the second place.

Finally, when the recommendations of the stakeholders of the units were asked for further implications, their suggestions appeared to be different from each other. Curriculum Development Unit member emphasized the significance of organizing student clubs and creating project based activities to increase the integration of the 4C skills in the academic studies whereas stakeholder of the Measurement & Evaluation Unit member recommended turning to formative assessment methods more and increasing the impact of the 4C skills on the students' final grade by allocating more grade percentage to specific tasks. According to Professional Development Unit, on the other hand, it would be beneficial to organize workshops specifically on the 4C skill to raise awareness and show possible ways to incorporate

these skills into EFL classes rather than working on these skills as individual competencies in the training programs. Also, it was indicated to be helpful to conduct classroom observations to share information and experience, to see whether these skills are addressed efficiently with appropriate task designs and encourage peer learning among the colleagues in terms of teaching these skills.

5.3. Discussion of the Findings

In this section, findings of the current study are discussed with reference to the literature by comparing and contrasting the results proposed by other authors.

5.3.1. Instructor Perceptions in Relation to the Instructional Practices of the 4C Skills in EFL Classrooms

By means of the first research question, perceptions of the teachers who work in the preparatory school of a university about the instructional practices of the 4C skills were aimed to be explored and the related findings are discussed in the following sections.

5.3.1.1 Background Knowledge of the Instructors

In order to explain the first aspect of the teacher perceptions, instructors' pre-existing knowledge and educational background were investigated separately.

To begin with, with the first category, *pre-existing knowledge*, instructors' background knowledge was explored. In contrast to the findings proposed by Seliem et al. (2019), Saleh (2019), and Zhang et al. (2020), it was found out that majority of the instructors were already knowledgeable about the 4C skills. This can be related to the fact that the university that they work in organizes conferences and publishes newsletters for several times in a semester. As also mentioned by some of the instructors, some of the 4C skills were the main focus of these organisations. By this way, the instructors may have become familiar with the skills with the help of institutional organisations.

When the instructors were asked to explain and describe what each skill means and what kind of competencies they may involve (rather than being asked to provide

definitions), they were able to provide comprehensive explanations and descriptions of the skills and how they are related to language learning.

Critical thinking was handled as a life skill which enables people to question the presented information and approach issues from different perspectives. The instructors also emphasized the abilities specified in Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2019b) to describe the skills such as to make judgments and decisions by analyzing the components of a whole to achieve overall results rather than merely understanding an issue or a problem to produce solutions while describing critical thinking. Creative thinking was also explained by making reference to numerous aspects like the ability to innovate in many fields, share new ideas with others, and be receptive to new viewpoints are all aspects of creativity being in line with the explanations provided in the study by Fajriah & Septiyanti (2021). For communication, they moved beyond the definition of only in-class communication and referred to different dimensions such as communicating in intercultural contexts and they mentioned communication as written and spoken communication and signified the ability to adjust tone and register depending on the form of writing to successfully express ideas and thoughts in a range of environments and formats by using oral, written, and nonverbal communication abilities for a variety of purposes including informing, persuading, and motivating; and these explanations were in line with the ones given place in Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2019). Collaboration, at last, was generally closely linked with communication as a way of reinforcing that skill with an emphasis on the nature of language requiring communication and collaboration together. They also expressed its contribution to peer learning being in line with the expressions by Lai (2011 as cited in Erdoğan, 2019) stating that collaboration, which is defined as when people work together on a same task as opposed to separately on different portions of the same assignment, can greatly enhance student learning, particularly for underachievers.

The second aspect was based on *educational background* of the instructors' background about the 4C skills. When they were required to evaluate the university education that they received in B.A. and M.A. programs, it was found out that almost none of the instructors received any explicit instruction about the 21st century skills and the 4C skills in their B.A. and M.A. education. These findings are in line the

ones put forward by Kurt & Önalın (2018) who revealed in their research with the pre-service English language teachers that they didn't feel prepared to teach creativity. The current study also confirms the findings by Bedir (2019) about the absence of a course that emphasizes a methodical strategy for encouraging professional growth for the integration of the 4Cs and the activities in the classes and the ineffectiveness of MA or PhD courses non-meeting the learning objectives and goals of pre-service teacher education for the twenty-first century.

In the light of the utterances from the instructors, it can be inferred that the university education that the teachers received both in B.A. and M.A. programs was insufficient to prepare the pre-service English language teachers to first acknowledge and then teach the 4C skills in EFL classes. For the participants taking part in the current study, this can be explained by the factor of graduation year of the instructors. As 21st century skills and 21st century learning have gained more and more importance in the last decade, the instructors who had completed their degrees way before had not have the 4Cs a part of curriculum and they may have met the skills and the concept after graduation, during their in-service years. In addition, it is crucial to note that despite of this insufficient emphasis on the 21st century skills and 4Cs in their university education, the instructors were knowledgeable about the 4C skills already. It can be deduced at this point that they became familiar with the skills during their in-service years by attending the conferences in the university that they were currently working or with their individual efforts by following the recent developments in the fields, and through the updates in the curricular practices, or via their own curiosity and motivation in this area.

5.3.1.2. Perceived Significance of the 4C skills

Regarding the second theme, instructor perceptions about the significance of teaching 4C skills in English classes were explored and as the findings suggested, they perceived the skills to be significant to for their contributions to a large number of areas which indicates similar findings with the studies by Bedir (2019), Şahin & Han (2020), and Eker Uka & Bedir (2023). In this study, these contributions were categorised in two groups as *contributions to learners* and *contributions to language learning*.

In the category named *contributions to learners*, majority of the instructors mentioned 4Cs as life skills and to be essential to prepare the learners for the future. Instructors highlighted similar points with Tran (2021) signifying the importance of encouraging the growth of effective and responsible global citizens, especially in the age of knowledge-based economies and global economic competitiveness. These points also align with Ratminingsih (2021) who emphasized that in order to become an effective employee who can make wise decisions in the workplace, the importance of problem-solving and critical thinking skills is undeniable. Besides, the 4C skills were also found to be beneficial to reinforce learner motivation and learner engagement by making students the active participants of the classes. These findings also support the arguments by Stefaniak & Tracey (2015) who found out in their study that learners who engaged in learner-centred activities in the communications course had higher levels of motivation and active learning. In addition, Samuelsson (2010)'s claim stating that peer collaboration is more beneficial than conventional and independent work for students' internal motivation is assured by the current study.

Regarding the contribution of the 4C skills into the learners' *language learning experiences*, the instructors perceived that learning and practicing the 4Cs especially contributes to writing skill together with grammar learning and speaking skills. For writing skills, critical thinking, creative thinking, and communication skills can all help students improve their essays and paragraphs in academic writing. This finding supports the claim by Zaker (2016) emphasizing the significance of activities that combine creative thinking and writing skills. Additionally, communication is highly beneficial in improving the writing skills in that by reinforcing effective communication strategies in written communication, student would be able to produce better texts by adjusting their tone, register and style depending on the formality level, the context and purpose of the passages. Moreover, according to the instructors, grammar learning can be fostered through critical thinking where students do not only listen, read, understand or memorise the grammar rules, but also analyze the sentence structures and word formations by comparing and contrasting them with their native language, discovering the functions of prefixes or suffixes and the roots of the words. Finally, speaking was revealed to be the final skill that majority of the instructors thought to be improved by 4C skills implementations. As

claimed by Paneerselvam & Mohamad (2019) proficiency in both oral and written communication is essential for collaboration. Therefore, by being engaged in collaborative and communicative tasks, students can improve their oral communication skills by trying hard to express and exchange ideas to be able to complete a mutual task.

5.3.1.3. Instructional Practices of the Instructors in Relation to the 4C Skills

In the third sub research question in relation to instructor perceptions, the teachers' opportunities to integrate the 4C skills were investigated, and the findings reported that majority of the instructors can integrate all the 4C skills, in their lessons in different contact hours throughout the semester by creating some room in their lessons for the relevant activities to reinforce the target skills; and this produces similar results with the study by Ratama et al. (2021).

Regarding *the most commonly integrated skills* in English classes, when the instructors were asked about whether they can address all the 4C skills equally or they prioritise any of them over the others, communication was found to be integrated more frequently than the other three as it was in Marwa (2023) and Demirkol-Orak & İnözü (2021)'s research. Instructors perceived communication as the most important competency in language classrooms, and this was also signified by Ambele & Boonsuk (2020) who proposed that communication is an integral part of language learning by its nature and the main goal of ELT is to equip language learners with the necessary skills to communicate effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Apart from the most frequently addressed skill, instructors were asked about *the least frequently integrated skill of the 4Cs*; and the results revealed that collaboration was the least integrated skills in English language lessons. The findings of Marwa (2023) were similar to the current study in that collaboration was found to be the least integrated skill in English language courses. Instructors in the current study expressed that incorporation of collaboration depends highly on the classroom dynamics and willingness of the students. This situation was addressed as time and energy constraint and classroom environment to foster the 4Cs by Runco (2001). When the students are not willing to take part in pair or group work activities, to

cooperate with their partners and to take responsibility, the instructors cannot foster collaboration in the classes. As also mentioned by one of the instructors, difficulties in monitoring the classroom and instructional procedures and challenges in providing effective feedback on the collaboration led them to give less place to collaborative activities in the classes.

In addition to collaboration, creative thinking was also found to be less addressed when compared to other skills as in line with the findings of Marwa (2023) and Akyıldız & Çelik (2020). The reasons stated for less integration of creative thinking were similar to the reasons of less incorporation of collaboration emphasizing the classroom dynamics, student profile and lack of willingness, together with more focus on exam-oriented approaches of the studies. This also indirectly supports the arguments from Saavedra & Opfer (2012) in that when these skills are not assessed on exams with high stakes for certification or accountability, the teachers have the tendency to prioritise them less in the classroom instructions.

5.3.1.4. Challenges in Integrating the 4C Skills

In relation the instructional practices of the instructors, the challenges and the obstacles that they experience in EFL classrooms while teaching the 4C skills were also investigated. As the first challenge, the obligation to follow a pre-determined *curriculum* in all classes of a specific level forces instructors to complete a given content in the specified time. This challenge was also noted in the previous studies in the literature as lack of time allotted to teaching critical thinking because of the need to cover an extensive amount of subject matter by Seliem et al. (2019), a curriculum which is heavy on content as stated in the study by Akyıldız & Çelik (2020) and the curriculum placing time constraints on practicing the 4Cs of the 21st century without considering punctuality for the teachers which was revealed in the study by Demirkol-Orak & İnözü (2021).

Another obstacle found to be significant in the process of incorporating the 4C skills was related to *lack of learner motivation* which plays a highly crucial role. The same challenge was reported in several studies in the literature; it was stated as resistance of learners to active learning and expectations of lecture-style instruction in the research by Seliem et al. (2019) or unwillingness to contribute to collaborative tasks

in Ratama et al. (2021)'s study. As learner engagement is the key factor in gaining competence in a foreign language and improving the essential language skills, lack of motivation functions as a huge barrier for the implementation of the 4C skills which requires higher level for engagement and participation for the learners.

Apart from these, challenges in relation to *learner characteristics and attitudes* were also among the important obstacles that the instructors faced during the time. Differently from learner motivation, learner characteristic factor is more related with the personal attitudes of the students that result in learner hesitation to take part in the activities or withdrawing from classroom activities. Ratama et al. (2021) also revealed in their study that the teachers in that research faced challenges in teaching critical thinking, collaboration and communication, and these challenges were related to a number of reasons such as problematic student attitudes along with lack of self-confidence which also significantly affects the learners' participation. In the literature, a number of studies such as Fajriah & Septiyanti (2021)'s research also emphasized that the teachers experience difficulties in building students' confidence and ensuring engagement during the process of incorporating the 4C skills.

5.3.1.5. Recommendations for Further Integration

After investigating the restricting elements, the instructors were also asked about their recommendations to reinforce the 4Cs integration in EFL classes and two major suggestions occurred: curriculum adjustments and in-service teacher training.

As curriculum appeared to be the biggest obstacle to reinforce the 4C skills, the instructors initially recommended *curriculum adjustments* being in line with the findings of Tran (2021) who proposed to develop an appropriate curriculum using the 4Cs as a part of the English courses. Moreover, it was recommended to enrich the curriculum by increasing the variety of materials and incorporating more materials to address the 4C skills effectively in the classes. This can also decrease the workload of the teachers who are to create more room and time to address the 4Cs among other contents. Additionally, a separate critical reading class was suggested to be designed. In these kinds of classes, the students are provided with opportunities to reinforce critical thinking skills and communication skills, improve skills related to

understanding the messages, reading and evaluating the ideas, making inferences, paraphrasing and summarising the information of a text.

Beside curricular adjustments, *in-service teacher training* was another aspect that was mentioned by the instructors and it was also recommended by the participants of the studies by Tran (2021), Seliem et al. (2019) and Tuzlukova et al. (2018) who emphasized the significance of teacher training using the Cs. Some of the instructors shared that they became familiar with the 21st century skills and the 4C skills in the conferences and seminar that they attended during their in-service years. Therefore, they found it quite significant for all the instructors to be open for professional development and to follow the recent developments in the field. Eker Uka & Bedir (2023) also found this necessary for EFL instructors to expand their horizons and comprehensions of when and how to apply these skills.

5.3.1.6. Sample, Effective Activities to Teach the 4C Skills

Lastly, with the fourth sub research question, the instructors were asked about the tasks and activities that they found effective to address the 4C skills. In this aspect, they mentioned several examples which are categorised in two groups as *authentic themes and materials* and *use of web tools*.

Initially, instructors found it crucial to engage the learners in real life related issues and topics. It's crucial that the themes and subjects captivate the students; they should be engaging, relevant to their levels, and controversial to encourage debate and participation from those who have opposing views and want to persuade the others (Itmeizeh & Hassan 2020). Cox & Montgomery (2019) also stated about this point that realistic, authentic projects that require students to use the 21st century skills enable learners to emotionally connect with peers and foster engagement in cognitive, emotional, and behavioural domains.

Use of web tools and technology integration was another prominent answer for effective ways to address the 4C skills. Ekizer & Yıldırım (2023) also supported this indicating that these abilities can be nurtured in interesting, dynamic classroom settings that use technology. Mesh (2009) also suggests utilizing online personal blogs, which is similar to this webpage, to reflect on the learning process. It is both a

beneficial monitoring tool, and also tutors can also give quick feedback while promoting peer reviews and comments.

5.3.2. Student Perceptions about Learning and Practicing the 4C Skills in English Language Classes

The second research question sought to explore the perceptions of the preparatory school students' by exploring their experiences related to learning and practicing the 4C skills in their English language lessons. In order to answer this, five sub research questions were utilized and they are presented in the following parts.

5.3.2.1. Background Knowledge about the 4C Skills

At first, as it was with the English language instructors, students were asked about their background knowledge regarding the 4C skills. In the explanations and descriptions that they made, in contrast to the instructors, it was found out that their pre-existing knowledge was inadequate and they were not quite knowledgeable about these skills. They basically related the skills to their personal and everyday practices while interpreting what they mean.

5.3.2.2. Perceived Significance of Learning & Practicing the 4C Skills

As the second aspect of student perceptions on learning and practicing the 4C skills in EFL classrooms, their opinions about the significance of these skills were investigated. The findings were similar to the instructors' perceptions; the students found these skills highly crucial for many reasons and these are grouped into two categories as explained below.

For the first category, *contributions to personal development*, just like in the instructor perceptions, the 4C skills were perceived to be essential life skills that the learners will need and use in many aspects of their lives both in their personal and future professional lives. They can be beneficial in constructing a good impression during interpersonal relationships and this advantage was mentioned as effective communication, which is a crucial component of the 4Cs and the key to success in both the classroom and in daily life by Weng (2022). Also, this point was signified in the literature mentioning the 4Cs as essential skills especially in this age of

globalization, which is marked by the frequent interactions and meetings of individuals from many cultures (Liliane & Colette 2009 as cited in Nganga, 2019). Besides, in order to become successful members in their profession, critical thinking was also widely perceived as an essential skill especially for decision making processes; with advanced critical thinking abilities, the students perceived to be able to weigh all possible consequences, including moral and ethical ones, while making judgments (Turan et al., 2019).

Apart from these, students believed that 4C skills are pretty beneficial for permanent learning and easier retention in that when they utilized critical thinking strategies in their learning processes, it helps them first to be able to comprehend the content in multiple perspectives as they question, evaluate, and analyze the given information by going beyond being a passive recipient and memorising the subject matter. That is, reinforcement of critical thinking skills was believed to foster the learning process and achievement of the students. Similarly, when engaged in several cognitive processes while learning a concept, students indicated that it becomes much easier for them to remember the information even after a quite long time as learners are to critically reflect on their educational experiences and processes, rather than only understanding an issue or problem to develop solutions. They are also to apply the certain steps of critical thinking which are stated as to make judgments and decisions by analyzing how components of a whole work with one another to achieve overall results in Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2019b). This can be also explained by the contribution of the 4Cs on improving high-order thinking skills of the students which can foster their learning processes. The findings of the study conducted by Yuanita et al. (2021) also support this aspect. They investigated the relationship between 4C learning model and high-order thinking skills and concluded that worksheets designed specifically on 4C skills were revealed to be effective in improving the high-order thinking skills of middle school students.

Apart from their possible contributions to the learners' personal experiences, the students also signified the 4C skills' *contribution to language learning*. Initially, speaking was the prominent skill that was reported by majority of the students especially through the use of collaborative and communicative activities. Especially through collaborative activities, they need to clearly understand each other to follow

certain steps of a task, and as also Selman (2020) explained, the learners need to develop their speaking and effective communication skills in a variety of manners such as expressing thoughts, queries, or instructions, and sending messages in a clear and convincing manner.

Apart from speaking, writing was also stated as one of the skills that can be improved through practicing the 4C skills; and improved level of competence in those skills can result in better performance in writing. They emphasized especially the contribution of creative thinking and mentioned that by thinking creatively, they can generate ideas while writing an essay and produce creative and strong topic sentences to successfully argue an opinion. This urges them to employ a variety of strategies to create ideas, as well as developing, improving, examining, and assessing their own concepts as stated in Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2019b), and with the help of these creative thinking stages, they can produce stronger and more comprehensive written works. In this regard, it is also possible to encounter this aspect supported in Zaker (2016)'s study who proposed activities that combine creative thinking and writing skills.

Finally, as students of the current study expressed, grammar learning was another area which was perceived to be improved by practicing the 4C skills. This point was supported by the students by clarifying the fact that when the learners are engaged in cognitive processes including critical thinking strategies and higher order thinking skills while learning grammar. This finding was also consistent with the results of the study by Alcantara & Basca (2017) who questioned the relationship between the critical thinking and problem solving skills and academic achievement in Mathematics, revealed that student proficiency is positively related with the students' level of critical thinking and problem solving abilities.

5.3.2.3. Current Opportunities to Learn & Practice the 4C Skills

By means of the third sub research question in relation to student perceptions, their instructional practices and experiences in relation the 4Cs were investigated and the findings are discussed in five aspects; and these are as integration of the 4C skills in EFL lessons, student needs & priorities, the most commonly addressed skills, teacher & learner roles and sample, recommended activities to practice the 4C skills.

Initially, in contrast to the instructors who indicated that they can integrate all the 4C skills in their classes at different times in a semester, the students emphasized partial integration of the 4C skills and indicated to have limited opportunities to learn and practice certain skills. This finding was consistent with the results proposed by Landon (2019) who investigated the perceptions and experiences of high school students in relation to learning the 4C skills. As the results suggested, although the students reflected positive attitudes towards the 4C skills and find them significant to learn even for their lives after the high school, the results related to their experiences showed lower ranking than the part related to their believes especially for critical and creative thinking skills.

When *the students' needs and priorities* were explored, communication was found to be the most valued skill. This can be explained by the fact that the students can evaluate their language achievements and their proficiency in a foreign language with the extent to which they can communicate with people; and this is in line with Sayera (2019)'s argument claiming that the best way to learn a language is through social interaction. Also, when compared with the instructor results, communication was indicated as the most frequently integrated skill in English language lessons; and it can be inferred that student needs are in line with the instructional practices of the 4C skills. This finding matches with the study results by Duong & Hoang (2021) who investigated to what extent the 4C skills are perceived as important for EFL students; and communication and collaboration skills were perceived highly important especially for utilizing communication skills for various purposes. Besides, critical thinking was the second skill that was perceived to be essential to gain in EFL classes according to the students and this is quite related to the previous utterances by the students signifying the contribution of critical thinking to their personal development and language skills. It is crucial to note at this point that the instructors also stated critical thinking as the second most commonly integrated skill in their lessons; so we can conclude that instructional practices of the instructors are again in consistent with student needs and expectations. Again, this finding is in line with Landon (2019)'s study in that critical thinking emerged among the most significant skills according to the attitudes and perceptions of the high school students taking part in that study.

Moreover, creative thinking was stated as equally important as critical thinking by the preparatory school students in the current study. However, in the instructors' expressions, it appeared as the least frequently addressed skills in English language classes. Therefore, it is possible to express that there is a discrepancy in student needs and their opportunities to learn this skill. In this aspect, again Landon (2019) found out similar results; although a large number of students of that research perceived creativity as an important 21st century ability, only minority of the students expressed to be engaged in the activities involve creativity in majority of the classes.

Apart from the students' needs and expectations in relation to the 4Cs, their current opportunities to learn and practice these skills were also asked to see whether their *needs and priorities* are met in the English language classes. In that sense, communication was found to be the most frequently practiced skill in their lessons which was previously revealed as the most valued skill for the students. Additionally, it was also indicated by the instructors to be the most commonly practiced skill. Therefore, it can be concluded that student needs and expectations were proved to be consistent with their instructional practices and it is confirmed with the expressions of both students and teachers. This finding confirms the results revealed by Duong & Hoang (2021) who revealed communication and collaboration as skills that were perceived as highly important by third-year students who were majoring in English. However, these findings were in contrast to Monib (2023)'s results which demonstrated collaboration as the most integrated skills with technology as a way of reinforcing learning and communication.

Apart from communication, according to the preparatory school students, critical thinking was found to be the second skill which was frequently addressed in EFL classes. When their expressions about their priorities also the instructor utterances in relation to the most commonly addressed skills are reviewed, it can be clearly inferred that students' expectations and their experiences related to learning and practicing critical thinking are consisted. It is confirmed in that both the instructors and the students perceived critical thinking as the second most frequently taught skill in English language lessons. This finding, however, does not collide with the results of Landon (2019), in that study, students perceived critical as crucial for the 21st

century ability, but only minority of them concurred with observing it being taught and/or practiced in most of their classrooms.

5.3.2.4. Challenges in Learning & Practicing the 4C Skills

In the next part, just as it was with the instructors, students were also interviewed about the possible obstacles that can impede with their learning opportunities about the 4C skills. In this regard, being in consistent with instructor findings, students also expressed *lack of student motivation* as the major barrier in learning and practicing the target skills (Seliem et al., 2019; Ratama et al., 2021). While mentioning this factor, they focused on lack of motivation both in the individual level where the learner himself/herself does not feel psychologically well to participate in the activities, and also in the class level in which an individual learner feels well and motivated, but s/he is affected by the peers who do not seem willing to take part in the tasks or do not contribute when they are engaged in group or pair work exercises.

Another major obstacle occurred as the *exam oriented approaches* of the students which lead them to put more emphasis on mechanical, exam-related tasks and activities rather than being engaged in the tasks reinforcing the 4C skills as they are not a part of their exams. This finding supports the argument by Saavedra & Opfer (2012) in that when these skills are not assessed on exams with high stakes for certification or accountability, the teachers have the tendency to prioritise them less in the classroom instructions. This can be explained by the fact that the preparatory school students perceived learning a foreign language being different from preparing for an exam. As students aim at being successful in the final exam to take TOEFL exam at the end of the semester and to receive a good grade in the TOEFL exam, they tend to improve themselves in grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening skills. In order to do this, their previous learning experiences lead them to expect instruction-based lectures and to work more individually by solving tests.

Finally, *curriculum* was also stated by the students to be among the main challenges that they face in their experiences of learning and practicing the 4C skills. They found the curriculum inefficient in integrating the 4Cs; and they thought that due to the heavy content of the program, it is quite challenging to find appropriate time to integrate the skills as additional competencies. This can also support the findings by

Kundu & Bej (2022), they also found out in their research that the curriculum does not adequately match with the necessary skills (4Cs), also with the findings of Ullah et al. (2022) indicating insufficient emphasis on developing critical thinking skills in the current curriculum to be among the major obstacles that are faced by English language teachers. Furthermore, when reviewing the pre-service English language students' perceptions, Bedir (2019) explored negative opinions of the students about the national curriculum's emphasis on the 4Cs.

5.3.2.5. Recommendations for Further Integration

As the last aspect of the third sub research question, students were asked for their recommendations to foster the integration of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms. The most commonly mentioned recommendation was integration of *more authentic and engaging tasks* into the English classes; this was also mentioned by the instructors as the convenient and effective methods to reinforce the 4C skills generating group discussions and debates. These types of group and pair works, and discussion sessions were also among the significant findings of Demirkol-Orak & İnözü (2021) emphasizing these as convenient means to benefit from teaching the 4C skills. This significant point was also emphasized by Sayera (2019) clarifying that in communicative language teaching, authentic contents should be integrated into the tasks since it's crucial to provide students with opportunities to understand how language is utilized in real-life situations because authentic, real-world projects that demand pupils to employ 21st century abilities and emotionally engage students promote learner engagement cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects

Additionally, they recommended having *a specific course* or contact hour for working on the 4C skills and improving them. This can be related to the issue that students are already quite busy with improving grammar knowledge, practicing reading and writing in the existing courses and they find it difficult to create some more room for these skills while studying other skills. That is why; they found it more convenient to take a different class just to practice the 4Cs. This idea can be supported with the argument by Saavedra & Opfer (2012) who claimed regarding the 4Cs that students would not acquire these skills unless they are explicitly taught as separate courses. Therefore, they should learn these skills as discipline studies.

5.3.2.6. Sample, Beneficial Activities to Learn & Practice the 4C Skills

As the final sub research question sought to explore, the activities they the students found beneficial to foster the 4C skills were investigated. More than half of the students described different activities which shared the several common points and these can be expressed as group based tasks requiring students to collaborate to create a product or idea and develop it. The focuses of these tasks varied from setting up a business with a partner, designing a robot for a specific purpose by working with a partner, presenting the robot to the class and receiving and responding the comments by the other groups. While doing this, students assume different roles than being themselves and think like a businessman or trader; these tasks are also stated to be beneficial activities by Carter (2020) where the learners are asked to put themselves in another person's shoes and comprehend what and how they could be thinking and feeling. While doing this, they must have an open mind, a thorough comprehension of a situation or issue, and the desire to be vulnerable, he expressed. Additionally, Puangpunsi (2021) also proved the significance of project based learning in reinforcing the 4C learning by conducting a research about the improvement of English language skills and the 21st century skills of the students through the use of project-based learning and concluded in the study that all 4C skills were successfully promoted by means of project based learning.

5.3.3. Perceptions of the Stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development Units

As the last aspect of the current study, perceptions belonging to the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units were investigated. The following areas are organised to present and discuss the findings related to the perceptions of the aforementioned units.

To start with, Curriculum Development Unit prioritises improving the language skills of the preparatory school students and reaching B1+ proficiency level in English at the end of the academic year to achieve the objectives proposed by YÖK. Although there is sufficient integration of the 4C skills in the preparatory school academic programs, due to heavy emphasis on language development, the 4C skills function as background competencies.

These findings are in line with the study results by Kundu & Bej (2022) who signified the excessive amount of course modules that the students are required to complete in a given semester resulting in less incorporation of the 4C skills as they are perceived as exclusive competencies. In addition, Ataberk & Mirici (2022) produced similar results in that the curricula of the departments that they explored ensured the 4C skills integration to some extent but did not achieve full incorporation. When the distribution of the skills integrated in the curriculum was investigated, critical thinking was found to be the in the first place being the most frequently integrated skill in the current study. Also, it was the skill that the unit highly values and it aims to assure the critical thinking integration in the course books that are utilized in every class level. This finding, however, contradicts with the findings of Ullah et al. (2022) in that they revealed significant deficiencies in the incorporation of critical thinking in the curriculum and indicated lack of appropriate course book to efficiently teach this skill in EFL classrooms.

Regarding the second educational unit, Measurement & Evaluation Unit positioned the primary aims as assessing the objectives determined by the Curriculum Development Unit and the course book objectives. The 4C skills were perceived as significant, but their integration in the systematic assessment procedures was insufficient. This finding supports the results of Marwa et al. (2023), which indicated lower level of 4C skill integration in assessment documents when compared to lesson plans included in the curriculum. This can be explained by the fact that assessing the 4C skills are more demanding than assessing content knowledge or basic language skills as claimed by Aġaoġlu & Demir (2020). Also, regarding the distribution of the skills incorporated in the assessment processes, collaboration was the skill which is not tested in any forms of examination. This can be related with the condition explained by Binkley (2012) who expresses that one has to take into consideration a number of variations that can have an impact on student performance while assessing collaboration and should offer credit for each member in a group separately. This way, it becomes more demanding for the unit to design and utilize an effective method to be able to effectively evaluate the target skills. As a result, this may lead to lower level of incorporation of the target skills in the assessment system of the preparatory school by leaving the 4C skills as supplementary components.

As for the final aspect, Professional Development Unit was found to be taking action according to the feedback and needs of the instructors and does not put the 4C skills in the first place for teacher development. Considering the fact that the instructors in the current study were knowledgeable about the 4C skills, this area may not be brought about as a need for further improvement. However, as the instructors also indicated that they became familiar with these skills during their in-service years, it can be deduced that despite possessing adequate knowledge, the instructors may still need to improve their pedagogical knowledge on the strategies of addressing the 4C skills in instructional activities. That point is also supported in the findings of Eker Uka & Bedir (2023) who searched for English language instructor experiences with regards to the 4Cs and implied that even though they were aware of the skills, they need support from their supervisors and the government in the related field. This is also in line with the claims by Demirkol-Orak & İnözü (2021) who signified that with instructional help to fill in knowledge gaps about the 21st century 4Cs and organizational support, language teachers will be prepared to incorporate the 4Cs into their teaching. Therefore, the institutions aiming at full integration of the 4C skills in EFL lessons should shift their focus to teacher development strategies, and as noted by Siregar et al. (2021), it is advisable to gradually give additional courses and training regarding 21st century education in order to keep instructors updated about any developments and innovations in education.

5.4. Implications for Practice

The current study investigated the experiences and perceptions of the English Language instructors and preparatory school students in relation to the integration of the 4C skill in EFL classrooms. Furthermore, the perceptions of the stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation and Professional Development units were explored about the 4C skills integration in the educational procedure such as the curricular implication, testing and assessment processes and professional development opportunities. In the light of the findings obtained through this study, a number of suggestions are presented for future implications, and these suggestions are categorised in three sections: implications for English language teaching, implications for English language teacher education and implications for the policy makers.

5.4.1. Implications for English Language Teacher Education

According to the findings obtained from the interviews with the English language instructors, it is possible to present several implications related to English Language Teacher Education.

Initially, the education that the instructors received in their B.A. and M.A programs was found to be insufficient in terms of introducing the 21st century skills and the 4C skills; and majority of the instructors stated not having a course covering this concept either in their Bachelor or Masters Programs. Therefore, it can be clearly noted that there is an urgent need for English Language Teacher Education programs to give place to these concepts in their curricula to better prepare pre-service teachers for their profession. These skills can be adapted to already-existing undergraduate / graduate related to approaches and methods to English language teaching as additional components so that the pre-service teachers can familiarise the content and gain fundamental knowledge.

Furthermore, pre-service English language teachers can be provided with the chances to develop competence in the 4C skills and possess further hand-on practice with the help of the methodology or material development courses. In these contexts, they can be invited to design materials and activities, create and apply lesson plans or evaluate a given lesson plan/teaching material in term of the target skills and perform micro-teachings integrating the 4C skills. By this way, they can go beyond learning the content knowledge, gain experience through the controlled practice opportunities and improve their teaching skills in the related area.

Finally, during the practicum courses where pre-service English language teachers find the opportunities to observe real classroom implications and experience teaching English in real classroom environments, they can be encouraged to create their lesson plans by incorporating the 4C skills as a part of their activities and implement these in their lessons in real classroom contexts. This can enable them to have an interactive lesson with real students and observe any possible challenges or benefits of integrating the 4C skills. This can also lead them to improve themselves accordingly afterwards by producing possible solutions to the weak points by making their future teaching experiences better.

5.4.2. Implications for English Language Teaching

Based on the findings deduced from the instructor and student interviews, some recommendations for English language classrooms can be made for the future implications.

To start with, it was found out that the students are not quite knowledgeable about the 4C skills; however, when they were introduced with the 4C skills and the competencies that these skills comprise, they developed positive perceptions about the skills and their possible contributions to their personal lives and academic achievement in language learning. Therefore, introducing the 4C skills in the lessons, advisably at the beginning of the semesters via a short input session, and familiarizing the students with the possible ways to gain and improve these skills can be beneficial to raise student awareness and provide a meaningful and solid basis for their future learning experiences.

Additionally, it was confirmed by both the students and the instructors that 4C skills are convenient means of improving nearly all language skills, especially speaking, writing and grammar. Hence, the findings suggest that English language teachers can reinforce collaboration and communication to foster speaking skills, emphasize critical and creative thinking along with communication to work on writing skills and foster collaboration and critical thinking to develop grammar competence of the students in English language lessons. To accomplish this, teachers can focus on peer learning where learners can find the chance to collaborate and communicate with each other to complete a task by improving their language skills at the same time.

Apart from these, lack of student motivation emerged as one of the major challenges that the instructors and the students face while integrating the 4C skills into EFL classes. Thus, it is also crucial to put some effort to overcome this barrier to ensure student engagement in language learning activities that incorporate the 4C skills to be able to effectively address the skills and achieve desired outcomes. In order to accomplish this, as suggested by both of the participant groups, authentic themes and topics, real-life related, problem-solving based tasks and the topics appealing to learners' interest areas can be utilized in language lessons to attract learner attention and increase motivation.

This can be ensured through the collaborative activities where the students are expected to work in pairs or groups to create a project by brainstorming several critical aspects to come up with a mutual decision, to put forward a concrete product and share it with the class. It is also noteworthy to state at this point that lack of student proficiency level was also indicated as a barrier by majority of the instructors as they found it difficult to effectively carry out these types of activities with the lower level students. In order to eliminate this factor, English language instructors can adjust the complexity level of the tasks to enable students to generate more simple and clear ideas to solve the problems so that they can express their ideas more easily in English.

Moreover, again based on the findings of the student perceptions, teachers have a major role in fostering the 4C skills. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for language teachers to be encouraging, to have a lively attitude and teaching style in order to efficiently address the target skills; and they should be leading the students during the time they are working on the tasks to practice the 4C skills. Similarly, the data gathered from the students also signified lack of confidence, fear of making mistake or being judged to be among the challenges that the students experience while learning and practicing the 4C skills. Because practicing the 4C skills requires learners to have an active role in their learning processes, it is also crucial for teachers to create a safe zone and convenient atmosphere to welcome any idea or contribution utilizing positive reinforcement in order to prevent student hesitation to contribute or withdrawing from the activities. This way, it becomes possible to help students overcome their anxiety to speak up and to encourage them to express their opinions by increasing their self-confidence.

5.4.3. Implications for Policymakers

As the last scope of the current study, institutional aspects including preparatory school curriculum, assessment and evaluation processes and professional development of the instructors were explored. By means of these findings, some implications can be offered for policy makers.

To start with, specific implications in relation to the curriculum of the preparatory schools can be developed. As findings of this study suggest, 4C skills can become an

explicit part of the academic programs paving the way for the teachers to be able to specifically reinforce these skills in EFL classrooms. By this way, the burden of attempting to create extra room to address the 4C skills as additional components can be removed for the teachers. Although English language teachers both in the current study and in the literature possess positive attitudes towards utilizing these skills in their language lessons, curriculum posed a major barrier to accomplish this as it was too intense and strict about the contents to be covered. Additionally, supplementary tasks such as term projects can be adapted in the curriculum to encourage learners to be creative, collaborative, communicative and critical to complete the tasks; and these tasks can be graded to provide a meaningful purpose for the learners. Finally, 1-2 contact hours a week can be devoted for learning and practicing the 4C skills in the preparatory schools. These hours can create an environment for learners to reinforce their grammar and vocabulary knowledge working on the theme of the week by practicing the 4C skills in a separate lesson.

As for the measurement and evaluation facet, the implications implied in the current study are based on developing alternative assessment tools directly aiming at assessing the 4C skill. It is obvious in this study that some of the 4C skills are already a part of the current assessment system such as communication and critical thinking. However, there still is a need to increase the emphasis of these skills and this can be achieved through formative assessment methods rather than summative ones. As previously mentioned, learners can be expected to take part in the tasks or projects that require them to work collaboratively and engage in creation processes by critically analysing the situations and making wise decisions. The steps of this kind of an assignment can be evaluated separately on the basis of the 4Cs and students can be provided with relevant rubrics to be aware of the outcomes they need to achieve. In addition to this, there should be a considerable impact of these assignments on the student grade so that the students can consciously work on improving their competence.

Finally, professional development of the instructors was explored and discussed highlighting its significance, and it was inferred that there is an undeniable need for special focus on the 4C skills for the English language teachers to become familiar with the concept. As it was previously remarked, it was not possible for the teachers

taking part in the current study to learn the 21st century skills and the 4C skills in their B.A and M.A. education. Therefore, in-service training opportunities provided by the institutions play a crucial role in enlightening the instructors. These trainings can be in the form of seminars or workshops to provide necessary content knowledge. Also, classroom observations can be arranged to enable the teachers to learn from each other in terms of alternative ways to address the 4Cs in their language classes. Similarly, weekly or monthly newsletters about the field and the target skills can be published in the institution or shared with the instructors to keep them informed about the recent developments.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1. Summary of the Study

The current study aimed at investigating the experiences and perceptions of the English language instructors, preparatory school students and stakeholders of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation and Professional Development units in relation to the instructional practices of the 4C skills in the preparatory school of a private university in Ankara, Turkey.

According to the study findings related to the instructors, they were found to have adequate knowledge about the 4C skills even though they did not receive specific training during their B.A and M.A education. They perceived the 4Cs significant for learners for their development as they recognized the 4Cs as life skills and believed them to contribute to language learning experiences of the students especially in writing, speaking and grammar. They managed to integrate all of these skills in their English lessons throughout the semester and they stated to prioritize and integrate communication and critical thinking more frequently when compared to other two skills. They also found authentic themes and topics and utilizing web tools as convenient ways to reinforce these skills. However, they experienced a number of challenges during the time; and these challenges included obligation to follow a pre-determined curriculum, lack of learner motivation and learner characteristics and attitudes and lower level of student proficiency. In order to ensure further integration of the 4C skills in EFL classrooms, the instructors recommended having adjustments in the curriculum and promoting in-service training about the target skills.

In addition, preparatory school students were revealed to have inadequate knowledge about the 4C skills. When they were introduced with the 21st century skills and the 4C skills, they gained positive attitudes and stated the skills to be beneficial for their

personal development as these are life skills and the skills can contribute to peer-learning and permanent learning by assuring easier retention. Moreover, they highlighted that certain language skills such as speaking, grammar and writing can be fostered with the help of practicing the 4C skills. As to their instructional practices, they believed to find chances to practice some of the skills in the English language lessons while some of them remained in the background. The students prioritized communication as the most important skill which was followed by critical thinking and creative thinking in the second place being found equally significant. Regarding their current opportunities to learn and practice the 4C skills, their preferences actually were in line with their practices: they can work on communication and critical thinking more often in their English classes when compared to other skills. In order to practice the 4C skills, they found it most beneficial to take part in the activities encouraging them to work in pairs or groups to create a product or project and then present it to the class. However, lack of student motivation, exam oriented studying and curriculum appeared to be the major obstacles for students to learn and practice the 4C skill. In order to reinforce the integration of these skills in language classes, students recommended adapting more authentic and engaging tasks and having a specific course for practicing the 4Cs.

As the last facet of the current study, institutional aspects in relation to the units of Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation and Professional Development were under investigation about the place of the 4C skill in these units. Initially, 4C skills were perceived to be highly important skills by all of the units. Regarding instructional implications of the 4C skills in each unit, the findings implied that the 4C skills were a part of the preparatory school curriculum to some extent (mostly as background competencies) taking place in the course books, portfolio tasks and extra activities; and critical thinking is the prominent skill in these contexts. Also, for measurement and evaluation processes, although the 4C skills did not have a significant impact on the students' overall final grade, these skills were assessed as a part of the portfolio tasks, writing and speaking exams and in some of the reading and comprehension and inference questions. Critical thinking and communication were revealed as the foreground skills that are evaluated throughout the semester, but collaboration was not assessed in these examinations. Professional Development Unit, on the other hand, did not prioritise the 4C skills for the

instructors' professional and personal development, but the instructors were provided with the chances to work on these skills as individual competencies in several areas such as in the induction programs and organizational trainings. In these contexts, collaboration was the most frequently emphasized skill which was followed by critical thinking. With regards to suggestions for further integration, organizing student clubs and project based tasks, adapting formative assessment methods, increasing the impact of the 4Cs on students' final grade, organizing workshops and classroom observations for the instructors were recommended.

To conclude, in the light of the findings presented in this study, English language instructors and students can be informed about the significance of the 4C skills, their contributions to learners along with possible and beneficial tasks and activities to address these skills in EFL classrooms and the areas needing improvement to foster 4C skills integration. Moreover, it is also possible to unveil the possible challenges that the students and teachers may face while implementing the 4C skills in their language classes and be prepared for these obstacles. The recommendations implied in the study can also shed light for those who are willing to bring the 4C skill into their classes to reinforce the language learning experiences of the students. Apart from these, several implications in relation to curriculum, testing and assessment processes and professional development areas for the teachers can be developed to foster the 4C skill integration in the educational implementations.

6.2. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The current study was a small scale study, which is rich in qualitative data, and it provided in depth analysis of the subject matter by exploring the perceptions of instructors who have different experience years and students who study in different class levels. However, the data gathered from a single university may not represent the situation in a broad sense. Thus, in order to gain more comprehensive results, quantitative approaches can be adopted to reach out more participants to investigate the situation and obtain more generalizable findings. Also, the study was conducted in a private university context in Ankara, Turkey, and the participants were invited to take part in the study by utilizing convenience and criterion sampling methods. If a similar study is conducted in a state school or in a number of different schools a

different region, different results may be obtained in relation to the integration of the 4C skills in EFL classes.

Similarly, the current study was carried out in the preparatory school of the university with preparatory school students and instructors; and all the implications that were revealed and discussed belonged to this context. Therefore, further studies can be carried out to explore the 4C skills integration in the departmental courses, specifically in Foreign Language Education departments.

Finally, the main data in this study were gathered through the interviews with the participants and it was supported with secondary data namely the sample activity documents provided by the instructors. Further studies can include classroom observations, field notes and lesson plans to produce a clearer picture of how the 4C skills are integrated into EFL classrooms.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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T: +90 312 210 22 91
F: +90 312 210 79 09
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Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu 27 OCAK 2023

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAİK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç.Dr. Perihan SAVAS

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Fatma Kapkır Acarbulut'un "Teaching 21st Century Skills in EFL Classrooms: An Investigation of Teacher, Student and Institutional Perspectives on the Instructional Practices of 4C Skills" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek 0090-ODTÜİAEK-2023 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Prof. Dr. Sibel KAZAK BERUMENT
Başkan

Prof. Dr. İsmail AKÇOMAK
Üye

Doç. Dr. Ali Emre Turgut
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVINÇ
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye

B. INFORMED CONSENT FORM OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee

Informed Consent Form: The Essentials

Teaching 21st Century Skills in EFL Classrooms: An Investigation of Teacher, Student, and Institutional Perspectives on the Instructional Practices of 4C Skills

Focus Group Participants

This study is conducted by Fatma Kapkır, M.A. student at Middle East Technical University, English Language Teaching department, as a part of Master Thesis under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Perihan Savaş.

This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the instructional practices and perceptions of English language instructors, preparatory school students, and other members of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university in relation to teaching 4C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and communication) in EFL classrooms.

The focus group discussion will take approximately 30-45 minutes and voice recordings will be kept during the session. In this session, you are kindly requested to review the research questions and based on your experiences, perceptions and ideas, brainstorm and offer possible interview questions that can be directed to the participants.

Participation in this study is on voluntary basis, and no personal identification information is required. Participants are free to withdraw at any time they would like. The answers will be kept confidential and will only be evaluated by the researcher; the data obtained from this interview will only be used for scientific purposes.

If you have any questions related to the study, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers.

Name Surname

Date

Signature

C. INFORMED CONSENT FORM- INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Middle East Technical University Human Subjects Ethics Committee Informed Consent Form: The Essentials

Teaching 21st Century Skills in EFL Classrooms: An Investigation of Teacher, Student, and Institutional Perspectives on the Instructional Practices of 4C Skills

Interview Participants

This study is conducted by Fatma Kapkır, M.A. student at Middle East Technical University, English Language Teaching department, as a part of Master Thesis under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Perihan Savaş.

This study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the instructional practices and perceptions of English language instructors, preparatory school students, and other members of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units of the university in relation to teaching 4C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, collaboration, and communication) in EFL classrooms.

The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes and voice recordings will be kept during the session. In this interview, you are requested to respond to a set of open-ended questions (9 questions for teachers, 9 questions for students and 5 questions for each member of the Curriculum Development, Measurement & Evaluation, and Professional Development units) which aim to explore your perceptions, experiences, and suggestions in relation to the instructional practices of 4C skills in EFL classrooms.

Participation in this study is on voluntary basis, and no personal identification information is required. Participants are free to withdraw at any time they would like. The answers will be kept confidential and will only be evaluated by the researcher; the data obtained from this interview will only be used for scientific purposes.

If you have any questions related to the study, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers.

Name Surname

Date

Signature

D. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM FOR STUDENTS

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

STUDENTS

Age: _____

Gender:

Male

Female

LGBTQ+

Prefer not to say

Proficiency level:

Elementary

Intermediate

Upper-intermediate/advanced

The high school that you graduated from: _____

University Exam Score: _____

GPA: _____

E. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS IN ENGLISH

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

STUDENTS

1. What do you know about 4C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication and collaboration) and learning these skills in language classes?
2. How beneficial do you find it to learn and practice these skills for your personal and academic improvement?
3. How can learning 4C skills affect your academic achievement in English language learning?
4. To what extent do you have a chance to learn and practice 4skills in your English lessons?
5. What kind of activities/materials that you cover in your English language lessons do you think are helpful for you to learn and practice these skills?
6. Which skill of the 4C would you like to/do you work more on as a part of your classes?
7. How do you evaluate your role as a learner in learning and practicing these skills in your lessons? What do you yourself do in that aspect? How much of this process rely on the student effort and how much of it depends on the teacher?
8. What could be the possible obstacles to learning & practicing these skills in your English language classes? What would you suggest to overcome these?
9. What do you suggest to do in the future to reinforce the integration of 4C skills in English language classes?

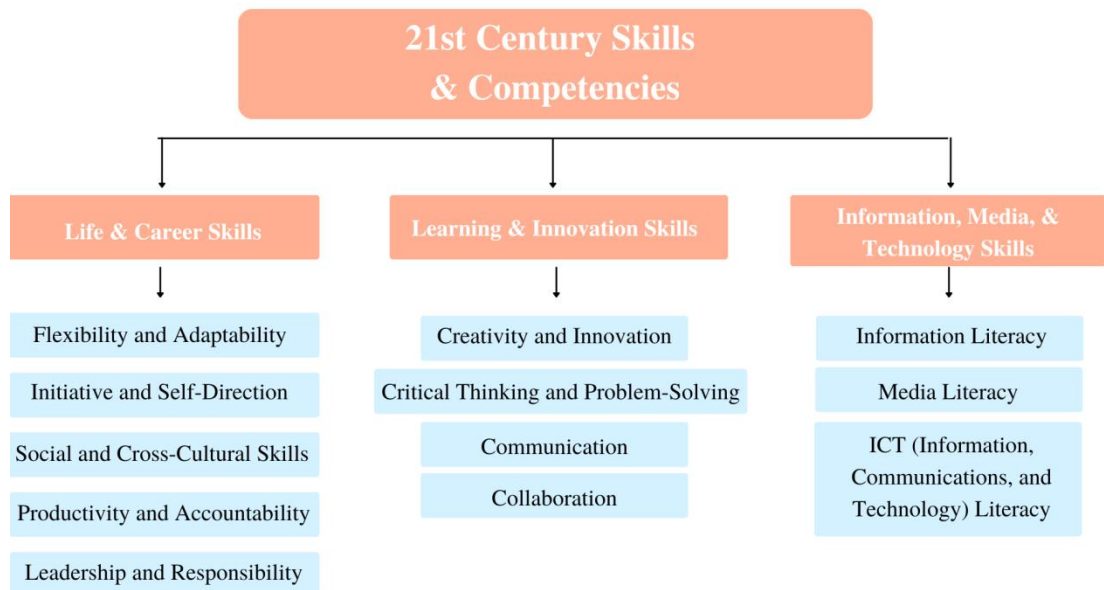
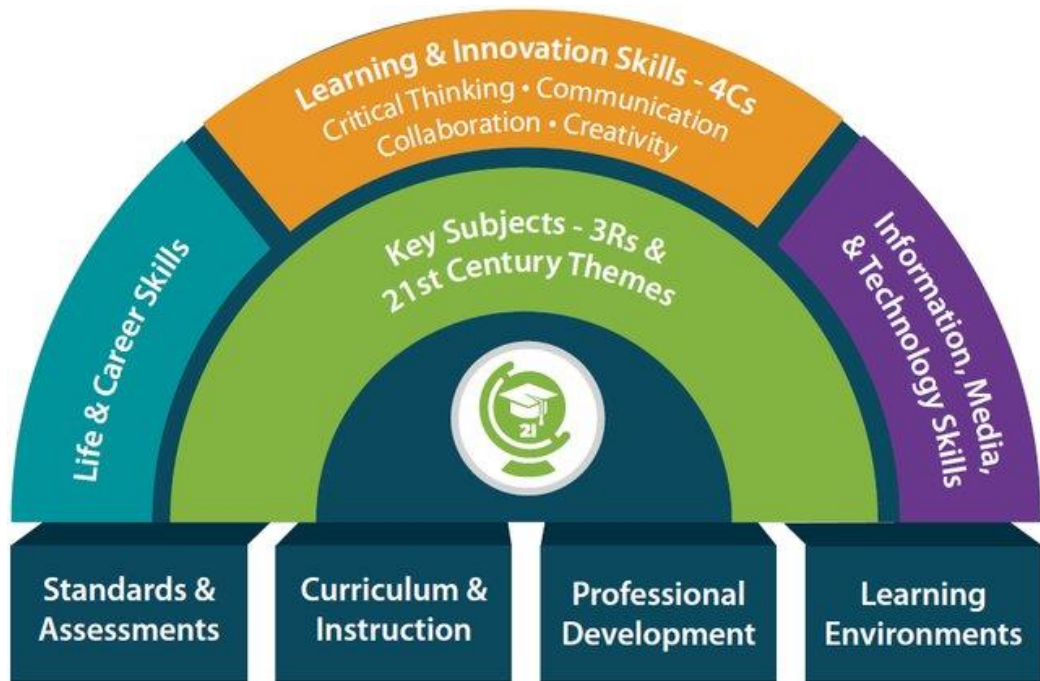
F. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS IN TURKISH

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

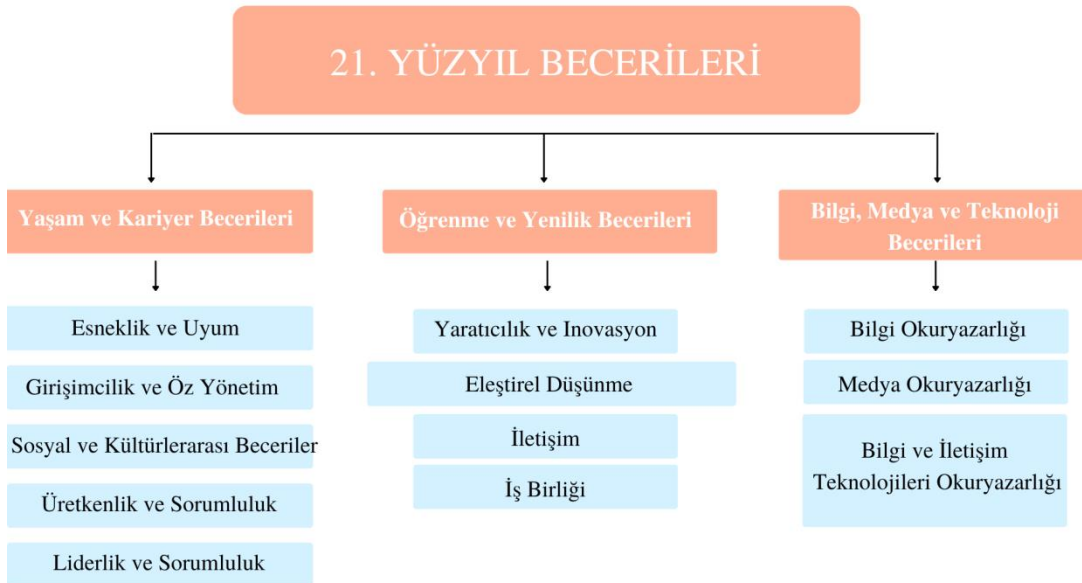
ÖĞRENCİLER

1. 4C becerileri (eleştirel düşünme, yaratıcı düşünme, iletişim ve işbirliği) ve bu becerileri dil sınıflarında öğrenme hakkında neler biliyorsunuz?
2. Kişisel ve akademik gelişiminiz için bu becerileri öğrenmeyi ve uygulamayı ne kadar faydalı buluyorsunuz?
3. 4C becerilerini öğrenmek, İngilizce derslerinizdeki akademik başarıınızı nasıl etkileyebilir?
4. İngilizce derslerinizde ne ölçüde 4C becerilerini öğrenme ve uygulama şansı buluyorsunuz?
5. İngilizce derslerinizde ele aldığımız ne tür etkinliklerin/materyallerin bu becerileri öğrenmenize ve uygulamanıza yardımcı olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
6. Derslerinizde 4C becerilerinin hangisi üzerinde daha çok çalışmak isterdiniz/çalışıyorsunuz?
7. Bir öğrenci olarak bu becerilerin öğrenilmesi ve derslerinizde uygulanmasındaki rolünüzü nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? Bu açıdan kendinizin neler yapıyorsunuz? Bu sürecin ne kadarı öğrencinin çabasına, ne kadarı öğretmene bağlıdır?
8. İngilizce derslerinizde bu becerileri öğrenmenin ve pratik yapmanın önündeki olası engeller neler olabilir? Bunları aşmak için ne önerirsiniz?
9. 4C becerilerinin İngilizce dil sınıflarına entegrasyonunu güçlendirmek için gelecekte ne yapmayı önerirsiniz?

G. THE DOCUMENT INTRODUCING THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS TO THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE TIME OF THE INTERVIEWS (ENGLISH)



H. THE DOCUMENT INTRODUCING THE 21ST CENTURY SKILLS TO THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE TIME OF THE INTERVIEWS (TURKISH)



I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM-INSTRUCTORS

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

TEACHERS

Age: _____

Gender:

Male

Female

LGBTQ+

Prefer not to say

Departments that you studied:

B.A.: _____

M.A.: _____

PhD.: _____

How many years of experience do you have in the field? : _____

How many years of experience do you have in this institution? : _____

J. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS (ENGLISH)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

TEACHERS

1. What do you know about 4C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication and collaboration) and teaching these skills in language classes?
2. How do you evaluate the university education that you received in terms of learning & teaching these skills in language lessons?
3. What do you think about the significance of teaching 4C skills as a part English language classes?
4. What is your opinion about the possible impact of learning these skills on student achievement regarding language learning?
5. To what extent can you integrate 4C skills in your classes?
6. Do you prioritize any of them over the others depending on the circumstances? If yes, what affects your choice?
7. What kind of materials, activities and tasks do you adopt into your English language lessons in order to reinforce 4C skills of the students? Can you describe/provide any samples?
8. What could be the possible obstacles to integrating these skills into your English language classes? What would you suggest to overcome these?
9. What do you recommend to do to reinforce the integration of 4C skills in English language lessons in the future?

K. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS (TURKISH)

GÖRÜŞME SORULARI

ÖĞRETMENLER

1. 4C becerileri (eleştirel düşünme, yaratıcı düşünme, iletişim ve işbirliği) ve bu becerilerin dil sınıflarında öğretilmesi hakkında ne biliyorsunuz?
2. Aldığınız üniversite eğitimi dil derslerinde bu becerilerin öğrenilmesi ve öğretilmesi açısından nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
3. 4C becerilerini İngilizce derslerinin bir parçası olarak öğretmenin önemi hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
4. Bu becerileri öğrenmenin dil öğrenimi ile ilgili öğrenci başarısı üzerindeki olası etkisi hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
5. 4C becerilerini derslerinize ne ölçüde entegre edebiliyorsunuz?
6. Koşullara bağlı olarak bu becerilerden herhangi birine diğerlerine kıyasla öncelik verdiğiniz durumlar oluyor mu? Cevabınız evet ise, seçiminizi neler etkiler?
7. Öğrencilerin 4C becerilerini pekiştirmek için İngilizce derslerinizde ne tür materyaller, etkinlikler ve görevler uyguluyorsunuz? Herhangi bir örneği tanımlayabilir/verebilir misiniz?
8. Bu becerileri İngilizce derslerinize entegre etmenin önündeki olası engeller neler olabilir? Bunları aşmak için ne önerirsiniz?
9. Gelecekte 4C becerilerinin İngilizce dil derslerine entegrasyonunu pekiştirmek için ne yapmayı önerirsiniz?

L. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM – UNIT MEMBERS

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

UNIT MEMBERS

Age: _____

Gender:

Male

Female

LGBTQ+

Prefer not to say

Departments that you studied:

B.A.: _____

M.A.: _____

PhD.: _____

How many years of experience do you have in the field? : _____

How many years of experience do you have in this institution? : _____

The unit that you work in: _____

How many years of experience do you have in the unit? : _____

M. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR UNIT MEMBERS (ENGLISH)

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT

1. What are the main objectives that are taken into consideration while preparing the curriculum for a semester or an academic year?
2. How significant do you think it is to integrate 4C skills into the academic programs of the preparatory school?
3. What is the place of 4C skills in the curriculum, aims and outcomes of the courses? How do you manage to address these skills in the instructional practices?
4. How would you evaluate the proportion of 4C skills integrated in? Are they equally addressed in the curriculum or are any of them given more room?
5. What kind of implications (in-class tasks, assignments, term projects etc.) can be developed in order to improve the integration of 4C skills into the curriculum/instructional practices?

MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION UNIT

1. What are the main objectives that are taken into consideration while developing testing and assessment tools for the preparatory school education?
2. How significant do you think it is to assess 4C skills of the students as a part of the measurement & evaluation processes?
3. What is the place of 4C skills in the measurement & evaluation procedures? How do you/do you manage to evaluate these skills of the students as a part of their academic achievement?
4. How would you evaluate the proportion of 4C skills that are integrated in the measurement & evaluation processes of the students? Are they all equally addressed in the assessment procedures or are any of them given a priority?
5. What kind of implications can be developed in order to improve the integration of 4C skills in the measurement & evaluation procedures?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT

1. What are the main focuses that are taken into consideration while arranging events/workshops/meetings/projects for the professional development of the instructors?
2. How significant do you think it is for the instructors to be informed 4C skills and how to integrate them into their classes?
3. What is the place of 4C skills in the professional development procedures of the unit? How do you/do you manage to inform & improve the instructors based on these skills in relation to instructional practices?
4. How would you evaluate the importance given to addressing 4C skills as a part of the professional development? Are they equally emphasized or are any of them given a priority?
5. What kind of implications can be developed in order to inform, improve and encourage the instructors for the integration of 4C skills in the instructional practices?

N. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR UNIT MEMBERS (TURKISH)

MÜFREDAT GELİŞTİRME BİRİMİ

1. Bir yarıyıl veya bir akademik yıl için müfredat hazırlanırken dikkate alınan temel hedefler nelerdir?
2. 4C becerilerini hazırlık okulunun akademik programlarına entegre etmenin ne kadar önemli olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
3. 4C becerilerinin müfredattaki yeri nedir? Öğretim uygulamalarında bu becerilere nasıl yer veriyorsunuz?
4. Müfredatta/sınıf içi uygulamalarda yer verilen 4C becerilerinin oranını nasıl değerlendirirsiniz? Müfredatta eşit olarak mı ele alınıyorlar yoksa herhangi birine daha fazla yer veriliyor mu?
5. 4C becerilerinin müfredata/ders içi etkinliklere entegrasyonunu geliştirmek için ne tür uygulamalar (sınıf içi görevler, ödevler, dönem projeleri vb.) geliştirilebilir?

ÖLÇME & DEĞERLENDİRME BİRİMİ

1. Hazırlık eğitimi için ölçme ve değerlendirme araçları geliştirilirken dikkate alınan temel hedefler nelerdir?
2. Ölçme ve değerlendirme sürecinin bir parçası olarak, öğrencilerin 4C becerilerini ölçmek sizce ne kadar önemli?
3. Ölçme ve değerlendirme süreçlerinde 4C becerilerinin yeri nedir? Öğrencilerin bu becerilerini akademik başarılarının bir parçası olarak değerlendiriyor musunuz/nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?
4. Öğrencilerin ölçme ve değerlendirme süreçlerine entegre edilen 4C becerilerinin oranını nasıl değerlendirirsiniz? Bunlar, değerlendirme süreçlerinde eşit olarak ele alınıyor mu veya herhangi birine öncelik veriliyor mu?
5. 4C becerilerinin ölçme ve değerlendirme süreçlerine entegrasyonunu artırmak için ne tür uygulamalar geliştirilebilir?

MESLEKİ GELİŞİM BİRİMİ

1. Öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimine yönelik etkinlikler/çalıştaylar/toplantılar/projeler düzenlenirken dikkate alınan temel /odak notaları nelerdir?
2. Öğretmenlerin 4C becerileri hakkında bilgi sahibi olmaları ve bunları derslerine nasıl entegre edeceklerini bilmeleri sizce ne kadar önemli?
3. Birimin yönettiği mesleki gelişim süreçlerinde 4C becerilerinin yeri nedir? Öğretmenleri bu becerilere dayalı olarak öğretim uygulamalarıyla ilgili olarak bilgilendirmeyi ve geliştirmeyi nasıl başarıyorsunuz/yönetiyorsunuz?
4. Mesleki gelişimin bir parçası olarak 4C becerilerinin ele alınma oranını değerlendiriyorsunuz? Eşit derecede vurgulanıyorlar mı veya herhangi birine öncelik veriliyor mu?
5. 4C becerilerinin öğretim uygulamalarına entegrasyonu konusunda öğretmenleri bilgilendirmek, geliştirmek ve teşvik etmek için ne tür uygulamalar geliştirilebilir?

O. SAMPLE ANALYSIS ON MAXQDA

The screenshot displays the MAXQDA software interface. At the top, there is a menu bar with 'Analiz' and 'Raporlar' tabs. Below the menu bar is a toolbar containing various icons for document management and analysis. The main workspace is divided into two panels. The left panel shows a transcript with 80 paragraphs. The right panel shows a list of identified obstacles, including 'Preparatory school program as an obstacle', 'Lack of student motivation as an obstacle', and 'education system which shaped the learner habits (passive recipients) as an obstacle'.

Analiz Raporlar

Belge Sistemi Kod Sistemi Belge Tarayıcısı Geri Çağrılan Bölümler Düzen Görünümü Günlük Ekip Çalışması Projeleri birleştir Projeyi Farklı Kaydet Projeyi Kaydet ve Anonimleştir Etkinleştirilmiş Belgelerden Proje Harici Dosyalar Arşiv Verisi

196 Paragraflar

71 00:22:57 Instructor 5

72 Or the schedule. Of course, we are bound to the course books and we have a programme as service in your hands so you don't have a enough... Actually, if you were free, it would be difficult. In that way, we have to prepare more and more for each class, so that's why it may not be that practical. But I think the syllabus and the course books are well, I think they are good. So you don't need to prepare anything extra or if you, even if you don't prepare anything extra, it is enough, I think, for addressing these 4C skills.

73 00:23:39 Interviewer

74 For the curriculum and the materials you say.

75 00:23:42 Instructor 5

76 I'm thinking of any other obstacles. Maybe the way of their students motivation in terms of thinking critically or creating something, especially they may be a little lazy or maybe unmotivated about maybe participating in some. The exercises or activities, the student motivation in order to it's maybe difficult to motivate them in order to make an effort.

77 00:24:11 Interviewer

78 Do you have any suggestions to overcome them like or the time constraints or the schedule or the student personalities?

79 00:24:21 Instructor 5

80 Maybe also the another obstacle, maybe our education system in general, because critical thinking doesn't come up in one night. So the students are from primary school, in from nursery school. They they are not used to thinking critically, I think That's why it may be difficult to expect so they cannot get it or they cannot find it easy to integrate on its thinking.

Preparatory school program as an obstacle

Lack of student motivation as an obstacle

education system which shaped the learner habits (passive recipients) as an obstacle

P. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETİLEN SINIFLARDA 21. YÜZYIL BECERİLERİNİN ÖĞRETİMİ: 4C BECERİLERİNİN ÖĞRETİM UYGULAMALARINA İLİŞKİN ÖĞRETMEN, ÖĞRENCİ VE KURUM ALGILARININ İNCELENMESİ

1. GİRİŞ

İçinde yaşadığımız çağın değişen gereklilikleri ve dijital çağa geçişin bir sonucu olarak birçok yeni iş ve çalışma alanının ortaya çıkmasıyla birlikte, Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce öğretilen sınıflarda öğretim yöntem, strateji ve tekniklerinin yanı sıra eğitim hedeflerinde de bir takım değişikliklere tanık olmak kaçınılmaz hale gelmiştir. Öncelikle, Higho'nun (2016) da belirttiği gibi, 20 yıl önce var olan sınıflarda ders vermiyoruz, o yıllarda yaşayan öğrencilere ders veren öğretmenler değiliz ya da o dönemde popüler olan ve doğru olduğuna inanılan yöntem ve teknikleri artık kullanmıyoruz. Bunların yanı sıra, örneğin 2012'deki mesleklerin birçoğu 2002'de yoktu; tıpkı bugünün öğrencilerinin gelecekte sahip olacağı mesleklerin birçoğunun bugün var olmaması gibi. Dolayısıyla öğrencileri 21. yüzyıla hazırlamak sadece teknolojiyle değil, küresel ekonomiye yönelik becerilerle de ilgilidir (Higho, 2016). Ayrıca, okullarda öğretilebilecek beceri, davranış ve eğilimlerin sınırlı olması, öğrencilerin 21. yüzyıl için öğrenmeyi öğrenme konusunda yönlendirilmeleri gerekliliğini ortaya çıkarmakta (Saavedra& Opfer, 2012) ve öğrencilerimizin değişen koşullara uyum sağlayabilmeleri için çağın gerektirdiği becerilere uygun olarak eğitilmelerini ve hazırlanmalarını zorunlu kılmaktadır.

Partnership for 21st Century Learning, 21. yüzyıl becerilerini "öğrencilerin iş ve yaşamda başarılı olabilmeleri için sahip olmaları gereken beceri, bilgi ve uzmanlık" olarak tanımlamaktadır (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009, s.1). 21. yüzyıl becerileri tek başına öğretilen ayrı beceriler olmayıp, alan bilgisi, özel beceriler, uzmanlık ve okuryazarlıkların bir kombinasyonudur (Partnership for 21st Century

Skills, 2009). Bu çerçevede 21. yüzyıl becerileri "Yaşam ve Kariyer Becerileri", "Öğrenme ve Yenilik Becerileri" ve "Bilgi, Medya ve Teknoloji Becerileri" olmak üzere üç ana grup altında toplanmaktadır (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019a). Öğrenme ve yenilik becerilerinin alt bölümleriyle ilgili olarak, çerçeve 4C becerileri olarak adlandırılan dört ana beceriden oluşan bir set sunmaktadır; bunlar "yaratıcılık, eleştirel düşünme, iletişim ve işbirliği" olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2019b). Bu beceriler, bireyler tarafından bir meslekten diğerine veya bir görevden diğerine aktarılabilen "taşınabilir" beceriler olarak kabul edilebilir (Pardede, 2020).

Son yıllarda, giderek daha fazla ülke, 21. yüzyıl becerilerini programlarına uyarlamak için müfredatlarını yeniden tasarlamaktadır (Bedir, 2019). Bu uyarlamalar, İngilizce derslerinin öğretimsel uygulamaları üzerinde de önemli bir etkiye sahiptir. Günümüz sınıfları, dinleme, konuşma, okuma, yazma, dil bilgisi ve kelime bilgisi gibi temel dil becerilerini öğretmenin yanı sıra, öğrencileri eleştirel ve yaratıcı düşünceleri ve kendilerini daha etkili bir şekilde ifade etmeleri gereken daha etkileşimli, iletişimsel ve işbirliğine dayalı etkinliklere dahil etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Sınıf içi uygulamaların yanı sıra, dil öğrenimi ve özellikle 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonu, eğitimi güçlendirmek, standardize etmek ve etkili bir entegrasyon sağlamak için müfredat geliştirme, ölçme ve değerlendirme birimleri ve öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimini gibi farklı eğitim paydaşlarının katkılarını gerektirmektedir. Ağaoğlu & Demir'in (2020) de belirttiği gibi, öğretmenlerin alan bilgilerini öğrencilere dersler ve ders kitapları aracılığıyla aktardığı "aktarım" modeli, dünyanın pek çok yerinde hala en sık kullanılan eğitim stratejisidir ve bu da öğretmenlerin bu alandaki yetersiz alan bilgisinin yanı sıra gerekli teknolojik araçların eksikliğinin bir sonucu olabilir. Ayrıca, 21. yüzyıl becerilerinin ölçülmesinin kavramsal bilginin ölçülmesinden daha zor olduğu ve bunun da öğretmenlerin bu becerilere verdiği önceliğin azalmasına yol açtığı belirtilmektedir (Ağaoğlu ve Demir, 2020).

Bu bağlamda, öğretim süreçlerine dâhil olan farklı aktörlerin ve etkili faktörlerin bir arada ele alınarak mevcut durumun bütüncül bir şekilde incelenmesi büyük önem taşımaktadır. İlgili alan yazında, İngilizce derslerinde 4C becerilerinin bir bütün olarak ya da eleştirel düşünme veya yaratıcılık gibi belirli becerilere odaklanarak

öğretilmesine yönelik öğretmen tutum ve algılarını araştıran çok sayıda çalışmaya (Tsourapa, 2018; Tuzlukova vd., 2018; Şahin ve Han, 2020; Akyıldız ve Çelik, 2020; Tran, 2021) rastlamak mümkündür. Bu çalışmalar, 4C becerilerinin İngilizce öğretmenleri için algılanan önemini, bu becerilerin öğretiminin öğrencilerin yaşamlarına olası katkılarını ve 4C'lerin öğrencilerin dil öğrenme deneyimleri sırasında akademik başarılarını teşvik etmek için nasıl faydalı olabileceğini araştırmıştır. Ancak, öğretmenlerin öğretim uygulamalarını ve öğretim deneyimlerini ortaya koyma ve 4C becerilerini etkili bir şekilde ele almak için benimsedikleri yöntem ve stratejileri açıklama konusunda sınırlı kalmışlardır. Benzer şekilde, yine öğretmen deneyimleriyle ilgili olarak, Saleh (2019) ve Fajriah & Septiyanti (2021) tarafından yapılan çalışmalarda, araştırmacılar İngilizce öğretmenlerinin 4C becerilerini İngilizce derslerinin bileşenleri olarak entegre ederken yaşadıkları zorluklar üzerinde durmuşlardır. Ayrıca, Kurt & Önalın (2018) ve Bedir (2019), İngilizce öğretmen adaylarının 4C becerilerinin algılanan önemi ve bu becerileri gelecekteki EFL sınıflarına entegre etmek için ne kadar başarılı bir şekilde hazırlandıkları konusundaki algılarını araştırarak odaklarını farklı bir noktaya çevirmiştir.

Öğretmenlerin yanı sıra, sayıca daha az olmakla birlikte, literatürde öğrencilerin İngilizce derslerinin bir parçası olarak 4C becerilerini öğrenme ve uygulamaya ilişkin algı ve deneyimleri üzerine yapılmış çeşitli örnek çalışmalar da bulunmaktadır (Landon, 2019; Puangpunsi, 2021; Duong & Hoang, 2021, Ekizer & Yıldırım, 2023). Bu çalışmalardan bazıları, 4C becerilerini öğrenmenin öğrenci perspektifindeki önemine ışık tutmuş, öğretim uygulamalarını ve öğrencilerin derslerinde bu becerileri edinmeleri için mevcut fırsatları ortaya koymuştur. Bunlara ek olarak, Monib (2023) ve Ratama vd. (2021) tarafından yapılanlar gibi bazı çalışmalar, dil öğrenme bağlamlarında 4C becerileriyle ilgili hem öğrenci hem de öğretmen tutumlarını ve algılarını bir araya getirmeyi amaçlamakta ve entegrasyon sıklığını, derslerde en yaygın olarak entegre edilen becerileri ve her iki katılımcı grubun yaşadığı zorlukları keşfetmektedir.

İngiliz dili öğretimi bağlamlarında 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonu üzerinde etkili olan konunun son yönü için, müfredat, ölçme ve değerlendirme ve öğretmenlerin hizmet içi mesleki gelişim fırsatları ile ilgili alanlar da araştırma için önem arz etmektedir..

Ancak, bu alanlarla doğrudan bağlantılı olarak yapılan çalışmalar literatürde oldukça azdır. Bu üç birim arasında ise müfredat daha fazla araştırmaya konu olan bir alan olarak görünmektedir. Örneğin Tamela & Dwi (2021), 4C becerilerinin 7. sınıf İngilizce dersine entegrasyonunun dağılımını analiz etmeye önem vermiş ve Ataberk & Mirici (2022) de İngilizce öğretmeni yetiştirme programlarının 4C becerisini müfredatlarına ne ölçüde entegre ettiğini araştırmıştır. Bunun dışında, ölçme ve değerlendirme alanında da öğrencilerin 4C becerilerinin değerlendirilmesiyle ilgili daha az sayıda araştırma yürütülmüştür. Marwa ve diğerleri (2023) tarafından yapılan araştırma, sadece ders müfredatlarında değil, aynı zamanda üniversitedeki sekiz farklı İngilizce dersinin sınav belgelerinde de 4C becerilerinin entegrasyon düzeyini değerlendirerek bu boşluğu telafi etmektedir. Bu kategorinin son ayağı olan mesleki gelişim alanı, araştırmaya değer çok önemli bir konudur. Alan yazında öğretmenlerin 4C ile ilgili tutum ve deneyimlerini inceleyen çok sayıda çalışma bulunmaktadır ve bu çalışmalarda mesleki gelişim, İngilizce öğretmenleri için üzerinde durulması ve desteklenmesi gereken bir nokta olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Bu noktaya kadar verilen örneklerden de görülebileceği üzere, ilgili literatür, İngilizce sınıflarında 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonu ile ilgili olarak farklı katılımcı gruplarının katkısıyla ve konunun farklı yönlerine eğilerek çok sayıda çalışma sunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, bu farklı yönlerini aynı anda inceleyecek ve 4C becerilerinin İngilizce sınıflarındaki öğretim uygulamalarına bütünsel bir bakış sunacak daha kapsamlı çalışmalara hala ihtiyaç vardır.

Bu sebeple bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretim görevlilerinin, hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin ve Program Geliştirme, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme ve Mesleki Gelişim birimlerinin paydaşlarının, bir yükseköğretim kurumundaki İngilizce dersliklerinde 4C becerilerinin (eleştirel düşünme, yaratıcı düşünme, işbirliği ve iletişim) öğretim uygulamalarına ilişkin algılarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Mevcut çalışmanın hedeflerine ulaşmak için ise aşağıda belirtilen sorulara cevap bulmak amaçlanmıştır.

1. Bir yükseköğretim kurumunda görev yapan İngilizce öğretim görevlilerinin, İngilizce derslerinde 4C becerilerinin öğretim uygulamalarına ilişkin algıları nelerdir?

1.1. 4C becerileri hakkındaki mevcut bilgileri nedir?

- 1.2. Bu becerileri sınıflarına entegre etmeye ne kadar önem veriyorlar?
- 1.3. 4C becerilerini İngilizce derslerine ne ölçüde entegre edebiliyorlar?
- 1.4. Ne tür materyaller, etkinlikler ve görevler kullanıyorlar?
- 1.5. Karşılaştıkları zorluklar nelerdir?
2. Hazırlık okulunda okuyan öğrencilerin İngilizce derslerinde 4C becerilerini öğrenme ve uygulama konusundaki algıları nelerdir?
 - 2.1. 4C becerileri hakkındaki mevcut bilgileri nedir?
 - 2.2. İngilizce derslerinde bu becerileri öğrenmeyi ve uygulamayı ne kadar faydalı buluyorlar?
 - 2.3. Derslerinde bu becerileri öğrenmek ve uygulamak için mevcut fırsatları hakkındaki görüşleri nelerdir?
 - 2.4. 4C becerilerini uygulamak için derslerinde ne tür etkinlikler olmasını önerirler?
 - 2.5. Karşılaştıkları engeller nelerdir?
3. Üniversitenin Program Geliştirme, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme ve Mesleki Gelişim birimlerindeki paydaşların 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonuna ilişkin algıları nelerdir?

2. YÖNTEM

Bu çalışma, Ankara'da özel bir üniversitenin hazırlık okulundaki öğretim görevlilerinin, hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin ve Program Geliştirme, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme ve Mesleki Gelişim birimleri paydaşlarının 4C becerilerinin öğretimine ilişkin deneyim ve algılarını incelemek için keşfedici durum çalışması araştırma yaklaşımı benimseyerek nitel çalışma tasarımını esas almıştır.

Bunun için bu çalışma, 2022-2023 akademik yılı bahar döneminde Ankara'da özel bir yükseköğretim kurumunun hazırlık okulu bağlamında yürütülmüştür. İngilizce derslerinde 21. yüzyıl becerilerinin öğretim uygulamalarına ilişkin kapsamlı sonuçlar

elde etmek amacıyla, bu çalışmada kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme ve ölçüt örnekleme yöntemleri kullanılarak hazırlık okulu öğrencileri (9), öğretim görevlileri (9) ve üniversitenin birim üyeleri (3) olmak üzere üç katılımcı grubuyla görüşülmüştür. Öğrenciler yeterlilik seviyelerine göre seçilmiş olup, A seviyesinden üç öğrenci, B seviyesinden üç öğrenci ve C seviyesinden de üç öğrenci çalışmaya katılmıştır. Ayrıca, öğretmenler de alandaki deneyim yıllarına göre gruplandırılmıştır. Eğitimden üçü 1-3 yıllık deneyime sahip yeni mezun öğretmenler, üçü 3-10 yıllık öğretmenlik deneyimine sahip deneyimli öğretmenler ve üç öğretmen de mesleklerinde 10 yıldan fazla deneyime sahip yetkin öğretmenler olarak gruplandırılmıştır. Son olarak, birim üyeleri ile ilgili olarak, Program Geliştirme Birimi, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Birimi ve Mesleki Gelişim Birimi olmak üzere üç farklı birimden birer üye çalışmada yer almıştır.

Bu araştırmada, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme oturumları aracılığıyla elde edilen nitel veriler ana bilgi kaynağı olmuştur. Çalışmanın güvenilirliğini artırmak için, araştırmacıların destekleyici veriler üretmek için çeşitli kaynaklara, yaklaşımlara, araştırmacılara ve hipotezlere başvurduğu veri üçgenleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır (Creswell, 2013). Bunun için öğrenciler, İngilizce öğretmenler ve üniversitenin birim üyeleriyle ayrı ayrı görüşülmüştür. Görüşmeler yoluyla toplanan verilere ek olarak, çeşitliliği pekiştirmek amacıyla, öğretim elemanlarıyla yapılan görüşmelerin sonunda öğretmenlerin 21. yüzyıl becerilerini öğretmek için yararlandıkları örnek etkinliklere ilişkin dokümanlar da toplanmıştır.

Görüşmelerle ilgili olarak öğrencilere toplam dokuz soru yöneltilmiştir. İlk soru, başta eleştirel düşünme, yaratıcı düşünme, iletişim ve işbirliği olmak üzere 21. yüzyıl becerilerine ilişkin mevcut bilgilerini ve bunların çağrıştırdığı temaları araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu bölümün ardından, katılımcılar konuyla ilgili ne kadar bilgili olurlarsa olsunlar, görüşme süresince tartışmanın ana odağı olacak kavramları ve becerileri özetlemek için hem İngilizce hem de Türkçe versiyonlarında 21. Yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerilerini özetleyen bir sayfalık bir belge kullanılmıştır. Öğrencilerin bu kavramlarla daha önce hiç karşılaşmamış olmaları halinde farkındalıklarını artırmak ya da belirli bir bilgi birikimine sahip olmaları halinde bakış açılarını genişletmek, ayrıca katılımcıları tartışmaya hazırlamak ve görüşmeyi daha anlamlı ve geçerli kılmak amaçlanmıştır. Daha sonraki sorularda öğrencilerden

bu becerileri öğrenmeyi kişisel ve akademik gelişimleri için ne kadar faydalı bulduklarına dair görüşlerini belirtmeleri istenmiş, bu becerileri İngilizce derslerinde ne ölçüde öğrenme ve uygulama şansına sahip oldukları, ne tür materyal ve etkinliklerde yer aldıkları ve bu becerilerden hangilerini öncelikli olarak öğrenmek istedikleri tartışılmıştır. Bu noktaların dışında, bu becerileri öğrenme ve uygulama sürecinde bir öğrenen olarak kendi rollerini değerlendirmeleri, bu amaçla kişisel olarak neler yaptıklarını belirtmeleri istenmiştir. Son olarak, öğrencilerden sınıflarında 4C becerilerinin öğretilmesi ve öğrenilmesinde tecrübe ettikleri olası engelleri belirtmeleri ve bunların üstesinden gelmek ve 4C'lerin EFL derslerine entegrasyonunu güçlendirmek için önerileri istenmiştir.

Öğretmenler için tasarlanan soru seti de öğrencilerin sorularıyla benzer yönleri kapsayan dokuz maddeden oluşmaktadır. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerden yaş, cinsiyet, lisans, yüksek lisans ve doktora programlarında okudukları bölümler, alandaki deneyim yılları ve kurumdaki deneyim yıllarını belirtmelerinin istendiği bilgilendirilmiş onam formları ve demografik bilgi formları hazırlanmıştır. İlk bölüm, öğretmenlerin 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerileri hakkındaki ön bilgilerini keşfetmeyi amaçlamış, ardından bu becerilerin dil derslerinde öğretilmesi açısından aldıkları üniversite eğitimini değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Bu aşamadan sonra, 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerilerine ilişkin temel bilgileri kapsayan doküman öğretmen görüşmeleri sırasında da kullanılmış ve öğretmenlerin 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonuna ilişkin algılarını ve öğretimsel uygulamalarını daha sağlıklı ve anlamlı bir şekilde tartışabilmeleri sağlanmıştır. İlerleyen bölümlerde, öğretmenlere bu becerilerin İngilizce sınıflarında öğretilmesine verdikleri önem, bu becerileri öğrenmenin ve uygulamanın dil öğrenimine ilişkin öğrenci başarısı üzerindeki olası etkisi ve 4C'yi derslerine eşit olarak ya da herhangi birine öncelik vererek ne ölçüde entegre edebildikleri sorulmuştur. Ayrıca, bu bölümde öğretmenlerden derslerinde 4C becerilerini öğretmek için faydalı buldukları materyal ve etkinlikleri tarif etmeleri veya örnek bir materyal sunmaları istenmiştir. Son bölümde, bu becerilerin dil derslerine entegrasyonunun önündeki olası engellerle ilgili öğretmen algıları araştırılmış ve bu zorluklara aşmak için gelecekteki uygulamalara yönelik öğretmen önerileri sorulmuştur.

Son grup mülakat soruları ise Müfredat Geliştirme, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme ve Mesleki Gelişim birimlerinin paydaşlarına yönelik olarak tasarlanmıştır. Her üyeye yöneltilmek üzere, farklı birimler için benzer noktaları ele alan beş soru belirlenmiştir. Birim üyelerinin soruları kişisel olarak cevaplamak yerine temsil ettikleri birim adına yanıt vermeleri istenmiştir. İlk olarak, birim üyelerinden bir akademik yıl için müfredat planlarken, hazırlık okulu eğitimi için ölçme ve değerlendirme araçları geliştirirken ve öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimi için etkinlikler, çalıştaylar veya projeler düzenlerken dikkate aldıkları temel hedefleri açıklamaları istenmiştir. Daha sonra, her üyeden 4C becerilerinin kendi birimlerindeki önemini ve yerini değerlendirmeleri istenmiş, bunları öğretim uygulamalarına ne ölçüde entegre ettikleri sorulmuştur. Ardından bu becerilerin eşit şekilde ele alınıp alınmadığı veya herhangi birine diğerlerinden daha fazla öncelik verilip verilmediğine dair eleştirel bir analiz yapılmıştır. Son bölümde ise 4C birim üyelerinin 4C becerilerinin müfredata, ölçme ve değerlendirme prosedürlerine ve hazırlık okulundaki mesleki gelişim alanlarına entegrasyonunu iyileştirmek için alternatif uygulamalar hakkında görüş ve önerileri sorulmuştur.

Veri analizi sürecinde katılımcı gruplarıyla yürütülen tüm görüşmeler yazıya dökülmüş, öğretmen, öğrenci ve birim üyesi görüşmeleri olarak farklı klasörlerde düzenlenmiş ve kodların oluşturulması için kenar notları alınarak aynı gruba ait katılımcıların algıları arasındaki olası bağlantılar birkaç kez gözden geçirilmiştir. Bu aşamada Strauss & Corbin'in (1996) üç aşamalı kodlama öneren veri kodlama yöntemi uygulanmıştır. İlk aşamada, "verilerin analitik olarak parçalandığı yorumlayıcı süreç" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) olarak tanımlanan açık kodlama yapılmış ve temel kodlar oluşturulmuştur. İkinci aşamada, önceden var olan kodları anlamlı bir şekilde birleştirmek için kategoriler oluşturularak eksnel kodlama uygulanmıştır. Kategoriler oluşturulduktan sonra ise, tüm kategorilerin bir "çekirdek" kategori etrafında birleştirildiği süreç (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) olarak tanımlanan seçici kodlama adımı, kategoriler daha geniş kavramlar oluşturmak ve nihai bulgulara ulaşmak için belli temalar etrafında birleştirilmiştir. Öğretmen ve öğrenci algılarının analizi her bir katılımcı grubu için farklı kod, kategori ve temalar oluşturulmuş, birim üyelerinin analizinde ise her grup için yalnızca bir katılımcı bulunduğundan yalnızca tema ve kategoriler belirlenmiştir.

3. BULGULAR

Öğretmenlerin ön bilgileriyle ilgili olarak, öğretim görevlilerinin çoğunun 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerileri hakkında bilgi sahibi olduğu görülmüştür. Kendilerinden her bir beceriyi tanımlamaları ve açıklamaları istendiğinde, bu beceriler hakkında kapsamlı tanımlamalar ve açıklamalar yapmışlardır. Öğretmenlerin eğitim geçmişine gelince, sonuçlar öğretmenlerin çoğunun lisans veya yüksek lisans eğitimlerinde 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerileri hakkında bir eğitim almadıklarını, ancak 4C becerilerinin bazılarını derslerde bireysel beceriler olarak öğrendiklerini göstermiştir. 4C becerilerinin öğrencilere katkısı konusunda, öğretmenler 4C becerilerini yaşam becerileri olarak algıladıkları ve öğrencileri geleceğine hazırlanmak için bu becerilerle donatılmaları gerektiğini ifade etmiş, İngilizce derslerinde öğrenci katılımını artırmaya, öğrencileri öğrenme süreçlerinde aktif hale getirmeye ve öğrenci motivasyonunu artırmaya katkıda bulunabileceğine inanmaktadır. Bunların yanı sıra 4C üzerinde çalışılarak geliştirilebilecek becerilerin başında yazma becerisi gelirken, bunu dilbilgisi ve konuşma becerileri takip etmektedir. Öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu, dönem boyunca farklı derslerde tüm 4C becerilerini başarılı bir şekilde ele alabildiklerini ifade etmiştir. Bu bağlamda, iletişim, İngilizce derslerinde en sık yer verilen en önemli beceri olarak görülürken, işbirliği ve yaratıcı düşünme, öğretmenler arasında en az ele alınan beceriler olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğretmenlerin yaşadığı zorluklara gelince, önceden belirlenmiş ve yoğun bir müfredatı takip etme zorunluluğu, 4C becerilerini derslere entegre etme fırsatlarını sınırlayan bir engel olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, düşük öğrenci motivasyonu ve yeterlilik seviyesi ve belirli öğrenci karakter ve tutumları 4C becerilerini pekiştirmek için gerekli etkinliklerin uygulanmasını zorlaştırmaktadır. Öğretmenlere 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonunu güçlendirmeye yönelik önerileri sorulduğunda, öğretmenlerin çoğunluğu müfredat düzenlemelerinin yapılması gerektiğini belirtmiş ve hizmet içi eğitim yoluyla bu temaların 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerileri olarak ele alınmasını önermiştir.

Öğrencilerin ön bilgilerine bakıldığında, beceriler hakkında oldukça sınırlı bilgiye sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. 4C becerilerini öğrenmenin olası katkılarına ilişkin öğrenci algıları incelendiğinde ise 4C becerileri öğrenciler tarafından yaşam becerileri olarak algılanmıştır. Aynı zamanda, kalıcı öğrenme ve öğrenilen bilginin

akılda daha kolay kalmasını sağlama ve akran öğrenmesini teşvik etme, öğrenciler tarafından 4C becerilerinin pekiştirileceği özellikler olarak belirtilmiştir. Bunların yanı sıra, 4C becerilerinin edinilmesinin konuşma, yazma ve dilbilgisi gibi farklı dil becerilerini geliştirerek öğrencilerin dil öğrenme deneyimlerine katkıda bulunabileceği ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğrencilerin çoğunluğu, dil sınıflarında bu becerilerin kısmen entegre edildiği konusunda hemfikirdir. Öğrenciler, bu becerileri bazı etkinliklerde uygulama şansı bulurken bazı becerilerin diğerlerine kıyasla daha geri planda kaldığını düşünmektedir. İhtiyaçları ve öncelikleriyle ilgili olarak, öğrenciler yaşamlarında en çok ihtiyaç duydukları becerinin iletişim olduğu ve bunu eleştirel ve yaratıcı düşünmenin takip ettiği konusunda neredeyse fikir birliğine varmışlardır. Öğretim uygulamalarına yönelik olarak, görüşmelerde öğrencilerin 4C becerilerini öğrenme ve uygulama konusundaki ihtiyaçlarının, bu becerilere odaklanan sınıf içi eğitimlerle uyumlu olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. İngilizce sınıflarında 4C becerilerinin geliştirilmesinde öğrenci ve öğretmen rolleri ile ilgili olarak, öğrenciler, 4C'lerin edinilmesinde öğrenciler için yararlı olabilecek görevlerin tanıtılması ve uygulanmasında öğretmenlerin rolünü öğrencilerden daha önemli olarak algılamışlardır. Öğrencilerin 4C'yi öğrenmek ve uygulamak için eğlenceli ve faydalı buldukları örnek etkinliklere gelince, öğrencilerin belirttiği favori aktivitelerde bir ürün, bir kavram ya da bir fikir yaratmak için bir partnerle ya da bir grupla birlikte iş birliği içinde çalışmak, beyin fırtınası yaparak ve yaratıcı düşünerek bu fikri çeşitli yönleriyle geliştirmek yer almaktadır. Bu süreçte öğrencilerin karşılaştığı başlıca zorluklar arasında öğrenci motivasyonu eksikliği, sınav odaklı çalışma ve müfredat yer almaktadır. Olası çözümler için, öğrenciler ilk olarak dil derslerine daha ilgi çekici ve gerçekçi etkinliklerin entegre edilmesini ve özellikle farklı bir derste veya çalışma saatinde bu becerileri uygulamak için daha fazla alan yaratılmasını önermişlerdir.

Mevcut çalışmanın son yönü olarak, Program Geliştirme, Ölçme ve Değerlendirme ve Mesleki Gelişim birimleriyle ilgili kurumsal yönler ve 4C becerilerinin bu birimlerdeki yeri araştırılmıştır. Öncelikle 4C becerileri, tüm birimler tarafından oldukça önemli beceriler olarak algılanmıştır. 4C becerilerinin öğretimsel uygulamaları ile ilgili olarak, bulgular bu becerilerinin hazırlık okulu müfredatının bir parçası olduğunu (çoğunlukla arka plan becerileri olarak), ders kitaplarında, portfolyo görevlerinde ve ekstra etkinliklerde yer aldığını ve eleştirel düşünmenin bu

bağlamlarda öne çıkan beceri olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca, ölçme ve değerlendirme süreçlerinde, 4C becerilerinin öğrencilerin final notu üzerinde ciddi bir etkisi olmamasına rağmen, bu beceriler portfolyo görevlerinin, yazma ve konuşma sınavlarının bir parçası olarak ve bazı okuma, anlama ve çıkarım sorularında değerlendirilmiştir. Eleştirel düşünme ve iletişim, dönem boyunca en çok değerlendirilen ve bu anlamda öne çıkan beceriler olarak bulunmuş, ancak ölçme değerlendirme süreçlerinde iş birliğine yer verilmediği ortaya çıkmıştır. Mesleki Gelişim Birimi ise öğretmenlerin mesleki ve kişisel gelişimleri için 4C becerilerine öncelik vermemiş, ancak öğretmenlere işe alım programları ve kurumsal eğitimler gibi çeşitli alanlarda bu becerilerden bazıları üzerine çalışma şansı tanımıştır. Bu bağlamlarda, işbirliği en sık vurgulanan beceri olmuş ve bunu eleştirel düşünme takip etmiştir. Daha fazla entegrasyon için önerilere gelince, öğrenci kulüpleri ve proje bazlı görevler düzenlenmesi, biçimlendirici değerlendirme yöntemlerinin uyarlanması, 4C'nin öğrencilerin final notu üzerindeki etkisinin artırılması ve öğretmenler için atölye çalışmaları ve sınıf gözlemleri düzenlenmesi önerilmiştir.

4. TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Öğretmen algılarıyla ilgili olarak öncelikle öğretmenlerin geçmiş bilgileri araştırılmıştır. Seliem vd. (2019), Saleh (2019) ve Zhang vd. (2020) tarafından öne sürülen bulguların aksine, öğretmenlerin çoğunluğunun 4C becerileri hakkında zaten bilgili olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, öğretim görevlilerinin neredeyse hiçbirinin lisans ve yüksek lisans eğitimlerinde, becerileri ayrı ayrı ele almanın dışında 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerileri hakkında açık bir eğitim almadıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu bulgular, Kurt ve Önalın'ın (2018) ve Bedir'in (2019) İngilizce öğretmen adaylarıyla yaptıkları araştırmada ortaya koydukları bulgularla örtüşmektedir. Ayrıca, öğretmenler 4C becerileri çok sayıda alana katkı sağlaması açısından önemli olarak algılamaktadır ki bu da Bedir (2019), Şahin & Han (2020) ve Eker Uka & Bedir (2023) tarafından yapılan çalışmalarla benzer bulgulara işaret etmektedir. 4C becerilerinin öğrenenler üzerindeki katkısı yaşam becerileri, öğrenen katılımı ve öğrenen motivasyonu olarak belirtilmiştir ve Tran (2021), Ratminingsih (2021), Stefaniak & Tracey (2015) ve Samuelsson (2010) ile benzer sonuçlar üretilmiştir. 4C becerilerinin öğrencilerin dil öğrenme deneyimlerine katkısı ile ilgili olarak, öğretmenler 4C'leri öğrenmenin ve uygulamanın özellikle dilbilgisi öğrenimi

ve konuşma becerileri ile birlikte yazma becerisine katkıda bulunduğunu düşünmektedir ve bu durum Zaker (2016) ve Paneerselvam & Mohamad'ın (2019) bulguları ile uyumludur. Öğretmenlerin çoğu 4C becerilerinin tamamını derslerine entegre edebildiğini belirtmiş ve bu da Ratama vd (2021)'nin çalışmasıyla benzer sonuçlar üretmektedir. Marwa vd. (2023) ve Demirkol-Orak & İnözü (2021)'nin araştırmasında olduğu gibi iletişimin diğer üç beceriye göre İngilizce derslerine daha sık entegre edildiği görülmüştür. Bunun yanı sıra, Marwa vd. (2023) ve Akyıldız ve Çelik'in (2020) bulguları doğrultusunda işbirliğinin yanı sıra yaratıcı düşünmenin de diğer becerilere göre daha az ele alındığı görülmüştür. Öğretim görevlilerinin yaşadığı en büyük zorluklar ise müfredat (Seliem vd., 2019; Akyıldız ve Çelik, 2020; Demirkol-Orak ve İnözü, 2021), öğrenci motivasyonunun eksikliği (Seliem vd. 2019; Ratama vd., 2021), öğrenci karakter ve davranışları olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. müfredat düzenlemeleri (Tran, 2021) ve hizmet içi öğretmen eğitimi (Tran, 2021; Seliem vd., 2019; Tuzlukova vd., 2018; Eker Uka ve Bedir, 2023) 4C becerilerinin daha fazla entegrasyonu için öğretmen tavsiyesi olarak ortaya çıktı ve bunlar literatürdeki bulgularla uyumludur.

Buna ek olarak, hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin 4C becerileri hakkında yetersiz bilgiye sahip oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Öğrenciler, 21. yüzyıl becerileri ve 4C becerileriyle tanıştırdıklarında olumlu tutumlar kazanmış ve becerilerin yaşam becerileri olması ve öğrenilen bilginin daha kolay akılda kalmasını sağlayarak akran öğrenmesine ve kalıcı öğrenmeye katkıda bulunabilmesi gibi farklı alanlarda kişisel gelişimleri için faydalı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir (Weng, 2022; Liliane & Colette 2009'dan aktaran Nganga, 2019; Yuanita vd., 2021) ve bu alan yazındaki bulguları destekler niteliktedir. Ayrıca, konuşma, dilbilgisi ve yazma gibi belirli dil becerilerinin 4C becerilerini uygulayarak geliştirilebileceğini vurgulamışlardır. Öğretim uygulamalarına gelince, İngilizce derslerinde bazı becerileri uygulama şansı bulduklarına, bazılarının ise arka planda kaldığına inanmaktadırlar ve bu bulgu Landon (2019) tarafından önerilen sonuçlarla tutarlıdır. Öğrenciler, Duong & Hoang (2021) tarafından yapılan çalışma sonuçlarıyla örtüşen en önemli beceri olarak iletişime diğer becerilere göre daha önemli bulmuşlardır. Bunu eleştirel düşünme (Landon 2019) ve bununla eşit derecede önemli bulunan yaratıcı düşünme takip etmiştir. 4C becerilerini öğrenmek ve uygulamak için mevcut fırsatlarıyla ilgili olarak, öğrenci ihtiyaç ve tercihleri aslında ders uygulamalarıyla eşleşmektedir:

İngilizce derslerinde diğer becerilere kıyasla iletişim ve eleştirel düşünme üzerinde daha sık çalışabilmektedirler. Bu, Landon'ın (2019) bulgularını doğrulamakta ancak Monib'in (2023) sonuçlarıyla çelişmektedir. Öğrenciler, 4C becerilerini uygulamak için, bir ürün veya proje oluşturmak ve daha sonra sınıfa sunmak için eşli veya gruplar halinde çalışmalarını teşvik eden etkinliklere katılmayı en faydalı bulmuşlardır. Bununla birlikte, öğrenci motivasyon eksikliği (Seliem vd., 2019; Ratama vd., 2021), sınav odaklı çalışma (Saavedra ve Opfer, 2012) ve müfredat (Bedir, 2019; Kundu & Bej, 2022; Ullah vd., 2022), öğrencilerin 4C becerilerini öğrenmeleri ve uygulamaları önündeki en büyük engeller olarak ortaya çıkmıştır ve bunlar literatürdeki önceki çalışmalarla uyumludur. Bu becerilerin dil sınıflarına entegrasyonunu güçlendirmek için öğrenciler, grup tartışmaları ve projeler (Puangpungsi, 2021; Demirkol-Orak ve İnözü, 2021) dâhil olmak üzere daha özgün ve ilgi çekici etkinliklerin (Sayera, 2019) uyarlanması ve 4C'lerin uygulanması için özel bir dersin olmasını önermektedir (Saavedra & Opfer, 2012) ve bu bulgular alan yazındaki belirtilen çalışmalarla uyumludur.

Üniversite birimleriyle ilgili olarak, hazırlık okulu akademik programlarında 4C becerilerinin yeterli entegrasyonu olmasına rağmen, dil gelişimine yapılan yoğun vurgu nedeniyle, 4C becerileri arka plan becerileri olarak işlev görmektedir. Bu bulgular, Kundu & Bej (2022) ve Ataberk & Mirici (2022) tarafından yapılan çalışma sonuçlarıyla uyumludur. Müfredatta entegre edilen becerilerin dağılımı incelendiğinde, mevcut çalışmada eleştirel düşünmenin en sık entegre edilen beceri olarak ilk sırada yer aldığı görülmüştür. Ancak bu bulgu, Ullah vd. (2022)'nin bulgularıyla çelişmektedir. Bir diğer eğitim birimi olan Ölçme ve Değerlendirme Birimi, öncelikli amaçlarını Müfredat Geliştirme Birimi tarafından belirlenen hedefleri ve ders kitabı hedeflerini değerlendirmek olarak konumlandırmıştır. 4C becerileri önemli olarak algılanmış, ancak bu becerilerin ölçme değerlendirme prosedürlerine entegrasyonları yetersiz kalmıştır. Bu bulgu, Marwa ve diğerlerinin (2023), müfredatta yer alan ders planlarına kıyasla değerlendirme belgelerinde 4C becerilerinin entegrasyonunun daha düşük düzeyde olduğunu gösteren sonuçlarını desteklemektedir. Son olarak, Mesleki Gelişim Birimi'nin öğretmenlerin geri bildirimlerine ve ihtiyaçlarına göre hareket ettiği ve 4C becerilerini öğretmen gelişimi için ilk sıraya koymadığı tespit edilmiştir. Bu nokta, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin 4C'lerle ilgili deneyimlerini araştıran Eker Uka & Bedir'in (2023)

bulgularında da desteklenmekte ve öğretmenlerin 4C becerilerinin farkında olmalarına rağmen yöneticilerden ve hükümetten desteğe ihtiyaç duyduklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Bu durum, Demirkol-Orak & İnöz (2021) 'nün çalışmasındaki öğretmenlerin, 21. yüzyıl 4C'leri hakkındaki bilgi boşluklarını doldurmak için öğretim yardımı ve örgütsel destek ile dil öğretmenlerinin 4C'leri öğretimlerine dâhil etmeye hazır olacaklarını belirten iddialarıyla da uyumludur.

Bu çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular ışığında, İngilizce öğretimi, İngilizce öğretmeni eğitimi ve politika yapıcılar için gelecekteki uygulamalar için bir dizi öneri sunulmuştur.

Öğretmen adaylarını mesleklerine daha iyi hazırlamak için İngilizce öğretmenliği programlarının müfredatlarında bu kavramlara yer vermelerine ihtiyaç vardır. Bu beceriler, İngilizce öğretimi yaklaşım ve yöntemleriyle ilgili hâlihazırda var olan lisans/lisansüstü programlara ek bileşenler olarak adapte edilebilir, böylece öğretmen adayları içeriği tanıyabilir ve temel bilgileri edinebilirler. Bunun yanında, 4C becerilerinin derslerde, tercihen dönem başında, kısa bir giriş oturumuyla tanıtılması ve öğrencilere bu becerileri kazanmanın ve geliştirmenin olası yollarını anlatmak, öğrenci farkındalığını artırmak ve eğitim süreci için anlamlı ve sağlam bir temel oluşturmak için yararlı olabilir. Bunların dışında, öğrenci motivasyonunun eksikliği, öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin 4C becerilerini İngilizce derslerine entegre ederken karşılaştıkları en büyük zorluklardan biri olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunu aşmak için her iki katılımcı grubun da önerdiği gibi özgün temalar, gerçek hayatla ilgili problemler, öğrencilerin ilgi alanlarına hitap eden konular dil derslerinde öğrencinin dikkatini çekmek ve motivasyonu artırmak amacıyla kullanılabilir. Ek olarak, Bu çalışmanın bulgularının gösterdiği gibi, 4C becerileri akademik programların açık bir parçası haline gelebilir ve öğretmenlerin bu becerileri EFL sınıflarında özel olarak güçlendirebilmelerinin önünü açabilir. Bu şekilde, öğretmenler için 4C becerilerinin ek bileşenler olarak ele alınması için ekstra alan yaratmaya çalışmanın yükü ortadan kaldırılabilir. Ölçme ve değerlendirme yönünden bu çalışmada ima edilen çıkarımlar, doğrudan 4C becerisini değerlendirmeyi amaçlayan alternatif değerlendirme araçlarının geliştirilmesini önermektedir.

Araştırmanın sınırlılıkları ile ilgili olarak, mevcut çalışma küçük ölçekli, nitel veriler açısından zengin bir çalışma olup, farklı deneyim yıllarına sahip öğretim elemanları ile farklı sınıf seviyelerinde öğrenim gören öğrencilerin algıları araştırılarak konunun derinlemesine analizi sağlanmıştır. Ancak daha kapsamlı sonuçlar elde etmek için daha fazla katılımcıya ulaşarak durumu araştırmak ve daha genellenebilir bulgular elde etmek amacıyla nicel yaklaşımlar benimsenebilir. Ayrıca, 4C becerilerinin EFL sınıflarına nasıl entegre edildiğine dair daha net bir tablo oluşturmak için ileriki çalışmalar sınıf gözlemlerini, alan notlarını ve ders planlarını içerebilir.

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