

TEACHING ENGLISH IN 21st CENTURY AND THE IMPORTANCE 4 Cs**Khamroeva Sanobar Hasan qizi***The Teacher of History and Philology Department**Asia International University**Bukhara, Uzbekistan**Email:hamroyevabuxduinyaz@gmail.com*

Abstract *Second or foreign language learning/teaching has been in the curriculum of schools for centuries. It has gone through various stages up to the 21st century in which both teachers and learners have assumed different roles and responsibilities in various approaches, methods, and techniques of teaching English. For that reason, in this chapter, the roles, responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges of learners and teachers in the 21st century have been described in terms of various contexts by taking into account the learners' level and age in terms of 21st-century skills. This article discusses about the importance of 4 Cs p in educational settings especially in teaching English . It explores the ways of solving them and giving motivation to students and it's effective sides for teaching. The author presents arguments supporting the process, overview real-world language use in curricula and highlights the impact of it for overall academic success. Additionally, the article acknowledges potential challenges and offers suggestions for overcoming them. Overall, it advocates for the significance of 4 Cs that refers to an approach in language teaching and learning that prioritizes the communication of meaning over that refers to an approach in language teaching and learning that emphasizes the explicit focus on linguistic forms such as communication ,critical thinking , collaboration ,creativity.*

Keywords: 4Cs, Lifelong learning , English Language Teaching (ELT), Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge, (TPACK), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

INTRODUCTION

Elementary students face a unique set of challenges when learning English, often stemming from their developmental . For years, learning and teaching second or foreign languages has been a part of educational curricula. Up to the beginning of the 21st century, it underwent several phases during which educators and students took on distinct roles and duties using a range of strategies, techniques, and methods for instructing English. Because of this, this chapter describes the duties, responsibilities, possibilities, and problems of instructors and students in the twenty-first century in terms of different settings while accounting for the age and ability level of the learners. All of the previous educational reforms improved people's lives, but the most recent one on 21st century skills led to a significant change in teaching methods. It is believed that having 21st century abilities is essential for survival. The 21st century is now being incorporated into

many organizations. Abilities into the curriculum design in order to get pupils ready for success and the workforce. Despite the need of developing 21st century skills, many nations, including Uzbekistan, do not fully comprehend its relevance. Traditional teaching techniques are still chosen in the majority of state institutions, despite the Ministry of Education's innovative efforts.

Background Information

Teaching English in the 21st century requires adapting to the rapid changes in technology, globalization, and evolving educational practices. As we move further into the digital age, the role of an English teacher extends beyond grammar and vocabulary instruction. It now involves preparing students for a world where communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity are more important than ever. These skills, known as the **4 Cs**, are essential in the modern classroom, and here's how they play a vital role in English teaching:

1. Critical Thinking

In the 21st century, students need to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information. English lessons provide an ideal space for fostering critical thinking skills through activities such as: **Literary analysis**, **Debates and discussions**, **Problem-solving**: Reading diverse texts helps students understand different viewpoints and challenge assumptions. Encouraging students to form opinions and justify them promotes logical reasoning. Teaching students how to find solutions in real-world scenarios based on language and context. Critical thinking empowers students to approach texts with an analytical mindset and navigate the world with greater clarity and insight. It is the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information in a thoughtful and reasoned manner. It involves the use of logic and reasoning to understand and solve problems, make decisions, and assess the validity of ideas or arguments. In the context of teaching English, critical thinking plays an essential role in developing students' ability to engage with texts, construct well-supported arguments, and approach problems in innovative ways.

2. Communication

Effective communication is fundamental in today's interconnected world. Teaching English goes beyond language proficiency—it's about using language as a tool for: **Self-expression**, **Digital literacy**, **Cross-cultural communication**: Allowing students to share their ideas and emotions through both written and spoken word. Navigating and interacting with digital platforms like social media, blogs, and podcasts is essential for global communication. Learning English enables students to engage with people from different cultures, fostering global understanding and empathy. By focusing on communication skills, English teachers help students become confident speakers, listeners, and writers, preparing them for both academic and professional environments. In order to place 21st century skills at the centre of learning, both domestically and internationally, the P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning is employed (Battella, 2019). Expanding upon this base, a state, district, or school can better prepare its graduates to succeed in the digitally and globally connected world of today by providing

them with the knowledge and skills they need through professional development, curriculum and instruction, standards, assessments, and learning environments. This increases student engagement in the learning process. The P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning; learning and innovation skills provides a detailed explanation of the 4 Cs: creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication, and collaboration.

3. Collaboration

Collaboration skills are critical for success in the 21st century workplace. In the classroom, English teachers can foster collaboration through: **Group projects , Peer review , Online collaboration tools:** Writing essays, creating presentations, or analyzing literature together builds teamwork skills. Students can offer constructive feedback to one another, improving their work and learning how to collaborate in a constructive manner. Tools like Google Docs, online forums, and virtual classrooms promote collaboration, especially in blended or remote learning environments. Collaboration in English classrooms mirrors real-life scenarios where teamwork and cooperation are key to solving problems and achieving goals. Task-based learning is more suitable for group learning. The tasks suitable for their level are assigned to groups according to their choices. Collaboration makes them more confident. Even the shiest student would contribute to the work to achieve the task. The tasks assigned should be relevant to real life situations to make them more realistic. Task- based teaching focuses on setting a goal for learners. After the goal is set, students start brainstorming and make plan for the achievement of the task. Language learning and mastery of that language depends on reading and listening skills at earlier stages. Then comes writing and speaking as more productive skills. Encouraging learners to read stories in English at lower levels could easily lead to creative story writing in English at later stages. Since the learners work on their own choices at their own paces to finish the tasks, they become more creative and innovative.

4. Creativity

Creativity in language learning is not just about artistic expression but also about innovative thinking. Teachers can nurture creativity by: **Encouraging diverse writing styles, Problem-based learning, Using multimedia :** Students can explore various genres, from fiction to poetry to persuasive essays, and experiment with different voices and tones. Offering students open-ended questions or scenarios that require creative solutions. Incorporating videos, podcasts, or visual media into lessons to engage students and expand their creative potential. Creativity in English teaching enables students to think outside the box, whether they are writing a story, interpreting a poem, or solving a language-related challenge. Creativity is the ability to make or otherwise bring into existence something new, whether a new solution to a problem, a new method or device, or a new artistic object or form” (Kerr, 2023) Autonomy as a personality characteristic is associated with creativity. Curiosity and problem solving are also linked with creativity. Cambridge

dictionary defines creativity as “the ability to produce or use original and unusual”. Marriam-Webster dictionary defines it as “the ability to create”. Creating a creative classroom atmosphere depends on the teacher’s creativity. However, it is not that easy to give the teachers any kind of framework to follow. Fan& Chai (2022) propose the hypothesis that “The creative learning environment is positively related to student creativity” and gives us a hypothesized model .

Figure 1

The hypothesized model :



Fan and Chai propose learning goal orientation as a mediator in the relationship between student creativity and a creative learning environment. Setting up learning goals increase motivation. Once the goals are set, learners start building up network and start sharing knowledge. The more they share knowledge. The more they become creative.

Conclusion: The 4 Cs in Action

In recent years, the concept of 4C (Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication and Collaboration) as part of 21st century education has become increasingly popular among scholars. Schools now are obliged to educate students for competencies of critical thinking solving problems in the real world, conducting clear communication, having collaborative practices, respecting cultures, improving creativity, and making good use of network . Incorporating the **4 Cs**—Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity—into English teaching aligns the classroom with the skills required for success in the modern world. By focusing on these core competencies, teachers not only enhance students' language abilities but also prepare them to navigate an increasingly complex, interconnected, and digital world. The importance of the 4 Cs in English education cannot be overstated: they form the foundation for lifelong learning and personal and professional success in the 21st century. The 21st century learning and innovation skills: the 4 Cs are at the core of the whole proposed skills in the framework. English language teachers can easily do 4C activities in their classes so long as they are trained to become lifelong learners. In this chapter, we tried to display both the theoretical and practical ideas related to the skills necessary to survive in this innovative era which causes fundamental changes especially in education. We tried to focus on English language teaching. As Gardner (2010) states it is the era when people need to possess

several minds such as the disciplined mind, the synthesizing mind, the creating mind, the respectful mind and the ethical mind. Education is responsible for the cultivation of these minds. Who knows, may be in the future, possession of the 4 Cs (Creativity, Critical Thinking,

Communication and Collaboration) skills will assist this cultivation Gardner proposes.

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