

# **LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

The 4 Cs in Lebanese Cycle Two ESL Classes: Theory and Practice

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# DEDICATION

To Khaled, my lovely husband,

Thank you for being patient and supportive throughout the whole MA process. I couldn't have done it without your backup and encouragement. Your support is priceless.

To my kids: Dana, Ahmad and Dani, the ones whose love for me is unconditional,

You are the reason behind my work.

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# The 4 Cs in Lebanese Cycle Two ESL Classes: Theory and Practice

Diana Amer

## **ABSTRACT**

The incorporation of the twenty- first century skills in education is highly needed. Yet, sometimes teachers' practices and the challenges they face in classes limit their incorporation. This study investigates the incorporation of the twenty-first century skills in cycle two ESL private and public school classes and explores the challenges that face those ESL teachers in Lebanon. A qualitative exploratory design was adopted. Data were collected by administering questionnaires to 16 ESL teachers, conducting interviews with 9 ESL teachers following the snowballing technique and analyzing 9 school books used in private and public schools in Lebanon. Results showed differences in teachers' practices and in challenges they face. Those challenges pertain to a rigid curriculum, outdated textbooks, time constraints, and teachers' lack of professionalism. These challenges differed for private and public school teachers as the former demonstrated flexibility in adopting the twenty-first century skills while some public school teachers are still using a traditional approach to teaching. Further recommendations are suggested for better practices to surpass the challenges.

**Keywords:** Twenty first century skills, 4Cs, English as a Second Language, ESL, Lebanese Curriculum, Public Schools, Private Schools, Cycle Two teachers

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CERD	Center of Educational and Research Development
ESL	English as a Second Language
ELL	English language learners
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IRB	Institutional Review Board
LAES	Lebanese Association for Educational Studies
LEA	Language Experience Approach
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
PD	Professional Development
PDP	Professional Development Program
SW	Silent Way
TQ	Teacher Qualifications
TPR	Total Physical Response

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

In this globalizing world, the rapid development of information and network technology has brought forth revolutionizing influence on education as with everything. The necessity and the need for the twenty first century learner is greatly emphasized nowadays (Nazikian & Park, 2016). That is, learners equipped with creative and critical thinking who are able to communicate and collaborate with speakers of different languages and cultural backgrounds increased. Thus, they survive the era of the new technologies and challenges of the twenty-first century.

And being aware of the fact that English is the global language, a *lingua franca* used among speakers of different first- languages in the international community (Seidlhofer, 2011) implied its prominence across the globe. Altan (2012) argues that the importance of English as a worldwide language has been increasing rapidly. It is one of the main or official languages in more than 60 countries (Macaro, 2010). About 400 million people speak English as a first language whereas 350 million speak it as a second language (ESL) (Ehrlich, 2008; Brisk, 2005). It follows this, that ESL teaching/learning has gained interest among most learners.

There are many different views on the 21st century skills; the skills in this study are the (4Cs) defined as critical and creative thinking, collaboration and communication skills. New curricula and syllabi are addressing the importance of incorporating the twenty first century learning skills. They are demanding the fostering of those skills to change the educational beliefs and mindsets that focus on

rote learning, mechanical drilling and to advocate collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and problem solving skills (Tan, Koh, Lee, Ponnusamy, & Tan, 2017).

Thus, educators are encouraged to incorporate in the curriculum skills of exploration, participation, collaboration and communication. It is important for education to reach its goals to be fruitful and incorporate the aforementioned skills, i.e., the twenty first century learning skills, in the classroom. Yet, it is worth noting that practices and resources devoted to education should be effective and that education be relevant for students (Wedin, 2004) in order to promote such changes. Hence, policy makers, stake holders, educators as well as teachers hold the responsibility of incorporating the 4 Cs in an effective way since the main focus of second language teaching is developing basic language competencies to help learners communicate effectively and efficiently in another language, in this paper the English language. Therefore, English as Second Language (ESL) teaching curriculum should be reviewed constantly to provide best opportunities for twenty first century learners to be effective and efficient human beings in the new era.

## **1.1 Rationale**

Teaching practices and methods implemented produce a variety of learning environments. Those environments play a crucial role in determining the outcomes of any education. Due to those practices students adopt different approaches of learning (Mayya, Rao, & Ramnarayana, 2004).

Traditional learning styles and the minimal use of modern assessments are some of the key factors contributing to low quality of education. Christie and Afzaal (2005) stated that the low educational outcome in Pakistan, for instance, is due to the mindset prevailing there and to the failure to reform and upgrade the curriculum to

assimilate the twenty first century learning skills. In Lebanon, on the other hand, rote learning and traditional assessments which is a well-practiced approach at all educational levels, emphasize memorization of content rather than analyzing and applying the content in real life events (Hasnain & Bhamani, 2014). Hence, due to preference of rote learning and valuing content assessments, development of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication are getting undermined.

Yet, this is the 21st century and there is an increased demand for a different learner profile, a profile that copes better with the accelerated growth of knowledge and technology where the learner encompasses critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication skills. Currently, the need is to include deeper understanding of content through experiential, problem-solving and inquiry-based learning (see for instance, Valkanos & Fragoulis, 2007). "...learning, change and development are better promoted through a process, which begins from an 'experience' and is followed by the collection of data and observations derived from this experience" (p.22). Students' learning skills should be developed to help them become lifelong learners and our curriculum should cater for all the learners regardless of their schooling backgrounds. This has resulted in endorsing the necessity of incorporating the 21st century skills in the teaching/learning process.

In this paper, I chose to talk about four of those twenty first century learning skills: collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity and their incorporation in ESL classes. Therefore, this study is conducted to investigate how teachers, specifically Lebanese cycle two ESL teachers, are incorporating the 4Cs in their classes and what challenges they face while incorporating them.

## **1.2 Significance and Research Questions**

Despite the fact that there is a growing importance for integrating the twenty first century skills, where the essential role of teachers as mediators is highlighted, the plethora of literature on teachers' knowledge and incorporation of the 4Cs shows that few studies combining the two areas have been conducted (Zohar & Barzilai, 2013). Moreover, in Lebanon, we couldn't but notice the scarce research about the 4 Cs. In fact, while searching through a number of databases such as JSTOR, ERIC, and EBSCO among others, I noticed that we lack research about the 4Cs relevant to the Lebanese context. Thus, this study contributes to both the overall knowledge and to the current practice. Accordingly, my study will provide educators with the present status of the implementation of the 4 Cs among ESL cycle two classes and consequently will encourage planning for future steps.

Therefore, my research questions are the following:

- i) How are cycle two ESL Lebanese teachers using the 4Cs in the classrooms?
- ii) What are the challenges these ESL teachers face while incorporating the 4Cs in the classroom?

## **1.3 Definition of terms**

Before proceeding I first present definitions for each of the following terms.

ESL: The term ESL means English as the second language of the individual. According to Masoodi (2013) ESL students are those living at homes where English is not their primary language for communication; they do not speak English or have minimal English language proficiency. In other words, they come from homes where another language is spoken (Calgary Board of Education, 2011) and "have a first language spoken that is other than English" (Alberta Education, 2007, p. 22).

Masoodi refers to ESL students as those who have a language other than English as their first language and their proficiency in English is not high enough to let them meet the requirements of the regular programming.

**Creativity:** It is the originality of thinking that generates a practical solution (Hargreaves, Macdonald, & Miell, 2012). It is the shift from what people should know into what they should be able to do with the knowledge. According to Butler (2010) it is the unconventional thinking to solve problems with limited information and resources.

**Critical thinking:** According to Young, Lambert, Roberts and Roberts (2014), critical thinking determines how learners reason, predict, explain and envisage alternatives. It is not our common sense thinking (Tishman & Palmer, 2006). Critical thinking transforms education's role to empower learners with lasting, transferable skills allowing them to face any problem (Frederiksen, 1994). It includes analysis, evaluation and problem solving.

**Collaboration:** It is a term used at the tertiary level that means the same as cooperative when employed in K-12 classes. Five elements must be present in order to be labeled cooperative. Those elements are positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, social skills and group processing (Debra, 2014).

**Communication:** It is the birthplace of individual and collective intelligence (Wei et. al, 2009). It is where everyone's ideas and solutions are shared and discussed by the whole teaching community.

## **1.4 Thesis outline**

The first chapter introduced the topic of this study. It discussed the incorporation of the 4Cs in cycle two ESL classes. The research questions, the purpose, rationale and significance of the study were stated.

The second chapter presents the literature enumerating the relevant topics related to the 4 Cs incorporation and challenges in the Lebanese ESL cycle two classes. Common practices and several challenges are identified.

The third chapter presents the methodology, research design, sample selection, data collection methods and instruments. Validity and reliability are met throughout and after the study.

The fourth chapter reports the results collected from each of the aforementioned instruments. Summaries and tables are added to easily comprehend and visualize the results.

The fifth chapter discusses the results in regard to answering the research questions. It answers research question one pertaining to the practice of teachers and how they are incorporating the 4Cs, and answers research question two by pinpointing out the challenges that face teachers.

The sixth chapter concludes the study, enumerates its limitations and endorses some recommendations for further application and research.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Incorporating the 4Cs in the classroom is one of the most demanded success elements. Research has widely provided evidence for the benefits of incorporating those skills into subject instruction (Mercer, 2004). Developing and incorporating the twenty-first century learning skills promote deeper understanding of the subject matter (Soneson & Tarone, 2012). Kabilan (2000) stated that creative and critical thinking along with communication and collaboration should be targeted in order to achieve high proficiency. Yet integrating the 4Cs had been peripheral (Pica, 2000) and there are no study reports on attempts to integrate the 4Cs within teaching of a language other than the mother tongue (Sokol, Oget, Sonntag & Khomenko, 2008). In this chapter, I present the literature enumerating the relevant topics related to the 4Cs incorporation and challenges in the Lebanese ESL cycle two classes.

### **2.1 Definitions**

In the following part we present the definitions of each of the 4Cs elements.

#### **2.1.1 Creativity**

Creativity is highly valued by society. Cook (2012) viewed this term as slippery because its underlying structure remains vague and elusive. Creativity has been understood at different levels with different foci; therefore, there is no single definition of creativity. Yet most of the definitions focus on the originality of thinking that generates a practical solution in response to a problem (Hargreaves et

al., 2012). (Sawyer, 2006; Seltzer & Bentley, 1999) stated that the main focus of creativity is to shift from what people should know rather to what they should be able to do with the knowledge which they perceived as central to developing creative ability.

This skill can be developed within the classroom (Karpova, Marcketti, & Barker, 2011). The development of creative thinking prepares students for challenges that they have never encountered (Sternberg, Jarvin, & Grigorenko, 2009). Creativity requires unconventional thinking to solve problems with limited information and resources (Butler, 2010). According to Davis (2013), creativity empowers learners to make decisions for themselves about their own progress and learning directions.

Gardner (2006b) defined a creative individual as one that questions the status quo and is unafraid of failure while challenging accepted ideas. “The reason why so many famous creators hated or dropped out of school, they did not like marching to someone else’s tune” (Sternberg, 1999, p. 127). Creative people are those who think on their own, identify problems, take risks, experiment and develop solutions to problems. Jobs of the 21st Century require workers who are flexible, adaptable, imaginative, innovative and highly creative. Thus, the need for creative problem solving as a skill is obvious (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

### **2.1.2 Critical thinking (problem solving)**

One of education’s important goals is to develop critical thinkers who can adapt to different contexts, solve problems, and make use of knowledge in a logical, analytical and systematic approach. Today’s learners are expected to have the profile of those who reach fast-automated and effortless usage of the exact accurate skills needed to solve problems in any subject matter (Pellegrino, Baxter & Glaser, 1999).

Yet, everyone thinks, it is our nature to do so, but thinking is not always an observable behavior in class. For instance, students can engage in silent but mentally reflective thinking (Li & Wegerif, 2014). Besides, much of our thinking, when left alone, is biased, unclear, partial or even prejudiced. Therefore, critical thinking must be taught and cultivated in order to ask the right questions and seek evidence before accepting ideas. However, the word 'thinking' is argumentative by itself. The ability to ask good questions in a critical way is important for students to develop (Gardner, 2000; Wagner, 2008). Nearly all cited definitions of critical thinking emphasize in-depth consideration and examination of gathered information using different modes of thinking, in order to create beliefs, make decisions or take actions.

Dewey (1910/1933) defined that critical thinking as a reflective thought which involves suspending judgment. Ennis (1980) explained that critical thinking is reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do. Furedy and Furedy (1985) argued that critical thinking consists of a variety of higher-order thinking abilities that require demonstration of the capacity to identify issues with reasoning, assumptions, inferences and the ability to deduce conclusions. Critical thinking according to Moore and Parker (2007) requires students to evaluate, weigh ideas and claims, and assess whether or not the ideas make sense. Young, Lambert, Roberts and Roberts (2014), on the other hand, endorsed that critical thinking is a form of powerful knowledge that determines how learners predict, explain and envisage alternatives. The fact that critical thinking is the ability to think reflectively and communicate ideas, imposes on students to have a sufficient language repertoire to do so (Pinker, 2000).

Critical thinking is not our common sense as diverse scholars differentiated it from the thinking that we acquire through every day experiences (Tishman & Palmer, 2006).

Shepard (2000) and El Hassan and Madhum (2007) believed that critical thinking equips students with robust understanding, intelligent thought that includes metacognition, aptitude of transfer, and intellectual abilities that are socially and culturally developed quotation. Critical thinking, according to them, helps learners be independent and skilled learners who use critical thinking to build their own learning in a student-centered environment. As a skill, it transforms the role of education as a whole to empower learners with lasting, transferable skills allowing them to face any problem under any circumstances (Frederiksen, 1994).

Critical thinking is identified as an important skill that can lead to success in college as well as the workforce. Research suggests that a focus on developing critical-thinking skills is important for several reasons. Besides, preparing for the workforce, critical-thinking skills can predict academic success in college as it has been identified as a crucial skill for college graduates and employers.

According to Lai, DiCerbo and Foltz (2017), critical thinking consists of four core skills. Systems analysis which is the ability to determine the relationship between variables in a system. Argument analysis which is the ability to draw logical conclusions based on data or claims. Creation which is the ability to construct a strategy, theory, method, or argument based on a synthesis of evidence. And evaluation which is the ability to judge the quality of procedures or solutions which involves criticism of a work product using a set of standards or specific framework.

### **2.1.3 Collaboration**

Collaboration is nowadays the focus of a considerable amount of empirical inquiry. Yet it is worth noting that the term ‘collaboration’ is used at the tertiary level and employed in colleges and universities, but it is replaced by the term cooperative when used in K-12 classes (Barkley, Cross & Major, 2014). Collaboration involves deciding goals together with others, sharing responsibilities, and working together to achieve more than could be achieved by an individual on their own (Barfield, 2016). Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, (1990) and Barfield, (2016) list five elements that must be present in order to be labeled as cooperative. Those elements are positive interdependence, face to face promoted interaction, individual accountability, social skills, and group processing. Collaborative learning can be seen to occur through dialogue, social interaction, and joint decision-making with others, and these shared processes contribute greatly to individual and collective growth, as well as to co-constructed understanding and knowledge (Barfield, 2016; Johnson & Johnson, 2002; Debra, 2014). Debra (2014) listed ten reasons highlighting the importance of classroom collaboration. According to her, collaboration, “infuses fresh ideas, expands resources, increases effectiveness, reduces barriers, keeps things real, spreads the wealth, forges good relationships, boosts self-esteem, lowers anxiety and increases excitement and fun” (p. 3).

Widespread emphasis on collaboration skills can be traced to several factors. First, research suggests that people with good collaboration skills enjoy better performance in school. For example, Druskat and Kayes (2000) found that interpersonal understanding and proactivity which are both part of good collaboration, are significant predictors of group performance and learning in university programs. Another study conducted by Prichard, Stratford, and Bizo,

(2006) found that training college students how to work together such as planning, making decisions as a group, setting objectives, managing time, agreeing on roles, and creating a positive group environment, increased the effectiveness of collaborative learning. In other words, having better collaboration skills yields better results in collaborative learning contexts.

Although collaboration is defined as a general set of knowledge and skills, yet without relevant background knowledge, one cannot effectively exercise his/her collaboration skills (Rotherham & Willingham, 2010). As Rotherham and Willingham (2010, p. 18) point out, “to think critically, students need the knowledge that is central to the domain.” Likewise, to collaborate, students need to engage in subject content that is debated in the field and on which multiple perspectives exist.

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) considers collaboration a learning and innovation skill comprising sub skills such as the ability to: work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams; exercise flexibility; make necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal; assume shared responsibility for collaborative work; and value the individual contributions made by each team member.

Schellens, Van Keer, and Valcke (2005) characterized five levels of collaborative knowledge construction that represent individual contributions to team dialogue, with the higher levels signaling more developed negotiation skill. Level 1: Sharing or comparing information, with a focus on observation, agreement, corroboration, clarification, and definition. Level 2: Dissonance or inconsistency, with a focus on identifying and clarifying conflicts. Level 3: Co-construction, with a focus on negotiating and proposing new ideas that resolve conflicts. Level 4: Testing tentative constructions, with a focus on validating new ideas against other resources

and perspectives. Level 5: Application of newly constructed knowledge, with a focus on confirming co-constructed knowledge. The levels are equivalent to the learners' roles in a group setting which are: non participant, participator, cooperater, coordinator and conflict resolver.

#### **2.1.4 Communication**

Communication, also called conversation, is the basic form in the process of coordination. Through communication, group members can discuss how to fulfill their required learning tasks; students can get teachers' and peers' guidance and assistance. Everyone's ideas and solutions are shared by the whole teaching community which was viewed by Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) as the birth place of individual and collective intelligence.

Teachers guide the students to conduct discussions about the preview questions among each group members and to hold inter-group dialogues about group answers. Learners arguably think more or less critically as they are actively engaged in communication. The interaction is with their peers and teachers, and their exposure is to ideas and discussion.

### **2.2 Theoretical framework**

According Ristow (1988) those skills were regarded as 'being disposed by genetics or being fluke of nature.' These skills lead to the major call for improving their instruction. Furthermore, a great deal of research indicated that the direct teaching of the twenty first century skills can produce better, more creative and critical thinkers (Sternberg et al., 2009).

Vygotsky (1978) theorized that through the use of language patterns and specific words, thinking is shaped. He, along with other psychologists, argued that the degree and direction of thinking development is related to the breadth of language used. Therefore, language communication has a direct effect on the development of thinking and vice versa. Classroom interaction that is collaboration between the teacher and students is highlighted as a tool to construct meaning and create high critical thinking skills. Language and interaction are involved in human development and learning. From a sociocultural perspective, learning is conceptualized as negotiation, collaboration and communication rather than mere language acquisition (Donato, 2000). Language is then portrayed to be a channel that not only conveys information but also develops ideas. Rojas-Drummond and Mercer (2003) supported that language use is seen as having a profound and direct effect on the development of thinking. Therefore, the effect of language on facilitating effective thinking in a way or another is obvious (Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2003).

Relating to the above reasons in order to incorporate the twenty first century skills into classroom, several practices must be discussed and teachers' self-concept of their role and professionalism must change. This type of change is conceptualized as the notion of extended professionalism where teachers are empowered to be responsive to their circumstances, interpret goals more broadly and exercise creativity in their professional work and activity (Davies, 2003; Hoyle, 1981). Therefore, in the coming section we will present teachers' practices, their roles and teachers' professionalism in the Lebanese context.

## **2.3 Lebanese Context**

Many countries use English as a medium of instruction in some form or another. In Lebanon, the educational system and organization is linked to Lebanon's history and its heritage (Frayha, 2009). The first national government after independence from France formulated in 1946 a new educational policy that underscored the role of English as a medium of instruction. Since then, many of Lebanon's schools have been using English as an instructional language at all levels of schooling, including the elementary (Ghaith, 2003). Legislators granted each community the possibility of organizing their own schools; thus, the existence of parallel systems have existed with diversified curricula which characterized and differentiated among Lebanese school education. Later on, the successive Lebanese governments failed to impose a common curriculum to private schools and to compete with their hegemony on society. Therefore, the Lebanese educational system is currently facing, social and quality disparities between schools (private and public) and regions (Frayha, 2009). In the postwar educational reform, only three out of the nine reforms covered were implemented, namely the curricula, textbooks and teacher training. The educational context has therefore remained largely unchanged since the end of the civil war with such a limited application. As a result, Lebanon has turned into a dual system on a social level, with huge disparities between private and public education. The Lebanese state was never able to build a public education system able to compete with the private schools (Frayha, 2009; Bahous, Nabhani, & Cochran, 2011a).

## **2.4 Changing from Bilingualism to Trilingualism**

From the onset of the new Lebanese constitution, resembled By Taif in 1989, all the Lebanese factions, stressed the Arabic identity of Lebanon (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999) and emphasized the openness to other ideas as well as Western ideas. In terms of language education, this was translated into strengthening language education in general. Yet this shift was the result of several historical events and landmarks which effected language policies and practices in Lebanon.

### **2.4.1 Lebanese ESL background**

The first event goes back to the Lebanese ruler Fakhereddine Al-Maani II who took shelter from the Ottomans in Tuscany in 1611. On his return back to Lebanon, he brought with him scientists, engineers to help build his country yet influenced by western patterns. Since then Western influence has grown steadily. Adding to them the autonomy that Lebanon had managed to maintain during the Ottoman rule, allowed European states to influence the Lebanese affairs through supporting specific religious communities. Thus, competing missionary groups came to Lebanon where the French and Americans were the most active ones. That period had witnessed the establishment of bilingual schools using both Arabic and the language of the missionary-founding school (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999).

Later on, Lebanon came under the French mandate (1920-1943). Thus, in 1924 they developed a constitution for the country in which French was adopted alongside Arabic as an official language. Therefore, the English-medium schools “dwindled in number and were forced to adapt to the situation by starting in French in Grade 1 and delaying English till Grade IV (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999, p.4).

Nonetheless, upon achieving independence in 1943, the first Lebanese government strived to rid the French hegemony in politics as well as education and made Arabic the sole official language of the land. As a result, all elementary school subjects were to be taught in Arabic. English was introduced in 1946 as another option for foreign language on a par with French. In 1968, the Lebanese government, issued a new curriculum which stated that Arabic should be the language of instruction in all subjects except for foreign languages and literature and later the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) added to them mathematics and sciences. Yet, it wasn't long before the civil war erupted in 1975 and managed to disrupt the education. Private schools mushroomed in the various parts of the country. However, the bitterness of war brought with it awareness among the Lebanese that education is one of the last weapons in their hands that would open gates for them worldwide. Therefore, "private schools stressed foreign-language standards as selling points and raided the public schools to get their good teachers" (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999, p.7), thus, deprived those schools of any elements of survivability. Due to this, a massive departure from public schools resulted and "public school student body decreased from 59% in early 1970s to 40% in 1991-92.

At the same period, English universities were established and English found its way to a full-fledged multilingual country where many languages operate in many areas of life (Shaaban & Ghaith, 1999, p.2). As a result, there was a clear emphasis on the communicative proficiency in two foreign languages in order to have Lebanon fit within and contribute to "globalization". English our focus in this paper is one of those foreign languages.

### **2.4.2 Bilingual Education**

According to Brisk (2005), research on bilingual education demonstrates that successful programs share a number of features with respect to the “school climate, curriculum, instruction, and assessment” (p.17). Successful bilingual programs exist in school environments that promote respect for the students and their families. Their languages and cultures are valued and incorporated in the curriculum. Students are well known by the staff, they are expected to achieve, and are supported in this effort. Families are welcomed in the school and are considered partners in the education of the students. These schools embrace the bilingual program and consider it an important component of their educational mission. Three major characteristics support the quality and stability of good programs: strong and knowledgeable leadership, clear goals for the program, and quality personnel (Brisk, 2005) willing to help students succeed which will be our focus in this study.

### **2.5 Schools in Lebanon**

Lebanon offers a dual system of education. Public schools are run by MEHE; they are free apart from a nominal registration which approximates 65\$ and a family fund that is decided by the ministry before the start of each scholastic year and which is around 65\$ (Farran & Chahine, 2014, p.9). Private schools are not regulated by the MEHE and the tuition ranges from 1,500\$ to 15,000\$ per year (Farran & Chahine, 2014, p.9).

At the social level, private education is sought mostly by the middle and upper middle income groups, with the exception of free private education which is focused on the very poor (Bahous, Bacha, & Nabhani, 2011). On the other hand, public education attracts lower middle income and poor social groups. The quality

between private and public education exhibits significant differences when it comes to quality where the Lebanese educational system is currently facing problems resembled by quality disparities between schools (private and public) and regions.

Regarding languages, most schools in Lebanon use French as a language of tutoring due to history and colonization being more association with Christians (Bahous et al, 2010). In the meantime, 717 schools out of 2786 teach in English followed by 23.44% of schools that have bilingual program (Farran & Chahine, 2014, p.9)

### **2.5.1 Differences among Schools**

Public and private schools have diverse policies concerning language methods in Lebanese schools which constitute one of the very differences among them.

Government (public) schools in Lebanon follow a national curriculum, and thus policies are more or less known. Private schools on the other hand, can choose to follow this curriculum or add to it whatever suits their mission and stakeholders including usage of specific books and resources of their preference and choice. Therefore, the “gap between the public and private schools in Lebanon has widened and is responsible for the decrease in the number of public students” (El Khaled, Novas, Gázquez, García, Manzano-Agugliaro, 2016, p. 29).

Besides, there is an assumption that teaching/learning methodologies are more innovative and motivating in private schools, where the use of resources and technology is available and integrated into the teaching/learning practices (Bahous et al., 2011).

Teacher training in public schools is conducted by government-sponsored programs such as the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD); however, many teachers are reluctant to let go of their 'old' ways. In private schools, language faculty members in private universities often conduct teacher training based on their research in the field (Bahous et al., 2011).

Regarding public schools, the quality of teachers, specifically their educational attainment, average age, competence in their subject, etc., has been lower in public schools than private schools especially at pre secondary levels (Bahous & Nabhani, 2011). Although there is no research about school standards in Lebanon, yet there is an impression that students who attend private schools perform better and are on the whole from a higher socio-economic level than those who attend public or state schools (Bahous et al, 2011).

According to McFadden and Sheeren (2005) current teacher preparation curricula are ill-equipped to produce professional teachers.

As a result, and due to all the deficiencies in the public educational system, many low income individuals are denied a quality education. After acquiring a general view of the status of English and schools in Lebanon it is important to find about the role of English teachers, their qualifications and status in Lebanon.

Teachers as change agents can make learning more engaging and relevant. Students have the opportunity to understand new material in terms of their own lives and realities. Students are inundated and overwhelmed with different and conflicting viewpoints; therefore, it is imperative for them to be equipped with twenty first century skills (Menachery, 2018). Teachers' personality and teaching methods are of the various factors that denote effective learning (Dornyei, 1998); therefore, the decisive role of ESL teachers in preparing students to face the future with purpose

and responsibility cannot be overlooked. New demands are often placed on the students in addition to academics, to be equipped with the skills to bring in positive changes in the society around them. An ESL class can easily bring in issues and initiate discussions and debates on issues like child labor, gender discrimination, human rights, etc. regardless that some argue that the role of teachers should not become activists and that language teachers should be more focused on teaching the course content (Blankstein, 2004; Gardner, 2006a). According to them, s/he should help students to develop intellectual tools to have an informed perspective (Yeung, Taylor, Lam-Chiang & Low, 2012)

McWilliam (2008) argues that teachers need now to unlearn their previously accepted role of “sage on the stage” (having the major function of knowledge conveyance and being a model of behaviours) and even the more recently advocated function of “guide on the side” (focusing on the learners and their learning). She argues that teachers of the next generation should shift to a “meddler in the middle,” which repositions teacher and student as “co-directors and co-editors of their social world” (McWilliam, 2008, p. 263)

## **2.6 Teacher Quality**

Teacher quality (TQ) is a common concern in daily life. The literature about TQ in English teaching involves qualifications, experience, methodology/teaching practice, knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes (Macaro, 2010; Darling-Hammond & Bradsford, 2005; Hanushek & Rivkin, 2007; Johnson, 2006; Wright, 2012).

According to Kennedy (2008) TQ has become a prevalent term without clear meaning, yet he mentions five different indicators that measure TQ. (1) tested ability, i.e., test scores used as an indicator of TQ for recruitment; (2) credentials by which he

meant, licenses and certificates that prove knowledge and experience; (3) quality of classroom practices, such as the work teachers do inside their classrooms; (4) teachers' effectiveness in raising the level of student achievement; and (5) beliefs and values.

The above TQ are categorized into: qualifications, knowledge, practices (methodology), and image (personal traits and professional attitudes, values, and beliefs).

Moreover, Villegas-Reimers (2003) and Richards and Farrell (2005) explain that the notion of professional development (PD) is linked to two concepts: *career development*, which resembles training and *staff development represented by development*. Training encompasses the teacher's initial or pre-teaching education and development refers to the in-service and long-term development of teachers.

The reviewed literature suggests that novice teachers should be reflective critical thinkers who are able to construct the knowledge needed to guide their classroom actions and steer their own professional development to improve their practice (Korthagen 2001). That is, teachers should reflect on what is learned by comparing theory to practice and new knowledge to that previously learned, and bridging the gap between coursework and fieldwork, all being important in educating teachers (Hammerness & Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Yet, McFadden and Sheeren (2005) argued that teacher preparation curricula are ill-equipped to produce professional teachers which is the reason why many instructors do not have the ability to teach higher-order thinking. "We don't know how to teach self-direction, collaboration, creativity and innovation ..." (Bahous & Nabhani, 2011)

### **2.6.1 Teachers' Preparedness and Professionalism**

Goodson and Hargreaves (1996) refer directly to the lack of consensus that surrounds the debate on the definition of professionalism of teachers since it is a socially constructed one.

Beck (2008) discusses in detail whether recent modern educational developments in the UK for example, have been about re-professionalizing or de-professionalizing. He noted that some political aims had been created with the intention to marginalize or even silence competing ideas about teachers' educational development. Evans (2008) argues that a hallmark of the modern era in re-defining professionalism has set narrower more procedurally based boundaries for teachers that, he argues, had de-professionalized teachers.

Generally speaking, the process of preparing teachers to teach and incorporate the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in the classroom is more than merely preparing content teachers. Craft (2005) asserted that in order to maintain pace with fundamental shifts in local and global societies, teachers are required to be creative themselves in the ways they conceive and carry out their role, and they should be creative in the ways they develop their key relationships with learners. Therefore, in order to respond to key changes in society, creativity needs to be applied to education in a central manner in a way never been before (Craft, 2005).

The review of the literature on teacher knowledge and acquisition of the twenty first century learning skills shows that few studies have been conducted regarding the two areas (Zohar & Barzilai, 2013). Moreover, those studies looked at teachers' critical thinking abilities per se. Developers and researchers of most of the effective programs claim that teacher training is a conspicuous key factor in the programs' success. Training teachers to teach and incorporate the 4Cs leads to

student achievement gains. The majority of these programs have a strong teacher training component, and developers consider this training to be as important as the program content in bringing about the learning gains noted.

In addition to the key role of teacher's development in the programs cited by Sternberg and Bhana (1986) and Baum (1990), a positive relationship between teacher training and student achievement was also identified to be prevalent in several studies conducted. Yet, Davies (2006) noted that teachers, despite striving to balance the cultural pressures while carrying out their role, were fearful of making decisions that affected learners' lives and futures. This was until strong relationships were built among educators and learners where teachers' efficacy proved to be highly demanded in order to carry out their task. In other words, if you trust the teachers and if they had properly mastered the skills, then their identity becomes closely linked to the identity of the learners.

#### 2.6.1.1 Status of Teachers in various countries

Indian education, particularly in connection with ESL education, requires that some urgent remedial actions be taken so as to heighten the efficiency of Education. Deficiency of critical thinking in school and college graduates is a major problem caused by methodologies adopted by teachers who are not prepared to adjust themselves with modern aims of education (Omidvar & Ravindranath, 2017). The teachers who have not been taught in critical thinking contexts could not adopt apt strategies to develop students' criticality. According to Neera Chopra, an Academic Analyst with 38 years of experience in planning, design, development and project management "most teachers do not even know what Bloom's Taxonomy is, how they will set questions which involve thinking skills." Adding to them factors from inside

the classrooms mainly time constraint considering the number of students in classrooms restrained teachers from adopting new strategies. Thus, it seems quite necessary to prepare student teachers in all disciplines using a curriculum which is totally based on critical thinking instruction. This aim can be only achieved by employment of experts in critical thinking instruction (Omidvar & Ravindranath, 2017).

In Saudi Arabia, for instance, Al-Hazmi (2003) pointed that English teachers and due to the increased demand, have mainly been put as untrained teachers into classrooms. Therefore, expanding access to schooling at the expense of the quality of teacher preparation, and, therefore the quality of learning and education programs. As a result, the gap between the content of teacher education programs and the needs of the classroom widens.

#### 2.6.1.2 Teachers in Lebanon

In Lebanon, teachers graduate with a university degree in subject area. Then some go on to gain a teaching diploma in teaching English but they are minority (Bahous et al., 2011). Most language teachers don't have any formal training or degree in teaching languages and depend on their bilingual or multilingual backgrounds to teach the language.

Bou Jaoude (2000) reviewed government documents for teacher preparation as well as course catalogues of several universities that prepare teachers. He found that teachers specifically math and science teachers at the elementary level need a Bachelor of Arts in education followed by a Teaching Diploma that includes courses in pedagogy and field work in various schools whereas teachers of middle grades are not catered for by universities.

On a similar line, Abu Rjeili (2002) studied various components of teacher preparation programs in Lebanon and found a need for assessing those programs. She recommended a unified institutionalized process for assessing those programs and diverse tools and approaches be used for this assessment.

On the other hand, the public government sector provides teacher preparation through the National University and the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD). CERD has been publishing the specialization of all teachers prepared since 1971. For instance, for elementary teachers, applicants need a Brevet certificate followed by 3 year preparation (CERD 1995). Several researchers (e.g. Nahas 2002; Dirani 2002) argue that teacher preparation programs attempt to spread the ideology of the institution in which they are trained and therefore due to this diversity of those institutions, the teachers vary in their approaches to teaching and learning, professional identity, and exposure to field work.

Today's aspiring teachers are expected to have a minimum of Bachelor of Arts degree (BA) level education, sometimes supplemented by courses on teaching practice and theory, resulting in a four-year long teaching diploma (TD).

Why incorporating the 4cs is important?

According to National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) only 10% to 25% of Indian undergraduates acquire qualifications and specific skills sets based on which prospective employees are looking to employ. Such problems have also been stated a number of times in the Indian Media (Djiwandono, 2013). For instance, *The Times of India* stated that the skills deficiency of engineering graduates falls into three main areas, namely: critical thinking,

communication, and the ability to function well as part of a team (Omidvar & Ravindranath, 2017)

In addition, the literature on 21st Century Skills reveals that a combination of basic skills and higher-order thinking skills will provide students with the ability to adjust to new trends in the future (Costa & Kallick, 2008; Levy & Murnane, 2005).

Mikati (2000), highlights the importance of the thinking skills emphasized in the 1997 Lebanese curriculum. She argues for the importance of involving students in activities that draw on the higher order skills of application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation in students' cognitive development in learning other languages that the New National Curriculum is emphasizing.

## **2.7 How teachers are incorporating the 4 Cs in ESL classes**

Schools as communities have many roles at many levels within society. Increasingly the ability of individuals to grasp informal educational opportunities is playing a role in the achievement of life success. Teaching and learning need to be rooted in high standards of intellectual challenge that will promote the development of students' higher order thinking, in-depth understanding, interpretation, analysis and engaging intellectually with the world beyond the classroom (Hammoud, 2008).

In the era of information explosion and change, it is the role of education to equip students with era's specific skills. Future society rewards those who not only possess logical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, but also those who enterprise, collaborate and acquire innovative, original and creative thinking. Therefore, it is first important to know how teachers are incorporating the 4Cs in ESL classes.

### **2.7.1 Practices of Teachers**

Teachers take the lead and help students acquire the twenty first century learning skills. They can help students develop, manage, create and navigate the incorporation of the 4Cs by the following practices.

Teachers can use referential questions, increase the waiting time, reduce interruptions and adopt selective repair. According to Li (2016) this can be done mainly not only by applying English in real-life situations but also by prompting skills of exploration, participation, collaboration, negotiation and communication. Moreover, teachers can employ one of several approaches to help incorporate the 4Cs. In addition to instruction in specific mental operations, research also supports the use of several teaching practices as effective in fostering the development of thinking skills. Those practices include redirection/probing/reinforcement, which increase students' content knowledge. Also, they enhance the development of critical and creative thinking skills (Cotton, 1988; Robinson, 1987) by asking higher order questions and lengthening wait-time i.e., the amount of time the teacher is willing to wait for a student to respond after posing a question (Cotton 1988; Pogrow, 1988, Walsh, 2006). Research revealed that those practices are associated with increases in students' engaged time and their level of participation (Freseman, 1990).

Rojas -Drummond and Mercer (2003) added that teachers' questions can encourage students to make explicit thoughts as well as model useful ways of using language. Again asking referential questions provide opportunities to develop students' thinking (Walsh, 2006).

For example, teachers can ask the question 'why' in order to get longer contributions, critical thinking and allow students to elaborate to express their understanding and lead them to articulate their difficulties. That is, teachers who are

equipped with the 4 Cs themselves are and will provide the relevant and effective education (Menachery, 2018).

Gains on learning and intelligence measures were noted in response to providing instruction in a variety of specific techniques: First, by implementing study skills such as paraphrasing, outlining, developing cognitive maps and using advance organizers (Barba & Merchant, 1990); second, by integrating creative and critical thinking skills such as decision making, problem solving, fluency, observation, exploration, classification, generating hypotheses (Crump, Schlichter & Palk 1988); third, by introducing metacognition which includes awareness, self-monitoring, and self-regulating (Freseman, 1990); and fourth, by conducting inquiry training, in which students are given a "discrepant event" and practice information-gathering skills to resolve the discrepancy new references(Baum, 1990). All of the above techniques can be used by teachers to incorporate twenty first century skills on a daily basis.

Moreover, teachers can provide platforms through classroom discussions which develop higher –order thinking skills. Those encompass participation, communication, negotiation, collaboration and problem –solving (Takahashi, Austin & Morimoto, 2000). Such discussions can create, develop, manage and navigate space for developing critical thinking skills rather than providing a system of what Hornberger and Chick (2001) call safe-time where students become skilled in guessing the answers expected by the teacher. Instead, all is achieved through asking referential questions, turn taking and giving, pauses and giving constructive feedback.

Therefore trained and knowledgeable instructors are needed to impart the proper information and skills.

Another factor regarded in the literature was concerning teachers' approach to bilingual education. Thomas and Collier (2002) showed very impressively that another important factor for children's success in bilingual education was that their mother tongue was strongly supported by the ESL teachers throughout their schooling. A notion that was previously asserted by Cummins (2000). Cummins agreed that learners succeed when teachers support the switch to mother tongue language at the expense of communicating and conveying their ideas using their second language.

Menachery (2018) conducted a study that explores the different language teaching strategies that can foster changes by shaping the thoughts and actions of students. The ESL class can be exploited to develop critical thought and initiate change efforts using the following: a) *Discussions and Debates* that is reflecting on local issues and problems, b) *WHY Sessions*, this Socratic questioning opens up different facets of an issue thereby helping students to understand it fully. Questioning assumptions and probing helps to reveal information gaps and then delving deeply while examining the assumptions through the eyes of different people and different viewpoints, c) *Unmasking Harmful Traditions and Customs* which is essential to create awareness of destructive social tendencies and helps students share such instances from their own families or areas they live in. d) *Grammar Through Community Issues* for instance making language learning more relevant to the students. Teaching grammar through community issues serves a double purpose that of teaching language and also raising consciousness of community issues, e) *Authentic Materials as Reading Resource*. The authentic materials help students link their knowledge to existing problems in society and take necessary actions to alleviate them.

### 2.7.1.1 Varying Teaching styles and methods:

People learn in many different ways, therefore in order to cater for all learners in class, differentiation must take place. The standardization of instruction and testing is successful only for those whose intelligence happens to match the dominant teaching method prevalent in the classroom (Christensen, et.al., 2008). Learners were expected to learn through rote memorization of facts and figures that hold little value or relevancy to the learner, rather than the development of deep understanding and conceptual thought which is crucial for the future (Pink, 2005; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005; Zmuda, Kuklis & Kline, 2004). Wagner (2008) warned that those who do not prepare students for the 21st Century would be held responsible for placing the nation at risk. There is a great divide between what employers seek in workers and what is currently being promoted in education (Robinson, 2001).

Making learners aware of their own learning styles and strategies is an important key factor to facilitate the learning process of a new language. A learning style is internal since it defines the preferred and natural way every student goes about learning that enables him/her to process new information (Nunan, 2015). This preference is somehow resistant to change, and independent from the first language, level of education and ethnicity (Willing, 1989). It seems that the common strategies used to acquire a language are memorizing, predicting, inferencing (Nunan, 2015), practicing, revising and repeating at home (Gallagher-Brett, 2007). Willing (1989) found a distinction between the learning strategies used by effective and less effective learners. Those who viewed the language as a tool for communication and used it outside the classroom were the good learners. They showed interest and motivation to learn the language. More specifically, they used the target language for watching television in English, listening to native speakers and conversing in class.

Less effective learners tended to rely more on the teacher's correction of mistakes, their choice of topic of the discussion in class; they also relied on textbooks (Willing, 1989).

This self-awareness of learning styles guides the learners to become more responsible for their own learning. It also helps them better acquire the new language and encourages them to participate and to communicate which builds their self-confidence (Nunan, 2015). Therefore, educators hold the responsibility of differentiating teaching methods in order to cater for all learners. In other words, learners should be enabled to learn by their own preferred learning strategies. Teachers should be aware of their own learning styles because they tend to be biased in choosing one learning method rather than the other. By doing so, they will encourage students to comprehend using a variety of strategies. It must be noted that no strategy is superior to another. It is motivation, independent learning and positive attitude towards the target language and the learning process that makes good learners (Nunan, 2015). Above all, creating a positive environment for classroom communication remains the key for success in language learning. Interaction and communication among students, in pairs or groups, fosters language learning (Ghaith, 2003). With less instant-corrections, learners will build their confidence to produce the language automatically and be pushed out of their comfort zone (Nunan, 2015; Hedge, 2000).

Regarding the Lebanese context, Public and private schools have diverse policies concerning language methods (Bahous et al., 2011). Among private schools, some depend solely on the foreign language in classes and activities (Yu, 2000). Others introduce Arabic and the foreign language at the same time, yet others emphasize Arabic and later on introduce foreign languages gradually thus allowing

teachers to communicate with students in both languages similar to bilingual learners (Cummins, 2008). Arabic is taught by traditional methods such as rote learning and memorization while English and French are taught through cooperative and communicative teaching methods (Ghaith & Shaaban, 1999).

Nazikian and Park (2016) asserted that in the past, standard foreign language teaching methods focused on teaching directly from the textbook and translation, placing importance on knowledge of the language rather than on skills. In reaction to this traditional teaching approach, the communicative approach was introduced in the 1980s and foreign language education shifted its focus toward more authentic and meaningful language use, which is, developing students' ability for self-expression and communicating in a socially appropriate manner.

However, as globalization took hold and the world became more interconnected, the necessity to communicate and collaborate with speakers of different languages and cultural backgrounds increased. Therefore, the need has grown for people who have integrated communicative language ability as well as critical skills to navigate the new technologies and challenges of the twenty-first century. To that degree, the language classroom must also modernize its teaching methods to stay current and foster skills students need to be competitive in the modern world, and English language education as a foreign language is no exception.

### **Japanese Model**

Meyasu is a theoretical framework that provides guidelines for integrating new, global-focused development into education curricula. Within the framework of the Meyasu model for learning a foreign language, educational philosophy as well as educational objectives and learning objectives aim to foster three key abilities (the

ability to understand, the ability to do and the ability to connect) in three domains of language, culture, and global society. These abilities encourage communication and collaboration with individuals from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, it stresses that it is important to consider (1) students' interests, motivation, attitude toward learning, and learning strategy, (2) what students already know, and content learned in other subjects/classes, and (3) people, matters, and information that exist outside the classroom (Nazikian & Park, 2016).

### **Indian Model**

In India, on the other hand, the bilingual method or translation method is the most practiced teaching method in most schools and colleges, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas (Ponniah, 2007). Dictating notes and memorizing the dictated notes are very common practices in the classrooms (Ponniah, 2007).

### **In the Lebanese Milieu**

Shaaban and Ghaith (1997) and in developing an English curriculum to be implemented nation-wide specified some cooperative learning structures that they made use of. Such strategies include: *Find Someone Who*, *Inside-Outside Circle*, *Numbered Heads*, *Mixer Review*, *Round Robin*, and *Three Way Interview*. According to them those structures enhance academic achievement and linguistic growth as well as ensure cognitive and social development in a stress-reduced environment (.p.202). In addition to this, they used several instructional techniques such as: *Total Physical Response (TPR)*, *Silent Way (SW)*, and *Language Experience Approach (LEA)*.

All of the above approaches were implemented at the level of the four skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Based on the mastery of the skills,

the curriculum scaffolds the level of instruction. That is, for instance in listening, moving from schema building, differentiating between main ideas and supporting details into making inferences, critical judgments and reflecting on their comprehension. Likewise follows in speaking, reading and writing. Besides, emphasis on the four language skills, the new curriculum promotes “critical thinking, study skills and cultural awarenessp.204”.

Regardless the new trends and calls for change, (Kelly, McCain & Jukes, 2009) argue that the traditional status quo continues to be practiced in schools. The fact that educators have spent a lifetime perfecting 20th Century instructional strategies probably made them resistant to change. Educators feel comfortable with 20th Century teaching practices because they were educated in the same model.

A par from this, teachers are faced by several challenges that impede the incorporation of the twenty first century skills. Those challenges are categorized into curriculum, cultural, students, and even teachers’ challenges which hinder the incorporation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in ESL classes.

## **2.8 Challenges teachers face while incorporating 4Cs in ESL classes**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the capacity to think critically and creatively is essential for effective communication, collaboration, problem solving and mastery of content. Research has shown the positive relation between the 4 Cs and content knowledge as well as higher order thinking skills (Manshaee, Mahmoudian Dastnaee, Seidi & Davoodi ,2014). Yet, incorporating the 4 Cs in the classrooms doesn’t look that easy because teachers face challenges in fostering them during curriculum time (Lim, 2014). Many external factors to the learning process affect the mastery and acquisition of the twenty first century skills. Those factors or challenges can be

classified into three groups: curriculum/school challenges, teacher challenges and student challenges and cultural challenges.

### **2.8.1 Curriculum Challenges**

Cheng (2010) asserted that teachers face challenges in teaching critical thinking skills and incorporating the 4 Cs in the classroom due to time constraints. That is, teachers don't have enough time to devote into incorporating the 4 Cs and teaching critical thinking. Pressures of the heavy and tight curriculum impede the flexibility of teaching and incorporating the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, due to the limited scope and heavy content which is emphasized at the expense of skills, attitudes, creativity and evaluation.

In Hong Kong, for instance, educators have implemented creativity development in their curriculum (Cheng, 2010). Thus, the teachers have to teach beyond the classroom walls. Teachers make students go beyond the mere reading in ESL classroom to develop their thinking by valuing their thinking attributes and by teaching creative skills and problem solving methods explicitly and discussing through communication and collaboration (Cheng, 2010). De Bono (2010) defined thinking as a means to change concepts and perception and his '*thinking hats*' tool was devised as a method of achieving this in social and cultural settings. He suggested that creative thinking skills should overlap with lateral thinking to create new concepts and/or new perceptions that must be integrated at the level of curricula. **IN ADDITION**, and in order to have critical thinking accessible to all students, sometimes out-of-school learning activities must take place. In fact, Kilic and Sen (2014) reported that out-of -school activities are of great support to critical thinking development but time constraints are an issue to deal with.

### **2.8.2 School Challenges**

However, Handy (1995) posits that schools do implement change yet schools' concern is to prioritize the maintenance of cycles and structures, rather than moving onwards towards the 'new age'. Handy (1995) stated that they are resistant to change. Elmore (2008) emphasized that school leaders implement change by reforming external and visible structures and processes but do little to change internal practices, the core is left intact.

Besides, research shows that positive classroom climates characterized by high expectations, teacher warmth and encouragement, pleasant physical surroundings, and so on, enhance all kinds of learning

Schools can be uncomfortable places for creativity and innovation. Especially that judgments about the work of learners and teachers are made by many such as educationalists and parents who interpret domains in ways that serve their own interests. Each makes judgments based on what they perceive to be in the best interests of the learners, in relation to their future roles as citizens (Craft, 2005).

In the Lebanese context, in line with the above and referring to the Lebanese language curriculum after several years of implementation, some indicated a general positive attitude in the learning situation (BouJaoudeh & Ghaith, 2006). While research showed that the teachers blamed the Lebanese curriculum for the many restrictions and their work conditions (Esseili, 2014; Bahous et al., 2011) that are affecting students' proficiencies in the three languages (Bahous et al., 2011). The curriculum is quite challenging for those who have been following traditional methods. Besides, many teachers find it often difficult to adapt to a system in which new methodology and time constraints need to be constantly addressed throughout the regular teaching/learning process. In addition, Bahous et al., (2011) found that

inadequate and insufficient resources, obsession with tests and grades, crowded classes all impede and are challenges that teachers face (p.745)

#### 2.8.2.1 Books

Part of the curriculum challenges is depicted by the implied textbooks. Textbooks don't consider students' exposure to English, their socio-economic status, their environment and their engagement topics. Students are thus less interactive because the topics are uninteresting, tedious and less engaging for them. Promoting the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in ESL classes might be much easier if what is done in school is based on either students' background knowledge or experiences (Saljo, 2000), i.e. if it were more relevant to the students' lives.

In the Lebanese context, Frahya (2009) addressed a hindrance imposed by the Lebanese parliament where it ratified a revised law concerning authorizing one of the sects to give prior permission to all books, visual and audio publications that address religious ideology of the sect. According to him, the sect which is normally a guarantee for freedom of belief became a potential hindrance to freedom of belief itself with this law.

Adding to the above, topics are predefined in textbooks that are imported from the U.S. or the U.K. and which in turn are not representatives of Lebanese students' lives and culture. Esseili (2014) pointed out that irrelevant textbooks and materials are the major challenges that add to public and private teachers' work conditions. Bacha and Bahous (2011), showed that some schools implement books that are prepared and published in Europe or the United States at the elementary level. Then shift to book that prepare for SAT and TOEFL, as well as teaching in line with the Lebanese Baccalaureate. All of those books are irrelevant to Lebanese

learners' culture. Thus, a very important question related to teaching is which culture to teach? This is the concern of some researchers as to how to preserve the "national culture" and at the same time expose the students to the cultures of the West, which also is a difficult task (Diab, 2000).

In China for instance, there was a public attack on the national fervor for English learning and a call to reduce if not cancel English lessons in the primary school curriculum (Zheng, 2014, p.34). Following reports stated that education authorities were considering scrapping mandatory English before the third grade. According to Zheng (2014) their English books such as, *Go For It*, boasts pure English language and jeopardizes Chinese language focusing on pronunciation and comprehending editorials in alignment with CNN pronunciation and reviews published in British and American Magazines such as *Times* or *New York Times*, and being familiar with the British/ American society and culture and so forth; therefore disregarding the Chinese Language, culture, and society in favor of the English Language.

This is coupled with the fear that some teachers and researchers have that there may be a national cultural "distinction" due to the strong foreign influence. Others argue that national identity is threatened. For instance, Brock-Utne (2001) and Schaub (2000) express misgivings one's identity is threatened, in this case that of the Lebanese, as young to identify with the cultures of the foreign languages used as media of major subjects studied at school. Many Lebanese groups are currently impact of the widespread use of foreign languages on culture and national (Diab 2009a ; Bahous et al., 2011). Nasr (2000) recommends that one way to keep the Lebanese cultural heritage alive and thus its language is through the study of Lebanon's literature which can address international issues of global appeal and at

the same time nurture the specific national heritage” (p.49). Nasr (2000) argues that although we live in an age of globalization and students are exposed in their lives at school and society to the many cultures especially the West and to English, the danger of losing their national identity and culture can be lessened by their reading literature of writers who are bridges between the East and West.

Culture is an important component of bilingual programs, programs, “based on the premise that the language and culture children bring to school are [both] assets that must be used in their education” (Nieto, 2000, p. 200).

Khoury (2003) reports that the curriculum focuses on “...creating a citizen who is proficient in at least one other language ... to promote openness to and interaction with other cultures” (Khoury, 2003, p.131). Translated into the teaching of second languages, cooperative content-theme based activities are drawn upon which focus on developing students’ critical thinking and problem solving skills on issues relating the target language

Bounded to the Lebanese context, Shaaban and Ghaith (1999) do voice the concern of researchers that this multilingual situation evident in Lebanon, may be negative more than positive in the sense that it may lead in language education to those who may not have any real proficiency levels in any of the languages and that Arabic is losing popularity compared to the foreign languages (p.12).

Similarly, Zheng (2014) argued that “the energy spent on learning English as a second language has seriously jeopardized Chinese citizen’s first –language education” (p.34). To be fair, if curriculum, textbooks and examinations all hinge upon standard English, then individual teachers nested in ESL classes have little to do about the ESL culture (Zheng, 2014, p. 35).

#### 2.8.2.2 Assessment Methods

According to NCERT the present system of assessment and evaluation for school education in India is exam-based. Even in curricular areas, the focus is on rote learning and memorization, and neglecting higher mental abilities such as critical thinking, problem solving and creative ability”.

School and national tests define students’ success in terms of scores. Abbott and Ryan (2001) pointed out that the use of standardized testing does little to increase higher-order thinking, creativity and problem solving, or to provide relevance to the real world.

The current accountability era of standardized and school testing does not align with the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and has placed the country’s future in jeopardy (Wagner, 2008).

In Lebanon, the English language scene has a predominance of the objective mode of testing because schools are preoccupied with preparing their students for the TOEFL, SAT, EEE and other similar instruments used as basis for admission for universities. Besides, another dominant form of testing is resembled by the official examinations. All of those testing are heavily dependent on memorization of factual information and grammatical rules (Shaaban, 2000, p.309). Certainly, emphasis on rote learning and exam oriented approach kills creativity and soft skills. In fact, “...memorization tests don’t reflect modern theories and methods of teaching and are not based on assessing abilities that students need to succeed in their lives” (Shaaban, 2000, p.309)

### **2.8.3 Teachers' Challenges**

Knowledge that was considered important in the 20th Century is no longer relevant in the 21st Century (Zhao, 2009). Instead, big picture thinking, or what Erickson referred to as, conceptual and critical thinking skills are the essential skills for the 21st Century (Brophy, 2010; Erickson, 2007; 2008; McTighe, 2010; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). However, teachers are ill equipped to teach 21st Century skills (Rotherdam & Willingham, 2009, p. 19).

Since teachers are the mediators of learning in the settings of schools and classrooms, they need high-level of professional skills and knowledge in order to carry out their task (Craft, 2005). Thus, building teacher capacity and efficacy to foster those skills in subject content, i.e. the English language, is a must. Yet, the difficulty lays in persuading teachers to make the pedagogical paradigm shift from being outcome oriented to process –oriented (Tan, Koh, Lee, Ponnusamy & Tan, 2017). Therefore, it is mandatory to discuss the qualities of teachers, their beliefs, teaching styles and their strategies in class which are themselves a challenge for incorporating the twenty first skills.

#### **2.8.3.1 Standards of Teachers**

According to the Lebanese Association for Educational Studies (LAES, 2006), the policies and procedures followed during the last few decades, in Lebanon, resulted in lowering the standards of the teaching staff in many schools. Studies showed that part of the elementary education in schools in Lebanon face serious problems when it comes to the qualifications of its teachers as evidenced by 1) the high percentage of teachers whose education has stopped at the Baccalaureate level, 2) contracting teachers with university degree on a discretionary basis and without

having any educational preparation; and 3) the lack of a system of professional development (LAES, 2006). Thus, the number of teachers on contract in public schools increased, from 6000 in 1993-1994, to 11000 in 2004-2005, i.e. from 21% to 27% of the total teaching body. Meanwhile, the number of non-degree holders on tenure appointment reached over 9000 elementary and secondary teachers (about one-third of all those on tenure). Besides, those who have only a secondary certificate or less constitute 33% of teachers in public schools, 82% in subsidized private schools, and 50% in private schools. “This part of the teaching body is unqualified or even unable to develop those skills in students” (National Educational Strategy in Lebanon, 2006, p.54).

Adding to the above, the working environment in Lebanon is one in which English language teachers face many of the same problems and challenges as their colleagues elsewhere. They are generally underpaid (Orr, 2011). Poor pay and working conditions have been identified as key factors in language teacher education (Hultman et. al, 2000) which lead to alienation and isolation.

#### 2.8.3.2 Teachers’ Beliefs

Nagappan (1998), found that teachers lacked the knowledge needed to teach and implement the 4Cs. Also he found that teachers’ habits and beliefs were obstacles in teaching thinking. Similarly, Diab (2009b) also explored the beliefs about language learning and concluded that teachers hold a variety of beliefs about language learning, some of which may be conducive to the language learning and teaching situation while others may constitute an impediment to successful language learning and teaching.

When teachers have low expectations about their students' abilities, they hinder the incorporation of the twenty first century learning skills. That is, teachers are sometimes convinced by the notion that students can't think critically and actively without them (Choy & Cheah, 2009). Choy and Cheah state that when teachers have disregarded students' input and feedback, then they are lessening the scope of the 4 Cs acquisition by their students.

#### 2.8.3.3 Teachers' Teaching Styles

Another major failure in classrooms whilst implementing the 4 Cs is characterized by the teaching styles. Although all teachers claim that they are fostering higher thinking skills, or at least teaching for thinking, Sternberg (2004) suggested that little of what goes in class encourages higher –order thinking. In fact, he added that students all over the world are taught to recall and recognize rather than to initiate thinking, since the most prevailing teaching method all over the world is the lecture-based method that doesn't facilitate critical thinking skills. This method depends on retrieving information rather than constructing new knowledge. Besides, many teachers find it often difficult to adapt to a system in which new methodology and time constraints need to be constantly addressed throughout the regular teaching/learning process (Bahous & Nabhani, 2011).

#### 2.8.3.4 Teachers' Safety Strategy

Moreover, the existence of a considerable gap between expectations and actual outcomes leads sometimes in some situations to a safety strategy that teachers develop to hide their failures. They tend to hide their failures by employing safety strategies that result in prompt-answer interactions; besides, teachers tend to address

successful learners and disregard and abandon students who don't show any understanding as a mechanism to hide failure.

Wedin (2010) had mentioned four types of call –response interactions employed by teachers to hide their failure: The repetition, confirmation, content-question and completion response. Moreover, teachers sometimes hint to students the correct answer by using high or low tones without understanding or even discussing it (Wedin, 2010). Hornberger and Chick (2001) added that the use of call-response interaction which serves to hide school failure, serves at the same time as a hindrance for pupil's learning and acquiring higher order thinking since it hides their real level of knowledge. Since teachers are seen as central to effecting change, poorly trained teachers hinder the development of students.

#### 2.8.3.5 Lack of Technology

Research in the use of computer assisted language learning (CALL) in the classroom has indicated that it creates a supportive and motivating environment for learners conducive to students to work at their own pace and linguistic developmental level and enhances their independent writing skills in terms of quality and quantity (Fidaoui, Bahous, Bacha, 2010).

The same follows for all fields of study. Burns, Roe and Smith (2002) maintain that the use of any technological tool has to help students meet their real-life needs. Similarly, Mishra and Mehta (2017) valued digital/information and communication technology (ICT) the most important foundational knowledge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As a result of this, teachers in low socio-economic status schools who reported irrelevant or inadequate resources had students stumble in their language

learning (Bahous et al, 2011). Those schools are much worse than private schools with minimal or no resources at all due to budgetary constraints. Therefore, learning should not only be restricted to the books and worksheets to be filled instead it should cater to 21<sup>st</sup> century skills by preparing learners and teaching them digital literacy (Prensky, )

## **2.8.4 Students' Challenges**

### **2.8.4.1 Power and Authority**

The plethora of literature highlights cultural factors as the main issue in incorporating the twenty first century skills. According to Durkin (2008) Asian students, for example, avoid expressing their personal opinion, debating, communicating critiquing opinions of other students or even their teachers. In their context, teachers are attributed with power and authority, and students therefore could not breach this gap. Some truth lays in the above perception, yet students are not deprived of thinking since they depend on other strategies to convey their ideas and communicate messages. They depend on other approaches such as rote and examination to communicate.

Moreover, in the twenty first century skills literature, there is an especially strong emphasis on the importance of class climate. Orr and Klein (1991) went as far as to say that educators should systematically evaluate the general culture of their classrooms and schools and should estimate how this culture affects their ability to promote critical reasoning habits among students (p. 131). Thus, in order for students to be willing to participate in the 4 Cs incorporation activities, they need to feel free to explore and express opinions, to examine alternative positions on controversial topics, and to justify beliefs about what is true and good, while participating in an

orderly classroom discourse. Otherwise problems will prevail due to the school climate as represented by the weak relations among students, teachers, administration, and parents.

#### 2.8.4.2 Students' Beliefs

Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) asserted that certain beliefs about language learning have significant effect on learners' motivation as well as affects learning the target language. For example, unrealistic beliefs regarding the amount of time required to become proficient in a second language could obviously result in frustration. Learners' beliefs and viewpoints influence not only the way that they attempt to learn English but also the method that will be used by them.

Bahous et al, (2011) added that English concepts and words are too abstract for some, which limits comprehension and makes the language unfamiliar and unfunctional and thus demotivates them to learn it (p.744)

#### 2.8.4.3 Language Barriers

On the other hand, some researchers disagree with the discussed mere rote way of thinking. Kumaravadivelu (2003) used as evidence Buddha's words that encourage Asian students to depend on their own. Furthermore, Paton (2010) endorsed this view by claiming that the students' limited critical thinking is due to the language barriers derived from low language proficiency that leads to class passivity. Therefore, students lack confidence and fear of being laughed at. Bahous, et al. (2011) added that English concepts and words are too abstract for some, which limits comprehension and makes the language unfamiliar and un functional and thus demotivates them to learn it.

These challenges encompass students' limited knowledge of English vocabulary and general knowledge that hinders them in scaffolding their thinking (Gunawardena, Sooriyampola, & Walisundara, 2017). Limited vocabulary in English acts as thinking obstacle and communication blocker which obstructs their thinking and leads to boredom (Kamal & Fahim, 2011). When faced with poor vocabulary repertoire, students either code switch or use their mother tongue language. Therefore, some teachers encouraged the use of bilingual approach (Gunawardena & Petraki, 2014) while others were reluctant and did not implement the bilingual approach since it would reveal their failure. However, according to Canagarajah (1999), this seems as lost opportunities as students should express themselves and engage in thinking and learning.

#### 2.8.4.4 Assessment Methods

Another challenge that teachers face is assessment methods. Students as well as teachers are overwhelmed and obsessed with passing examinations so whenever they have exams they spend most of their times studying which is mostly based on rote learning. Students learn patterns of essays rather than learning English meaningfully (Paton, 2010). Teachers, as well, have to deal with examination outcomes, for these are used to measure their teaching effectiveness, which leads teachers to focus more on teaching exam samples and providing exam type tasks. These tasks seem mechanical and demolish creativity, collaboration, critical thinking and communication. According to Omidvar and Ravindranath (2017), the assessment system plays a pivotal role in any education system. It depicts students' achievement and shows how and what they are expected to learn. The skills and abilities assessed determine how effective the teachers' teaching and the students' learning are. In

India, for instance, studies show that students depend mainly on rote learning. Students are expected to apply more memorization and less high order thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. It is traditional education that rewards the mere memorization and regurgitation of facts on tests, homework and class assessments. Evaluation system is also mismatched with critical thinking related guidelines. Teachers report the difficulty and lack of time to prepare students for both standardized tests and 21st Century skills (Bacha & Bahous, 2011).

Much of the testing forces teachers to overly concentrate on lower-order thinking skills. The current accountability era of standardized testing does not align with the development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, and has placed the country's future in jeopardy (Wagner, 2008).

### **2.8.5 Cultural Challenges**

Another challenge pertaining to students is the cultural factor denoted by students' respect for teachers that made students less interactive and less argumentative which hindered their creativity (Gunawardena et al., 2017). In line with this discussion, Bacha & Bahous (2011) in their qualitative study on 7-8 year old from a middle to low class background in one of the schools in Beirut, Lebanon, observed during group and class activities in learning English that the students were highly engaged in the lessons as the personality of the teacher was positive and friendly, both culturally determined characteristics when teaching children and would only speak in English as directed by the teacher. However, the students code switched between Arabic and English in student group activities often resorting to their L1 Arabic native tongue. The children would also call the teacher "Miss" in referring to her as teachers in the Lebanese context are highly respected and are

always addressed formally which is a culturally determined practice (Bacha & Bahous, 2011). The authors conclude that content and style of learning a second language are determined by cultural factors, but recommend larger scale research to confirm and validate these preliminary results.

#### 2.8.5.1 Lack of interest in another culture

Students sometimes possess undesirable performance that might be due to lack of interest in another culture which is another issue that hinders incorporating the 4Cs especially that learning a foreign language carries a novel culture which includes one's religion, gender, and set of beliefs (Chaouche, 2016; Khushik & Memon, 2017).

Another factor that affects ESL learning/teaching is motivation. Dornyei (1998), who is a researcher of motivation believe that motivation is of great importance while acquiring a second or foreign language. Dornyei (1998, p. 117) defines “motivation a driving force and inciting element in learning second language”. The students develop interest in second language when they find it interesting and beneficial for them. For example, in Pakistan, the students learn English language for the benefit sought of it which is achieving status in a society or getting a good job. At intermediate levels, the students learn English as a subject and study it to just pass the exams. In China, policy makers stress promoting English mainly to gain international stature (Zheng, 2014). Their knowledge of the subject does not help them directly to improve their language skills. Hence, learning and motivation are two interrelated concepts. Learning can occur in the absence of motivation, but learners would be less able to produce quality products unless they are motivated (Dodigovic, 2005).

Kikuchi (2009) found that teachers have a vital role in arousing and sustaining motivation for second language acquisition in students. The teacher is the driving force creating motivation in students to learn second language (Dornyei, 1998, 2001). According to Khirwadikar (2007) focus on issues, such as connecting knowledge to life outside helps shift from rote learning to constructing knowledge, providing wide range of experiences for overall development of a child and bringing flexibility in the examinations. Dornyei and Csizer (1998) carried out research on Hungarian students in 1998 which led them to frame several criteria for teachers to motivate language learners. These criteria are summed up in the following components (i) teaching material and methodology, (ii) teacher personality, and (iii) teachers' ways of interacting with learners.

As the role of motivation has become integral for effective teaching and learning 2nd languages Dornyei (2001) highlighted that students will not be motivated to learn unless they regard the worth of their material. He claims that teachers can help students to enhance their self-efficacy by creating supportive and acceptable learning environment in order to reduce students' anxiety in SL classroom.

To sum up, in the above paragraphs I discussed the major landmarks that gave birth to the English language and its prominence in the Lebanese society and rendered it a multilingual society. Afterwards, I explained the effect of the historical events on the situation and the status quo in the Lebanese schools both private and public schools and what is the reason behind the huge disparities among those schools briefly explained what they were. I looked at the differences in curriculums, teachers' roles, qualifications, practices, methods, resources regarding enabling the incorporation of the twenty first century skills. I discussed the status of teachers in

Lebanon and how do they incorporate the 4Cs in their ESL classes and their different teaching styles and practices in several countries and in Lebanon. Finally, I addressed the challenges, those teachers face whether they were curriculum challenges, resembled by employing specific foreign textbooks, assessments. Moving on to teachers' challenges themselves which are summed up in their unpreparedness and certain beliefs. Besides, I discussed students' challenges that impede the incorporation of the 4 Cs and cultural challenges. Those challenges are summarized in themes related to teachers' power and authority, cultural challenges, motivation, and specific beliefs.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter introduces the methodology used to conduct the study. The research design, participants, and instruments are discussed at length.

Incorporating the 4 Cs in the language classroom equips learners with skills that foster self-efficacy and school performance which are needed to achieve high performance. Therefore, this study aims at better understanding how cycle two ESL teachers are incorporating the 4Cs and what challenges they are facing in classrooms. The research aimed to answer the following questions: “How are cycle two ESL Lebanese teachers incorporating the 4Cs in the classrooms?” and “What are the challenges that teachers face while incorporating the twenty first century skills in the classroom?”

### **3.1 Research Design**

This research is exploratory in nature and the approach is qualitative. According to Merriam (2009), a qualitative study investigates a certain phenomenon or examines the relationship between things in order to understand how people view their surroundings and how they interact within their societies. The purpose of this study agrees with the aim of qualitative research since it constructs a broader picture of the quality of a certain activity that is going on in a particular setting (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). Therefore, the focus is on understanding the process rather than the product. Data is collected in terms of words or pictures rather than numbers,

and therefore, we are more interested in the process that the study undergoes, rather than the final product of the study (Creswell, 2009).

Due to the lack of literature regarding the practice of incorporating the 4Cs in the Lebanese context this exploratory study aims to gain insights into the practice and challenges of incorporating the 4Cs in ESL cycle two classrooms. It is an exploratory study as it mainly depends on questionnaires, interviews and textbook analysis rather than on numbers to explore an actual practice and convey an inductive conclusion. This qualitative study is naturalistic (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) as it studies the incorporation of the 4 Cs in the school settings. Therefore, the design suits and conforms with the topic.

### **3.2 Participants**

For the aim of conducting this research, this study adopted a purposive-non-random sampling technique as most criteria had been predetermined for recruiting the teachers (ESL cycle two teachers). A purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator, I, want to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore choose a sample from which the most can be learned (Patton, 2002). Purposive sampling usually goes along with qualitative research where the researcher defines specific criteria to include the participants. Convenience sampling is defined by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007) as a method of sampling that involves choosing available and accessible sites, individuals or groups of people to participate in the study.

The sample included 16 teachers. All of the recruited teachers meet the criteria established for conducting the research i.e. they are cycle two ESL teachers. A snowball sampling procedure was used. By definition, using the snowball technique

means that as we ask each key participant, he/she will refer us to another participant meeting the same criteria (Patton, 2002).

### **3.3 Instruments**

This section introduces the instruments used to address the research questions. Data was collected from 16 questionnaires, nine teacher interviews and nine book analysis (Wolcott, 2005). For the sake of tackling the research questions and for obtaining the results from different perspectives and thus increase the credibility of my research, I used triangulation. Triangulation, is the use of multiple instruments to collect data in order to validate a certain finding (Merriam, 2009).

The questionnaires were administered to 16 ESL cycle two teachers, and the interviews were conducted with 9 ESL cycle two teachers. Both questionnaire and interview questions were designed based on the literature review (see Appendix A for questionnaire; see appendix B for interview questions). Designing them, required including many variables to attain a broad picture of the practice of incorporating the 4Cs in classrooms. Variables such as teaching strategies, lessons' outcomes, allowing code-switching, offering constructive feedback, probing techniques, technology used, are essential to answer the first research question regarding the way teachers incorporate the 4cs through classroom instruction. Variables such as curriculum challenges, students' challenges and teachers' challenges were essential to answer the second research question related to the challenges faced by teachers while incorporating the 4Cs.

**Table 1: Triangulation Matrix**

Research questions	Data source #1	Data source #2	Data source # 3
How are cycle two ESL teachers incorporating the 4cs in classes?	Questionnaires(teachers	Interviews teachers	Book analysis
What are the challenges that face teachers while incorporating the 4Cs?	Questionnaires teachers	Interviews teachers	Book analysis

### **3.3.1 Questionnaires**

There were no ready-made questionnaires that I could use to conduct the study. As a result, I designed a study-specific questionnaire following guidelines in the literature and targeting the aforementioned variables. The questionnaire included 31 semi-structured questions based on a five point likert scale and 11 unstructured questions. Answers of the structured part ranged between not used at all and used all the time. In addition to this, a structured part on demographic data was introduced at the beginning of the questionnaires. Participants were asked to fill their age group, gender, and specify the school they teach at whether private or public school and the grade level they teach. Sixteen ESL teachers answered the questionnaires. I added a note at the end of the questionnaires asking teachers if they were willing to be interviewed. Nine agreed and thus I was able to interview 9 of them.

### **3.3.2 Interviews**

One-to-one interviews were conducted with 9 English teachers. All interviews were conducted in English since all of the participants in this study are English teachers. Each interview lasted around 10 minutes. Ten unstructured interview questions took place in face-to-face interviews where I had the flexibility to add, change or modify the questions on the spot depending on the interview itself.

The interview questions were derived from the research questions and from the literature review that help better understand the insights of the incorporation of the 4Cs and finding the challenges (see Appendix B for interview questions). The interview questions were piloted and modified in order to increase credibility. Questions were pre tested and reviewed by colleagues and members and they provided their feedback. Then revisions of the questions were based on their recommendations. The aim of the interviews is to explore more about the unanticipated issues regarding the integration of the twenty first century skills in the ESL cycle two classes and the challenges teachers face while incorporating those skills. According to Merriam (2009), interviews are the most common types of data collection methods in qualitative research whereby the researcher asks the participant a number of questions related to the research study in order to gain insight information from that participant. There are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (McNamara, 1999; Merriam, 2009, Boyce & Neale, 2006). For the purpose of this study, un-structured interviews were used. The interviews are relevant because they allowed me to explore data from specialists in the field and lead to new insights.

### 3.3.2.1 Transcription Procedure and reliability measures

All interviews were audio recorded using a smart Samsung device and then transcribed. I switched on and off the device to transcribe word by word. For reliability purposes, I transcribed the first time, then double checked and re- listened to the audio-recordings again and compared the transcriptions. In case of differences between the audio and transcriptions, the missing words were added to the transcriptions until the transcriptions were similar to the audio.

### **3.3.3 Book Analysis Checklist**

The third instrument was the English textbook analysis. I analyzed 9 English books used in cycle 2 ESL classes. Six of them were used at private schools and three were used at public schools. I checked for the incorporation of the 4Cs criteria (see appendix C). I designed this checklist and looked for the Incorporation of the 4 Cs. I made sure to check for the 4 Cs embedded in ‘speaking, writing, listening and reading’. Several criteria were included in the checklist. Those criteria tackle the first and second research questions. I looked for variables that demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and effectively with diverse teams (e.g., project-based learning, problem-based learning, and design-based learning) to accomplish a common goal. Also, I examined if the textbooks contain learner-centered materials and relevant content, teacher friendly instructions such as: the teaching methods employed in the books, the assigned activities, incorporation of higher order thinking and problem solving, technology-oriented, topics discussed and relevance to students’ culture. Besides, factual details were included in each checklist specific to each book. Factual details included information about copyright dates, assigned grade level, units and lessons included, titles of units, skills covered in each unit.

Trilling and Fadel (2009) argue that today’s student should be able to communicate clearly, articulate thoughts and ideas effectively, listen effectively to decipher meaning, and use communication for a variety of purposes, and utilize multiple media and technologies. The aim of this textbook analysis is either assure what was previously found in the literature or deny it. (See appendix C for checklist).

With all of the aforementioned instruments I gained enough insight of the practice and challenges that faced teachers.

### **3.4 Credibility and Trustworthiness**

According to Fraenkel, Wallen and Hyun (2015) credibility is when a certain instrument measures what it's supposed to measure. In other terms, the same results are produced given the same data or even if the study was replicated (Fraenkel et al, 2012) while trustworthiness is how much the findings are replicable in different contexts. The paper's consistency was ensured via triangulation. Therefore, for the sake of enhancing the credibility of this study, triangulation was used. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), for a study to be reliable it has to yield similar results if it were carried out more than once. Using the three instruments the results were homogeneous and consistency was ensured through triangulation.

### **3.5 Piloting**

For the sake of increasing credibility, all interview questions and questionnaires were piloted. Piloting ensures that the content is appropriate and clear for the participants within a consistent format, using comprehensible and precise questions and instructions. Also, it identifies any issue ahead of time so that it can be resolved before carrying out the actual study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Piloting is trying out interview questions and questionnaires with a friend or colleague (Merriam, 2009). It aims at removing jargon, guiding words and questions because they hinder the collection of information. Also, it aims at restructuring some ambiguous and leading questions or even rephrasing them in order to be more comprehensive (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). My questions were piloted with committee members and friends to see their own perspective. Statements were carefully written to avoid biased answers (Fraenkel et al, 2012). And the proper

terms were used and the content was clear and comprehensible. For example, I removed some leading words.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

Since conducting my research targets adults and human subjects, I applied for the Institutional Review Board Office (IRB) in order to ensure abiding by the required ethical guidelines. Before conducting any interview, I informed my participants about the study and the purpose of the research and reiterated that participation is on voluntary basis and anonymous since no name was required to be mentioned in any of the instruments. Participants were informed that they had the right to disengage from the study at any time. In addition, statements were carefully written to avoid biased answers (Fraenkel et al, 2012). Data were collected and reported without any bias considerations. Teachers' responses were stored securely and confidentially in a way that the participants' information was kept anonymous during and after the study.

**Table 2: Instruments**

Instrument	includes	RQ1. How are teachers incorporating 4Cs in ESL classes?	RQ2. What are the challenges that face teachers while incorporating 4Cs?
1. Questionnaire	Structured demographic part (grade level they teach / public/private school/expertise/level of education) 31 semi-structured questions	18 questions address RQ1. Criteria like: teaching methods/eliciting responses/assigning group work/catering for different students/debates & discussions/allow Arabic/use technology/feedback & responses/allow inquiry activities were highlighted	13 questions address RQ2. Criteria like: Limited vocab repertoire /examination impediments/teaching exam-wise/time constraints/topics discussed/engagement of students/accepting any belief/participation level/ Were highlighted
2. Interviews	10 interview questions (open-ended) 15 minutes long	Teaching methods/ Connection breakdown/ Corrective feedback/ Technology orientation/ Prepare learners for what	Curriculum challenges/ Books' challenges/ Examination difficulties/ Cultural challenges/time
3. Text book analysis checklist	Several criteria	demonstrate ability to work collaboratively / & effectively with diverse teams/ learner-centered materials/ teacher friendly instruction	Topics included/ Culturally oriented Global issues awareness/ Relevant content

The above table sums up the main themes answered and questions tackled by each instrument.

To sum up, in this chapter I have introduced the methodology used to conduct the study. The research design, participants, and instruments were discussed at length. I explained the criteria and variables used in designing each of the questionnaires, interview questions and textbook checklist analysis.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **FINDINGS**

The following chapter reports the results of the questionnaires, interviews and textbook analysis. To answer the two research questions, results obtained from each instrument are detailed. Then common themes and deviations from the three instruments are highlighted in order to better understand the practice of incorporation of the 4Cs in ESL cycle two classes and the possible challenges of incorporating them.

I analyzed the data manually. The data consisted of the transcribed interviews, questionnaires and textbook analysis. Responses from the interviews were read thoroughly and summarized. The segments which have a potential to foster and promote the incorporation of the 4 Cs were identified; also, challenges were spelled out. Common concepts were categorized into different themes. Color codes were used to highlight the responses that tackle research question one in green and the responses that address research question two were colored in red. New findings were colored in yellow to ease comprehending the results. I depended on color codes to categorize answers into themes.

### **4.1 Results of Interviews**

This section of the chapter summarizes the nine teachers' responses to each of the interview questions. The eleven interview questions answered the research questions one and two.

The first question asked teachers about the methods they use while teaching English as a second language. Sixty seven percent (67%) of the teachers said that they don't depend on a single method; instead they differentiate instruction. They cater for all the learners in the class and employ different teaching methods. Those teachers used different strategies such as Think-Pair Share or Inside-Outside Circle. Ten percent (10%) of the interviewed teachers replied that they depend only on visual and auditory teaching methods that is sensory methods of teaching because "at this age they learn by senses" one teacher explained. Yet the remaining twenty three (23%) percent of the teachers replied that they depend on children's choice and interest. In other words, their teaching methods are child – driven and they include a lot of games. One of those teachers said that they combine between learners'- driven interests and project –based methods that trigger students' critical thinking where students perform to learn. Most teachers focused on differentiation and diverse teaching methods. One teacher stated that she relies on group work or pair work except for specific lessons. Most teachers said that they cater for all students and use differentiated learning.

Question two, asked teachers about the way they approach a learner who demonstrates communication break down and doesn't know how to respond or express himself/herself in English due to lack of vocabulary repertoire. Fifty-five percent (55%) of the teachers said that they either simplify the question or re-phrase it. They try to use different descriptive sentences that replace the unknown words that the learner might not know and 'ask him/her to repeat after.' "I try to help him figure out the meaning by using synonyms or simplifying my question" one teacher said. Twenty two percent (22%) of teachers said that they use context clues to help students figure out the meaning depending on the student. Another fifty –five percent

(55%), answered that they give their learners enough time to think and respond. "... With enough time each learner will have the chance to grasp what is meant".

Another 35% percent of the teachers said that they allow the learner to seek help from his peers. "We have different students from different countries Afghanistan, for example, we ask his peers to help him with the answer..." One of the teachers supported this by saying "they learn from each other more than they learn from me so why not."

Another teacher said that

"In certain schools where there are students from different countries especially those who don't comprehend English perfectly we as teachers try to model or help our learners to understand insisting that they should respond in English.

Otherwise, we immediately translate the learners' answer and ask him to repeat after us."

Question three asked teachers if they allow their learners to respond back in Arabic or code-switch. In answering this question teachers' replies were divided into two opposite stances. Forty-five percent (45%) of the interviewed teachers said that they don't accept or allow Arabic at all. They defended this saying "the aim is they should talk in English, we don't take Arabic as an answer". One teacher explained: "if I allow my learners to answer in Arabic in English sessions, when is he/she going to use the English language." Yet, what was quite surprising is that eleven percent (11%) of the teachers replied that they don't respond at all to students who reply back in Arabic. "I just ignore his answer because he is supposed to know how to answer in English". Those teachers totally refuse the usage of mother-tongue language while others accept it as long as the learners are able to convey the meaning.

This was evident in the thirty three percent (33%) for those who allowed students sometimes to answer in Arabic. Those teachers think that teaching English is scaffolding teaching so they do allow at the beginning for some code switching and usage of the mother tongue language; yet later on they insist on students by using differentiation and motivational methods to communicate in English. Another twenty two percent (22%), allowed their learners to reply in Arabic without hesitation. They maintained that for the sake of communicating it is okay. One of the teachers precisely answered: “definitely, I allow Arabic, as long as they are communicating, discussing, and sharing ideas it is allowed ...I work on their personalities as well and boost their communicative skills even if it were Arabic communication.”

Regarding question four, when I asked teachers how they foster incorporating the 4Cs, responses were as follow. Thirty –three percent (33%) of the teachers lead debates in their classes and encourage their learners to respond critically “We try to have debates almost about every topic...in a way or another arousing their curiosity and challenging their critical thinking as much as possible”. Forty-four percent (44%) of the teachers allow discussions in class. Sixty-six percent (66%) of the teachers employed group work, and twenty-two percent (22%) of the teachers had outcomes specifically denoting collaboration among students. It was evident here that among the 4Cs , group work was the most implemented skill followed by debates which foster communication and critical thinking.

In the fifth question, teachers were asked if they find any challenges regarding applying their curriculum. Almost forty –four percent (44%) said that their curriculum is heavy and compact with many objectives and outcomes to tackle. In some periods, there are up to seven outcomes to tackle. Eleven percent (11%) of the teachers replied that they don’t follow a curriculum, they just have some outcomes

that they have to attain by the end of the day. Almost (33%) percent said that the curriculum is flexible and they can rotate around themes and concepts. One of the teachers said: “I teach at an American school and our curriculum is so flexible.” Yet what was quite alarming is that almost 66% answered that the curriculum itself is a challenge which is quite a high percentage. One of the teachers warned “our curriculum should be modified to meet our twenty first century learners”. Another teacher amply described how time consuming the demands of the curriculum are and how difficult it is to manage some classes especially those of big student numbers. He said: “We lack time compared to what we are supposed to do and to what we have as outcomes...not to mention that there is a management issue.”

In questions 5 and 6 the teachers were asked about the topics that engaged their learners and if they were included in their textbooks. Almost all the interviewees revealed that their learners are highly engaged when real-life situations are used. In other words, every topic related to them in their daily lives, events and experiences, their environment and their culture highly motivate them. “They get motivated the whole period and participate all of the time.” When the topics were imposed on them by the curriculum and weren’t connected to the learners’ lives, teachers noticed the demotivation and the lack of interest that students had. Twenty two percent (22%) of the teachers replied that engaging topics aren’t included in their textbooks, and they’d rather include some topics; however, they should abide by their books no matter what. One of the teachers said “we as teachers have no say” “... we have to go word by word as our curriculum imposes or even dictates.... regardless of what we think”.

She added:

“Once we had a lesson about Roberto Clemente, a famous baseball player, which neither my students nor I knew about or the game....so I had to get all of the materials on my own expense, since they were not available at school, and explain the game and the rules and still they were not interested and demotivated...it isn't efficient nor productive learning.”

Knowing that she teaches at a private school.

Another eleven percent (11%) of the teachers said that engaging topics are included in their textbooks yet they have the choice to add to them. This 11% teach at a public school and they assign some extra work as for having students prepare a presentation on them. They relate the books' lessons to students' lives , for example , “when the lesson tells about a famous player, they ask their learners to write about their own idol or when the lesson is about football they ask their learners to present about their favorite sport”.... Another eleven percent (11%) said that some of the engaging topics are included and they as teachers do have the opportunity to add the topics they find motivating and appropriate for their learners. Yet, the highest percentage was correlated with fifty five percent (55%) of the teachers who teach at private schools and have their own textbooks, booklets and resources that they choose depending on how relevant it is to their learners. For example, one teacher said “we noticed that our students are interested in music so we introduced a whole unit about music and music awards. Another teacher said that his learners are interested in sports and social media so they included a unit on each. “They are learners of today, so we must teach them their language and their interests”. “Our booklets are prepared on a yearly-basis driven by students' interests and concerns.”

Question 7 was about the technology means that teachers have and use in their ESL classes. Almost seventy seven percent (77%) of the teachers answered that they use everything. They use many technological platforms to share ideas such as wikis, assignments and tasks using blogs and Google forums. Yet eleven percent (11%) were more knowledgeable and specified some platforms such as: Moodle, Google docs, own websites, discussion forums...eleven percent stated that they use only smart boards and laptops. Also, another eleven percent (11%) use school resources depending on availability. "I use what is available, we are privileged by the white board, which is not much yet the school can't afford to get everything..."yet it is worth noting that this (11%) resembles teachers who teach at a public school.

In response to question number eight: "What are the difficulties of incorporating the 4 Cs in ESL sessions?" Answers differed greatly. Eighty eight percent (88%) of the teachers said "time". According to most of the teachers, time is a big issue. Teachers have to cater for the twenty first century learners but time doesn't allow for many activities on collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity. Incorporating group work itself is a difficulty whereby fifty five percent (55%) of the teachers specified how time consuming it is. "We have limited time ...,...plenty of outcomes that we should tackle and employ group work and it impede tackling the outcomes of the session. One teacher replied: "Oooh, I can't tell you about the wasted time in group work". Twenty two percent (22%) of the teachers argued that students' background is a hindrance in incorporating the 4Cs. "They just don't know how to think critically." Another twenty two percent (22%) said that the difficulty lays in the shortage of school facilities and resources that aid in the integration of the 4Cs. Twenty two percent (22%) of the teachers think that the difficulty is in the size of the classes that poses a management issue. "The teacher

has to teach and manage 34 students and at the same time employ group work and open discussion circles and debates, she just can't, out of her capacity." However, eleven percent (11%) of the teachers stated that the difficulty is in focusing a lot on the 4 Cs which in a way or another make you "lag behind attaining your curriculum outcomes". Surprisingly thirty three percent (33%) emphasized that the difficulty is in the teachers' un-professionalism. They saw that teachers themselves aren't well prepared and don't know how to incorporate the 4cs. Even some teachers said that "...they don't know how to teach critical thinking." "It is the teachers' fault that they don't know so they go on to blame the learners or the curriculum or the supervisors."

One of the teachers said:

"It is not always the students' fault that poses the difficulty claiming them of misbehaving that hinders the integration of those skills instead it is the unqualified teachers who must be blamed for not being well prepared to teach and inform and model to students those skills. Teachers are supposed to scaffold students thinking and not just use the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. They should be well prepared and qualified which is not the always the case."

Twenty two percent (22%) of the teachers blamed the curriculum itself for the difficulty. They claim that "the same curriculum that asks you to cater for the twenty first century learner, still asks you to prepare them to highly pass the exams." Other teachers, when asked earlier about the difficulty of the curriculum replied that there is no difficulty, instead answered it is a flexible curriculum, yet, when I revisited the question again their answers ranged as follow. Eleven percent (11%) argued that "The hectic lesson plans make us fall behind attaining the outcomes stated in the curriculum." Twenty percent (20%) said that the difficulty lies in the openness of materials itself. That is, all of the burden and hard work is on the teacher who is

responsible of choosing the relevant material, topics and resources in a way meeting the outcomes and enabling group work, pair work, communication..... To the remaining eleven percent (11%), it is the school's vision to employ and incorporate the 4 Cs so there are no difficulties at all. "We are very well trained concerning the incorporation of the 4 Cs and its integration."

Therefore, teachers complained that the difficulty lies in time constraints especially while assigning group work. The demands of the rigid curriculum and the lesson plans that they have to stick to with no regards to the large number of students in class nor to the distraction and behavioral problems that limit the productivity in class

In question nine I wanted to find whether assessments pose difficulties on integrating the 4 Cs so I asked teachers how they assess students and how do they prepare them for assessments in case they do. Sixty six percent (66%) of the teachers answered that they do assess their students. They teach their students a sample showing them the exact steps of how they should answer. They practice and drill and review sample exams Assessments are an integral part of their teaching. While only thirty three percent (33%) replied that assessments are based on competencies and checklists and they don't prepare their learners for exams. According to those thirty three percent, students are to be assessed on their speaking and critical thinking skills, acting in groups and on communication. According to them exams are not to be prepared at home and there is nothing that students should memorize or that depends on rote learning. They don't even call it assessments or exams, they just test learners' acquisition of competencies. They just test for the acquisition of the skill per se. On the other hand, the former sixty six percent (66%) stated that they prepare their students for the exams, by teaching a sample for students, days before the exam

and modeling to students how they should answer and the steps they should follow to get an acceptable grade. “We are grade- oriented and we well prepare our students for passing the exams regardless of the skills attained and achieved not to forget that there is a percentage credited to memorization.”

One of the teachers, replied that it is “the parents’ mindset as well as teachers as a whole that must be changed. Parents do believe in tangible results or in fact in numbers, they want to know where their children are on the learning spectrum, how much they are achieving, they want to see grades and see numbers, they believe in numbers and not in achievement” . Therefore, according to him informing students and making them aware of their achievement level is so essential to improvement instead of calculations and numbers. “Even teachers of the same grade levels start competing (my students are better than yours). They all use grade to measure the results and this whole notion ought to be changed.”

The interview answers are put in a comprehensible table that summarizes the responses of teachers, see appendix D.

## **4.2 Results of Questionnaires**

The questionnaires included two parts. Part 1 included 31 semi- structured- questions based on a five point likert scale and part two included 11 unstructured questions. Sixteen teachers filled in the questionnaires. All of them filled part 1 while only 14 filled the second part.

#### **4.2.1 Part one**

In this part, thirty one questions were designed to elicit teachers' views on incorporating the 4Cs in the classroom and the challenges these teachers face when incorporating them.

Regarding the first question, I asked teachers about their language of instruction and if they teach their classes using English language only. Thirteen out of sixteen teachers answered that they teach using the English language only. That is, 81 % replied that they use English all the time and only 19% interchange sometimes between English and Arabic.

In question two, I asked teachers if they allow their students to code switch in Arabic. 31% responded that they never allow their students to respond in Arabic while (25%) twenty-five percent said that they sometimes allow their learners to respond in Arabic. And (44%) replied that rarely they allow code-switching.

Regarding employing different teaching methods, 7% of the teachers answered that they rarely use different teaching methods. They depend on sensory or visual teaching while fifty-six percent (56%) answered that they differentiate their teaching methods almost all of the time. And (37%) answered that they frequently use different teaching methods.

When asked about encouraging critical thinking in students' responses and inducing their responses, (44%) of the teachers replied that they encourage their learners to use critical thinking all of the time while twelve percent (12%) stated that sometimes they stress on critical thinking. And 44% replied that they frequently encourage critical thinking.

In eliciting students' answers and inducing learners' responses, a total of 88% declared that they use several practices to elicit and induce students' responses such

as probing, redirecting and using referential questions. While 12% sometimes elicit students' answers.

25 % of the teachers assign group work all of the time, in addition to 56% who frequently assign group work. While only 19% replied that sometimes they assign group work. When asked about employing strategies that prompt students' answers, I tried to revisit the previous question (question 5 that investigated if teachers induce learners' responses) to find consistent answers, it was obvious that the number of teachers lowered from approximately 38% of teachers, who always used strategies to elicit students answers and induce responses, to 25% of teachers who employ strategies that prompt learners' answers.

In response to the question asking about catering for different learning styles, almost 81% of the teachers responded that they do cater for different learning styles almost all the time while only 19% responded that sometimes they do so.

37 % of the teachers reported that they frequently include debates and discussions in their sessions and 44% stated that they usually lead debates and discussions on a daily basis. Whereas only (19%) replied that sometimes they allow for debates and discussions.

In asking the question related to using the bilingual approach, results showed that 31% of the teachers don't allow it in their classes which turned out to be a similar and consistent result with the first question that investigated about teachers' allowance for code –switching and answers indicated that the number of teachers who refused completely Arabic in class was (31%). Yet the result that previously showed that 44% rarely allowed their students to reply in Arabic lowered to 25%.

Regarding flexibility in accepting answers, a total of 69% of the teachers replied that they are flexible with their students' answers while 31% replied that they

are frequently flexible with them. So when it comes to acknowledging every learner's response it was evident that all the teachers used this strategy where results showed that almost 60 % acknowledged their learners' responses and provided immediate feedback and the remaining 40% replied that they frequently acknowledged the learners' responses.

In replying to being a technology –oriented class, almost half of the teachers answered that they use technology in their classes. Yet, only 12 % specified that they use it at all times which is a surprisingly low percentage. The remaining 38% said that they frequently use technology in their ESL classes.

Again, teachers answered that they redirect or even re-phrase the question for learners in case they didn't answer properly. 43% of the teachers use this strategy at all times. 37% use it frequently and 20% sometimes use it.

Concerning giving learners enough time to respond, 44% of the teachers replied that they always give learners enough time to respond while 25% said that they sometimes wait for the learners to respond. And 31% replied that they frequently wait for learners to respond.

25% answered that they always demand inquiry activities. 50% replied that they frequently allow inquiry based activities and 25% only answered that they sometimes allow inquiry based activities.

When I asked teachers about their learners' limited vocabulary, if they think it is a reason that hinders their learners' communication, almost 87% replied that it is an issue that hinders students' communication. While only 13 % said that it is rarely an issue "they can communicate even if they don't know the exact words." "They can use a synonym or another sets of words".

When I asked teachers about the outcomes allocated in their lesson plans for learners' collaboration, results showed that only 25% had this outcome attained at all times. 44% of the teachers sometimes had collaboration as an outcome and 13% had never had collaboration as an outcome while teaching, they never tackle it as an outcome in their sessions.

When asking about the flexibility of the curriculum, 25% of the teachers replied that their curriculum is very flexible and has room for many activities. 38% viewed that their curriculum is somehow frequently flexible while only 6% replied that their curriculum is rarely flexible. And 31% replied that sometimes their curriculum is flexible.

In trying to find out more about the challenges, I asked teachers if examinations and examination outcomes pose difficulties on the incorporation of the 4Cs. In other words, I wanted to find out if examinations impede 4Cs incorporation in their ESL classes and lead to rote learning on the students' side and to teaching exam wise on the teachers' side. Responses to these questions were as follow: 12% of the teachers replied that exams don't hinder incorporating the 4Cs. While around 63% of the teachers replied that exams frequently lead to rote memorization and pose difficulties on students. 32 % of the teachers ensured that exams pose a difficulty and lead students to study by memorization and lead teachers to teach exam-wise. What was important to notice was when we asked if examination objectives lead teachers to focus more on teaching exam-wise, the results were exactly similar to the previous question asking about rote memorization. That is, exactly 63% of the teachers responded that they teach exam wise all of the time with only 6% responding that they don't.

Concerning time constraints, most of the teachers found that time consuming hinders applying critical thinking activities. That is, 63% of the teachers found that time constraints demolish critical thinking–driven activities. While only 6% of the teachers found that this is not the case and they can apply critical thinking activities regardless of time “they can be embedded in the teacher’s teaching method itself”. Again, in asking about creativity around 87% of the teachers replied that time sometimes hinders and prevents the application of creative activities. Only 7% of the teachers acknowledge that this they apply creative activities with no regards to issues related to time.

In answering about the connection to real-life situations, most teachers had their ESL lessons highly connected to their learners’ surroundings. 69% of the teachers had their lessons highly connected to the students’ surroundings with 31% at all times and in all of their lessons. Only 31% of the teachers answered that sometimes their lessons are connected to learners’ environment at other times they aren’t. With reference to the level of engagement of their learners, 81% of the teachers replied that their learners are frequently engaged with only 6% claiming their students’ engagement at all times and 19% said that their students are sometimes engaged.

In answering question 27, the high levels of participation in the ESL sessions was also evident. 50% of the teachers answered that their learners are frequently participating with 31% of teachers ensuring the constant participation of their learners. Only 19% stated that their learners are sometimes engaged in their ESL classes. When asked about accepting any belief without any further discussion or argument, only 7% of the teachers replied that this is the case at all times while 44% of the teachers commented that this happens frequently and another 7% who

denoted that this happens always and only 12% of the teachers endorsed that this is never the which I think is a low percentage for 21<sup>st</sup> century students, for so how come in applying the 21st century skills do students accept beliefs as it as without any further discussions?)

#### 4.2.2 Part Two

This section reports on 10 unstructured questions that were given to teachers to answer briefly. Here we note that 2 teachers out of 16 didn't answer this section. Therefore, only 14 teachers answered this part.

**Table 3: Answers related to the implemented teaching methods**

Part 2 of Questionnaire	Answers of teachers
1. What teaching methods do you implement? Specify.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory/auditory/visual</li> <li>• Inquiry based methods</li> <li>• Critical thinking methods</li> <li>• Cooperative learning</li> <li>• Teaching through doing</li> <li>• Task-based approach</li> <li>• games</li> <li>• Differentiated teaching</li> <li>• Active-learning</li> <li>• Drama-based teaching methods</li> <li>• Interactive teaching</li> </ul>

I asked teachers about the teaching methods that they implement and their answers included: critical thinking, inquiry based methods, child-centeredness, active learning, games and drama-based teaching interactive teaching. Along with many others who integrate the sensory, auditory and visual methods. In addition to differentiated learning, task-based approach.

**Table 4: Teachers' answers regarding students' communication break-down**

2. How do you respond to a learner who doesn't know how to respond due to lack of vocabulary and demonstrates a communication breakdown?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try to figure out the vocab and help him</li><li>• Allow them to answer the way they want as long as they deliver the message</li><li>• Allow language translation and switching to Arabic</li><li>• Ask him/her to use other ways to express (act it out/use another word)</li><li>• Allow using mother-tongue</li><li>• Rephrase my question</li><li>• Simplify the vocab</li><li>• Allow for friend's help</li><li>• Give prompting cues and guidance</li><li>• Simplify the question</li></ul>
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In responding to question number two, which asks about how ESL teachers act with students who don't know how to respond due to lack of vocabulary and demonstrate a communication break down. Teachers had diversified answers like: try to help with the vocab to express, another responded by allowing code switching to Arabic. Others said that it didn't matter as long as they were expressing themselves and communicating. Some teachers gave prompting cues and offered immediate guidance or even asked for friends' help.

**Table 5: Answers related to time allotted to a learner to answer**

3. How much time allotted to a learner to answer a question?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 sec (think more &amp; raise your hand again)</li><li>• 10 seconds</li><li>• 30 seconds</li><li>• 40 seconds</li><li>• 1 minute (think again)</li><li>• Few minutes</li><li>• Not more than a minute</li></ul>
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With respect to the time allotted to students to answer a specific question, teachers' answers varied on a spectrum ranging from few seconds to a couple of minutes with only one responding by giving 5 minutes to learners to answer.

**Table 6: Teachers' answers related to topics that engage students**

4. Which topics make students more engaged?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal stories</li><li>• Real-life experiences</li><li>• Controversial topics</li><li>• Pop/music</li><li>• Informational texts(sea-animals/pets)</li><li>• Society-related topics</li><li>• Sports topics</li><li>• Science topics</li><li>• Recent topics/trendy ones</li><li>• Youth-related ones</li></ul>
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Going on and finding about what topics interest learners teachers responses were real –life situations, personal issues, trendy media related topics. Topics related to pop, culture, informational, society-related topics and controversial topics. In addition to sports and youth related topics.

**Table 7: Teachers' answers related to technology used in ESL sessions**

5. What kind of technology do you use in ESL sessions? Specify.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tablet &amp; interactive board</li><li>• LCD/projector/overhead</li><li>• Smart board/white board only</li><li>• Educational platforms: IXL/TCM.</li><li>• Moodle/Google docs/online blogs</li></ul>
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Concerning the technology implemented in their classes and used teachers' answers included Tablet, interaction board, Google, LCD, projectors, smart boards, and many other educational platforms such as TCM and IXL, Moodle, Google forms and wikis.

**Table 8: Teachers' answers related to evaluating the environment of ESL classes**

6. How do you evaluate the environment of your class?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Active-learning environment</li><li>• Friendly-supportive</li><li>• Positive atmosphere</li></ul>
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In describing the surrounding environment of their learning premises most of the teachers replied that their learning takes place in an active –learning friendly and supportive positive atmosphere.

**Table 9: Answers regarding the difficulties of incorporating the 4Cs in ESL classes**

7. In your opinion what are the difficulties of incorporating the 4Cs in English classrooms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learners with difficulties(inclusion)</li><li>• Curriculum obliges teachers/students to stick to Traditional curriculum</li><li>• Too many things to do</li><li>• Unable to tackle all objectives</li><li>• Time</li><li>• Lesson plans</li><li>• Rigid curriculum</li><li>• Size of class (large number of students)</li><li>• Coordinators visits/supervisors visits to class</li><li>• Teachers unable to incorporate the 4Cs</li><li>• Students don't know how to think critically and creatively(not taught like this before)</li></ul>
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When I asked teachers about what difficulties they as ESL teachers face and what they think other ESL teachers face while incorporating the 4Cs in ESL classes, answers were student, teacher and curriculum -related. Teachers claimed that it is about the learners with difficulties and those who persist to be taught the way they were before. Also, what was evident was teachers' disapproval of the curriculum that poses lots of difficulties on teachers. Also, some teachers asserted that there are teachers who are unable to cope with and meet the criteria of the 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers and thus are unable to incorporate those skills themselves as is.

Teachers added that the curriculum has imposed on teachers too many things to do in class while not providing the convenient outcomes and still by having exam

oriented learning and assessment. Issues of time, lesson plans, and rigid curriculum were all main answers that teachers provided not to mention the size of classes and students' numbers in classes.

**Table 10: Teachers' answers related to their role in ESL classroom**

<p>8. How can you describe the role of teachers in a classroom that incorporates the 4Cs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential to motivate students to learn</li> <li>• Acquainted to students</li> <li>• Facilitator/guide students</li> <li>• Dynamic/supporter/</li> <li>• Aware</li> <li>• Flexible/caring</li> </ul>
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Teachers saw that their roles as educators is essential to motivate learners and be down to earth and gain acquaintance with students. Yet topics of behavioral issues are highly discussed among those teachers nowadays. Teachers are to be seen as facilitators and supportive to students' learning. Yet they are perceived to be flexible and caring.

**Table 11: Teachers' answers related to the purpose of preparing students**

<p>9. What are you as a teacher preparing your learners for?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• life-long learners</li> <li>• creators</li> <li>• entrepreneurs</li> <li>• innovators</li> <li>• be risk-takers</li> <li>• become critical thinkers</li> <li>• active citizens</li> <li>• international mindedness</li> <li>• pass exams</li> <li>• speak properly &amp; confidently</li> <li>• connected to global issues</li> </ul>
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They see that they should and are preparing learners to being life-long learners and creators.to be entrepreneurs, innovators and risk takers to be themselves critical thinkers and model critical thinking for the upcoming generations and be active citizens. Again, their role is to prepare learners to connect to global issues and

be engaged learners who are aware and caring and acquire international mindedness and openness to society.

**Table 12: Answers related to the frequency of impediment of objectives’ tackling**

<p>10. As a cycle two teacher does integrating the 4Cs hinder tackling your curriculum objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not at all (already embedded in our curriculum)</li> <li>• On a daily basis</li> <li>• Very difficult to tackle curriculum objectives and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.</li> <li>• Always lag behind meeting both requirements</li> </ul>
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### 4.3 Results of Book Analysis

In order to narrow down my results, I summarized the results of the book analysis in the following paragraphs (see appendix E) for further detailed information.

The analysis included 6 books taught at different private schools and 3 books taught at public schools. There were obvious contradictions among the books. Books used at the private schools were more up to date. They demonstrated and maintained collaborative work (see Appendix E). They suggested either group work, team work or pair work. Those books employed differentiation in terms of advocating different learning methods whether they were project –based, design-based, problem-based, design-based methods or even games. The incorporation of critical thinking, creativity and problem solving skills was highly evident in the vastly reasoned questions and activities. The books support professional learning communities that enable educators to collaborate, share best practices, and integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into classroom practice. The opportunities created in those books allow learners to connect, compare and apply content to their daily lives. The books allow equitable access to quality learning tools, technologies, and resources mainly probing through

different platforms to explain a specific event or research a specified topic. It includes relevant content that is mostly learner-centered and driven. However, what was evident throughout was that the books are intended to introduce and inform not only raise awareness and inform about international topics but also emphasize Western –driven topics, interests and cultures.

On the other hand, books used at public schools were poorly structured in a sense lacking collaborative work, differentiation, incorporation of critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. There is no challenge for learners' abilities in those books. Those books don't foster the incorporation of the communicative, collaborative, creative or critical skills. They are meant to be lectured. Those books are outdated, going back to the year 2000, yet they are taught in the year 2018. There are no opportunities created in those books that allow learners to move forward. There is no mentioning for online resources nor technologies is discussed. All of the topics included in those books are culturally rendered and confined to the Lebanese context.

This chapter presented the results yielded by the three instruments that were used for the purpose of this study: teachers' interviews, questionnaires and book analysis. The next chapter will discuss these results and analyze them in order to attempt to answer the research questions proposed at the beginning of this study.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## DISCUSSION

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the practice and challenges that face cycle two ESL teachers while incorporating the 4Cs in their classes. As an attempt to answer the proposed research questions, 9 teachers from both private as well as public schools were interviewed. And 16 teachers filled in the questionnaires. Books used at both private and public sectors were analyzed.

Regarding the first research question: “How are cycle two ESL teachers incorporating the 4Cs in the classroom?” results were collected from questionnaires, interviews, and book checklist analysis.

Upon analyzing the data from the three instruments, common themes were highlighted and discussed in light of the relevant literature.

### **5.1 Code switching in language classes**

Results from the questionnaires and interviews showed that regarding the use of Arabic during the English sessions (code switching), it was clear that there are disparities among teachers who allow code switching and those who don't allow code switching during the English sessions. Most teachers replied in questionnaires that they don't allow code switching, whereas minority of teachers responded in interviews that they do allow Arabic. Those results can be interpreted as related to teachers' self-image. The use of code switching (CS) which is code switching is the practice of alternating between two languages (or dialects) during communication (Macaro, 2010, p.44) in ESL classroom, has been a subject of controversy (Tan &

Low, 2017). It has been regarded as negative and undesirable behavior where there is a failure in using the target language. CS has also been considered as a sign of laziness of language.

In contrast to the above controversies, some researchers have argued that in ESL classroom context, CS is useful in assisting teaching and learning process of English. Code switching can no longer be considered as errors interference, but as bilingual resources. In addition, it helps low proficiency students gaining better comprehensions especially when giving classroom procedures.

Supporters of code switching in instructed settings argue that: “in few occasions, communicative tasks can be advanced via judicious teacher code switching and learning can be enhanced by referring to learner’s L1. They add that SLA instruction should be concerned with creating bilinguals and not emulating native speakers and that to prohibit learners from using their own L1 can be a form of “linguistic imperialism “(Macaro, 2010, p.45).

Code switching is an asset and a valuable addition to bilinguals in terms of communication strategies. Thus forbidding learners to code-switch will result in them not being able how to use it sparingly and in a principled way. Besides, banning code switching may lead to a number of undesirable pedagogical practices, for instance teacher domination of discourse or obstacles to learner-centered oral interaction. (Macaro, 2003, p.43). When ESL teachers code-switch to the students' first language in teaching English, it is possible that the teachers are able transmit the novel information to the students more effectively and to ultimately produce a better ESL learning outcome (Tan & Low, 2017). In addition, Cook (2001) favors incorporating some form of code-switching - because he believes code switching is a natural phenomenon and teachers should not discourage students from using it. He

argues that the maximization of L2 in the classroom should not be interpreted as meaning that the L1 should be avoided altogether and that, in fact, “the long-held tradition of discouraging the integration of the L1 in the TL (target language) classroom has sharply limited the possibilities of language teaching”.

Some teachers applied code switching as a useful strategy in assisting their ESL classroom teaching and learning process. According to Leoanak, Amalo, Kupang, and Timur (2018) in the most of their classroom interaction, CS helped teachers in accessing curriculum (explaining the meaning of new words, phrases, grammar, unfamiliar topics), managing the classroom (maintain classroom discipline) and maintaining interpersonal relation (increase students’ motivation and confidence). They also believed that CS was efficient and able to facilitate them in ESL classroom teaching and learning process.

Probably differences of views on code switching among teachers is closely related to how a teacher sees himself/herself, how a teacher defines himself/herself as a teacher, the image they would like to show, and the role they would like to play as a teacher (Seymen-Bilgin, 2016).

## **5.2 Differentiation to cater for learning problems**

Concerning differentiation, most of the teachers who teach at private schools depend on differentiation while those who teach at public schools answered that they depend only on traditional teaching. Teachers differentiate in order to cater for all of the students. However, it is apparent that there are still teachers who are prone to traditional teaching. They don’t cater for all learners. This was evident in teachers’ responses in questionnaires when they replied that the curriculum obliges them to stick to traditional teaching and it concurred with what was discussed in the literature

concerning teachers' preparedness and them resisting to applying traditional curriculum.

Nevertheless, people learn in many different ways, therefore in order to cater for all learners in class, differentiation must take place. The standardization of instruction and testing is successful only for those whose intelligence happens to match the dominant teaching method prevalent in the classroom (Christensen, et.al., 2008). Learners were expected to learn through rote memorization of facts and figures that hold little value or relevancy to the learner, rather than the development of deep understanding and conceptual thought which is crucial for the future (Pink, 2005; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005; Zmuda, Kuklis & Kline, 2004). Yet, this era mandates that students must be taught in different ways that match one's preferred learning method. Wagner (2008) warned that those who do not prepare students for the 21st Century would be held responsible for placing the nation at risk. Since, there is a great divide between what employers seek in workers and what is currently being promoted in education (Robinson, 2001).

Referring back to our study, probably teachers of the private sector are aided by the books that insinuate exactly the scaffolding methods and activities to be employed in class ranging from the smooth ones to the more difficult ones. Whereas, teachers at public schools in sticking to their curriculum and textbooks would be sticking to traditional teaching. They don't have the privilege of employing differentiated innovative strategies and methods. In line with this discussion goes the discussion of teachers' professionalism and the differences in teachers' standards and professional development between those who are accepted to teach at private schools and those who teach at public schools. That is, those who are taught how to differentiate and those who don't know how or don't have enough time to do so.

According to the Lebanese Association for Educational Studies (LAES, 2006), the policies and procedures followed during the last few decades, in Lebanon, resulted in lowering the standards of the teaching staff in many schools. Studies showed that part of the elementary education in schools in Lebanon face serious problems when it comes to the qualifications of its teachers as evidenced by 1) the high percentage of teachers whose education has stopped at the Baccalaureate level, 2) contracting teachers with university degree on a discretionary basis and without having any educational preparation; and 3) the lack of a system of professional development (LAES, 2006).

### **5.3 Teaching Critical thinking skills**

The fact that our curriculum emphasized that the role of education is to develop the individuals' general education and provide them with critical thinking skills and moral reasoning, enabling them to collaborate, communicate and work in a modern, changing society and to become lifelong learners, makes it imperative on teachers to equip learners with those 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

However, it was apparent that teachers' practices in schools fall short of the expectations of the Lebanese National curriculum. Teaching practices do not always cover critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. Practices in teaching differed which in turn emanated different challenges. Although some teachers claimed to incorporate the 4Cs nonetheless, the results showed low percentages in employing the 4Cs in classrooms. From the data collected, it was clear that differentiation was one of the reasons behind the discrepancy in the teaching methods and mastering English as a whole. Teachers catered for different learners yet, it turned out that all of those teach at private schools. And some teachers

depended on the lecturing methods defending “at this age ...no time to implement many activities.”

Which indicated that those skills are of little importance to teachers. Besides, going back to the literature there existed some teachers who hold certain beliefs about students' critical thinking claiming that students can't think critically and therefore teachers can't teach them to do so.

Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) asserted that certain beliefs about language learning have significant effect on learners' motivation as well as affects learning the target language they claim that they won't learn to do so.

Others argue that the language barriers are impediments that hinder teaching critical thinking.

Paton (2010) endorsed this view by claiming that the students' limited critical thinking is due to the language barriers derived from low language proficiency that leads to class passivity. Therefore, students lack confidence and fear of being laughed at. Bahous, et al. (2011) added that English concepts and words are too abstract for some, which limits comprehension and makes the language unfamiliar and unfunctional and thus demotivates them to learn it.

## **5.4 Using games**

What was evident though was the low percentile in depending on games for cycle –two classes. Using games is an effective way to improve students' social skills along with language skills (Saha & Singh, 2016). Through games learners can practice all the skills, in all the stages of the teaching and learning. Shu-yun Yu (2005) conducted an experiment on effectiveness of games. Based on analyzing the data he gathered, he asserted that games as teaching – learning strategies create fun

and a nonthreatening learning environment, enhances communication and teamwork, encourages active participation and enables students to demonstrate and apply previously or newly acquired language skills in a real context. He found that students were unconsciously motivated towards cooperating and consulting to win against the other group. Even weak and shy students were also engaging themselves in the game without any fear of being punished by the teacher.

Games help a teacher to create contexts in which a learner can use language in a meaningful way by helping and supporting peers. Through games learners collaborate with each other. Games are one of the best social skill training activities. Many games provide repeated use of language forms. The teacher can vary between virtual games as well as face to face games such as guessing games, miming games, debates, jigsaw think-pair-share, and role plays.

Games are learner-centered activity which help to create a meaningful context for language use (Saha & Singh, 2016). They increase learning motivation among students and reduce learners' anxiety to participate in teaching-learning process actively and thus encourage shy students to participate. Games develop language skills while creating a cooperative learning environment in ESL classroom. It helps learners practice speaking, writing, listening, reading and encourages students to interact and communicate. Therefore, helps to promote communicative competence.

This part summarizes the findings regarding the second research question. Answers related to the challenges and difficulties of incorporating the 4Cs in ESL classes are divided into themes and discussed in light of the relevant literature.

## **5.5 Group work employment**

Regarding group work, 56% of teachers use group work strategies, while all of the books used at private schools highlight group work criteria. The low percentage is due to the difficulties and management issues and challenges that impede collaboration in class. Besides lack of time and number of students in class, all of these constraints hinder applying group work as a skill in ESL classes. Nonetheless out of the four skills group work was the most implemented skill in ESL classes although it is at the same time one of the main challenges that face teachers. Teachers claim that applying group work consumes time and impedes classroom management. Yet, experienced skilled teachers enable group working in a smooth class environment.

## **5.6 Time impediment**

Another challenge was ‘time’. Time was the enemy of most teachers. Some teachers described amply how time consuming are the demands of the curriculum and how difficult it is to manage some classes especially those with big student numbers. Time hinders applying creative activities “...we lack time compared to what we are supposed to do...” In other classes with large numbers of students new burdens appear under the name of “class management”. To some teachers, group work and students’ collaboration is a waste of time, it is “...Loss of class control...can’t tell you about wasted time in assigning group work.”

In line with the above, the LAES (2006) admitted that there is an inherent weakness in the current curricula manifested in the lack of alignment among general goals, and objectives, in the limited scope and heavy and demanding content; in the

lack of concordance between curriculum objectives and assessment system; and problems related to teaching foreign languages.

## **5.7 Testing –oriented**

Regarding testing and preparation for exams, most teachers said that they teach and prepare for exam-wise. They show steps and revise a sample and practice and drill. While a few number said that they don't prepare for exams, they assess based on competencies and take checklist notes. As discussed in the literature and denoted by Shaaban (2000) Lebanon is test-driven. All of our assessments are heavily dependent on memorization of factual information and grammatical rules (Shaaban, 2000, p. 309). This is highly confounded with results of interviews whereby the majority of teachers focus on practice and drill to prepare for exams and emphasize on rote learning in order to pass the exams.

Another practice that was manifested is the way teachers approach students who show communication –break-down. So how do teachers deal with students who don't comprehend or can't reply due to lack of vocabulary repertoire? Teachers' views differed on two ends of the spectrum. Some teachers highly defended code – switching where it is viewed as a common practice as long as the learners are able to communicate and convey their messages. Few teachers refuted this claiming that “the aim is to foster the English language”. Those findings reveal that to some teachers code-switching is a challenge while to others, it is the solution instead of having communication break –down. Eleven percent of the teachers added that they ignore students' contributions if they were in Arabic “I totally ignore his response”.

This contradiction between teachers who allow their learners to convey their ideas at the expense of using English and those who ignore their students'

discussions and debates as long as they are in Arabic seems to be an unsettled matter with respect to teachers. However, according to Thomas and Collier (2002) mother tongue should be supported by ESL teachers throughout their schooling.

## **5.8 Books**

While analyzing books, it was evident that there is a huge disparity caused by the books used in cycle two ESL classes. There are two groups of books. Textbooks imposed and used by the Lebanese National curriculum which are mainly taught at the public schools and a number of subsidized private schools and books used at private schools. According to LAES (2006), although the bold initiative taken to develop school textbooks for all educational cycles has contributed to making the national textbook available to all and was an advanced move, nonetheless those books are poorly designed and of poor quality. The weak coordination has brought about negative results, as in: 1) the heavy content that is emphasized at the expense of skills and evaluation; 2) the discrepancy in quality among textbooks for different classes and subjects, where the lowest quality has been observed in the area of languages. Besides, those books suffer from stagnation and absence of a single autonomous authority which is responsible for developing, monitoring and updating the textbooks in accordance with the pre-determined criteria and outcomes. Knowing that regarding public schools, the MEHE has not yet proposed an educational vision whereby the public school's administration is not given the authority or responsibilities needed for self-management and thus doesn't have autonomy on deciding on specific books nor teachers.

Going back to our books' analysis, it was clear to us that books implemented at public schools lack creativity, critical thinking skills, collaboration and

communication skills. Those books are outdated (2000) and go over archaic topics that in some cases no longer exist. They don't create opportunities that allow learners to move forward or to apply in their real-lives. Neither alignment with online resources nor technologies are discussed. All of the topics included in those books are culturally rendered and confined to the Lebanese context with no awareness towards issues of global interest or even learners' interest. As a result, they create serious unequal opportunities with ESL education when compared with books used at the private sector in favor of the latter which is manifested in the high achievement levels and English Language mastery. Such problems reach their peak in the 4th and 7th grades; that is; around cycle two classes where more serious complications might further develop such as school dropout or class repetition...

On the other hand, books administered at private schools discuss topics that most of times are irrelevant to the Lebanese contexts. The study results showed that around 55% of the Lebanese students are found to be uninterested and demotivated in ESL sessions. Lebanese students did not get the chance to make decisions about the topics that are going to be discussed in the classroom, nor the choice of the activity that can best fit their ways of learning or their preferred ways of assessment (Nunan, 2015). This finding is validated with teachers' answers about their learners' motivation and participation. This lack of motivation goes back to the choice of topics discussed in class. These topics which are sometimes dictated and predefined in those textbooks that are imported from abroad and which are meant to be administered for other populations rather than the Lebanese learners.

However, to improve students' motivation, teachers can skip topics that are not related to the Lebanese culture if comparing the two cultures cannot be attained (Shaaban, 2013) especially that the language is better acquired when the expression

of feelings and opinions is involved (Macaro, 2003) which is supposedly to happen more with relevant topics. Students are found to be highly engaged when their textbooks were related to their own experiences and lives. Around 81% of the learners were engaged in lessons connected to them. It was noticed that schools that cater for life –long learners included topics that aren't book-bounded. That is, teachers had the freedom to include whatever topics that they found motivate learners of today and are of their interest. Yet sometimes the situation worsens and is aggravated when teachers are obliged to abide by the topics suggested in textbooks that were not intended to our learners. Sometimes teachers' margin of choice is insignificant "...we have no say ...we have to abide by those topics... regardless of what we think." Esseili (2014) pointed out that inadequate textbooks and materials are the major challenges that add to public and private teachers' work conditions. The topics are not designed up to meet our Lebanese learners' needs, backgrounds nor culture. Rarely are those topics changed to be more connected to our culture. Only a few teachers have the choice to add up topics.

It is quite frustrating to find out that the fact that teachers who are supposedly preparing learners of tomorrow are still bound to teach books and units which they themselves find irrelevant but can do nothing about it.

Those challenges go hand in hand with others and are aggravated with low teachers' professionalism. The academic conditions for appointing school teachers have been loosened, which had a negative effect on the quality of education. Up to 1985, appointed elementary teachers had to be graduates of the Teachers' Colleges. "In accordance with decree # 2636, dated 22 August 1985, about 4500 teachers were appointed from among those on contract, after having them go through training sessions. Since then, a new practice for appointing teachers on contract basis was put

into place. This occurred in parallel with graduating teachers from Teachers Institutes whereby 3675 teachers graduated between the years 1994 and 2002<sup>49</sup>. Then came the Law # 442, issued 29 July 2002, which made it possible for university degree holders to be appointed as elementary school teachers in Lebanon.” However, the law didn’t state whether the university degree should include educational preparation or no. Since then teachers with a university degree were contracted on a discretionary basis and therefore the policies and procedures followed, resulted in lowering the standards of the teaching staff in many schools. As a result, Elementary education in public schools is facing serious problems related to the qualifications of its teachers which is evidenced by: 1) the high percentage of teachers whose education has stopped at the Baccalaureate level or even before; 2) contracting teachers with university degree on a discretionary basis and without having any educational preparation; and 3) The lack of a system of professional development. At present, there are no frameworks adopted for raising the competency of the teaching staff in schools that is, there are no controls regarding the practice of the teaching profession in Lebanon except for requiring a 4-year university degree for teaching in public schools and no MEHE professional controls regarding practicing teaching in private schools which I personally think is a loophole that needs to be revised.

After the new curricula were issued, MEHE conducted only one extensive teacher training workshop for all public and some private school teachers. The LAES evaluation study of the training showed that there were many problems related to planning, organization, instructional materials, trainers’ qualifications, training styles, and evaluation.

Yet, referring to the above almost all of the recruited population in my study have attained their Bachelor degrees and have at least 3 years of experience in teaching.

In regards to Technology preparedness the current curriculum covers only the development of basic technological skills. Technology education, in its curriculum and applications, is still at its very profound basic levels. This was obvious in the results of teachers' questionnaires where only 12 % replied that they use technology as a daily basis and only 11% of the teachers were highly knowledgeable in technological platforms and tools. Add to this that the curriculum is not followed in many schools and in particularly in most public schools. Besides, those basic skills in informatics or technology are not to be tested neither at schools nor at official examinations. Therefore, teachers' preparation in technology knowledge and skills pertaining to the use of technology in teaching and learning remains a very slow process.

Teachers' professionalism is a highly debated topic that must be discussed broadly. Who is to be blamed when the policies and procedures followed during the last few decades, in Lebanon, resulted in lowering the standards of the teaching staff in many schools (LAES, 2006). Studies revealed that part of the teaching body especially those recruited to teach at primary levels are unqualified. Results of this study showed disparity in teachers' professionalism and preparation manifested in the teaching methods and practices applied. In other words, teachers' unpreparedness can impede the learning process and alter its use.

From the above study, it was clearly evident that depending on schools, teachers' responses differed. Teachers who teach at International or PYP school programs were clearly implementing and integrating the 21 st century skills and were

life-oriented. Those schools had a broad vision. They viewed the learner as a life-long learner that must be equipped with different skills especially the 4Cs “we are very well trained”. While teachers who taught at public or subsidized private schools replied that what they care for is assessment results as long as the outcomes are already dictated and stated and thus they had to abide by them. According to them there is no room for creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration due to many constraints that aren’t dealt properly and fairly in the aforementioned curriculum.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter concludes the study, enumerating its limitations and listing the recommendations for further research.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we all strive to have Education characterized by the high quality of its curricula, institutions, and outcomes. An education that is aligned with national and international standards and oriented towards the development of knowledge, skills and towards the incorporation of the twenty first century skills which are needed for better solving problems.

Yet, incorporating the 4Cs does not happen overnight and educators as well as learners don't carry their magic wand. Educators shouldn't be the only ones held responsible for the incorporation of the 4Cs. Teachers find themselves helpless, unable to decide when the learner's interest should be above the curriculum's outcomes. On the other hand, ESL learners, in this paper cycle- two learners, should not be held responsible for their education especially if they belong to low socio-economic classes and therefore are offered teaching by either irrelevant books or irrelevant curriculums. Instead, they should be provided with equal opportunities as those being educated in private sectors. Policies in this matter should be clearly set and teacher's professionalism should be of high importance.

The challenges underpinning the implementation of the 4Cs go in a vicious circle. Teachers blame the Lebanese curriculum for the many restrictions and their work conditions (Esseili, 2014; Bahous et al, 2011). School stakeholders and principals find that teachers lack professional training (Esseili, 2014; Orr, 2011;

Ghaith & Shaaban, 1999). Students blame the teachers for traditional methods and demotivating topics (Bahous et al, 2011)

Therefore, revising the current curricula or reforming it and developing the curricula and personnel in light of the current practice and fostering the integration of the 4Cs in each and every educational cycle might be one step forward towards promoting education that develops individuals and provides them with critical thinking skills and moral reasoning, enabling them to live and work in a modern, changing society and to become lifelong learners (LAES, 2006).

Therefore, providing professional development for teachers shall be mandatory for all teachers enrolling in any teaching sector public was it or private. Thus, professionally securing teachers. Knowing that General education curricula did not list under its general goals any goal for the development of critical thinking and moral reasoning, though it mentioned moral commitment, to prepare students to adapt to change and to the demands of living and working in changing modern societies. It is therefore now worth listing exactly the skills that must be incorporated specifically collaborative, communicative, critical and creative thinking.

## **6.1 Limitations and further suggestions**

Although the study fulfilled its purpose, and furthered my understandings about the practice and challenges of the recent incorporation of the 4Cs in ESL classes yet, I do acknowledge the limitations of the study.

First, my sampling was small in number. The interviewed teachers were 9 and only 16 teachers filled the questionnaires. Larger sample might have yielded new insights.

Second, teachers claim that they give learners enough time to answer, maybe their feedback worries the learner, maybe students' participation and demotivation is a result of being shy rather than being demotivated. Interviews with learners would have been valued consequently to listen and voice the students' own views and find more about the challenges from their own perspectives. Besides, the fact that the teachers themselves are the body of research and investigation, probably made them resort to blaming the curriculum and claiming the best of their practices. Therefore, class observations would be extremely helpful in further research.

Also, most of my recruited teachers were teachers who taught at private schools with only one teacher teaching at public school. It would be fruitful to gain more insights of a larger sample of public teachers 'teaching methods.

Yet, I do have some suggestions. The first is related to the role of ESL coordinators. In light of the above claims it would be helpful to define exactly the role of ESL coordinators. The second is to find out other challenges besides teachers' professionalism.

Due to the small size of population in the present study, it appears difficult to generalize the findings of this research to the entire population of English language teachers/ learners.

However, the process of change should involve the entire school community collaboratively working together. Otherwise, the implementation of 21st Century Skills will continue to remain a paradox. Accordingly, future research is needed to be carried out on a wider scale so as to investigate learners' beliefs across different populations, contexts, majors and age groups.

The examination system, which presently focuses on the students' liability to learn the content of textbooks taught, requires a thorough revisit especially at the

level of public schools. Developing framework for quality control of public books on the basis of implementing the 4Cs in activities and tasks and educational practices as well as following up with textbooks at private schools. In fact, the examination system should be modified so that it could encourage the conceptual learning in students. Then learners will be directed to deep understanding and application of the knowledge learned in classrooms.

Initiating or developing a system for rehabilitation, following-up and training teachers for the acquisition and use of skills needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and enabling them to help their students acquire thinking and moral reasoning skills as well as the skills for lifelong learning.

Make ESL coordinators more aware of their responsibilities in terms of teacher-preparedness to instill those skills on a daily basis.

In discussing this we seem to be in a vicious circle. The challenge might seem to be in the textbooks or in the curriculum itself or in the professionalism of teachers or even in the mindsets of parents as well as stakeholders and ...no matter where is its starting point, it all leads to curriculum reform. One of the teachers said that the curriculum itself is contradictory. "At times.... I shall employ the 4Cs at the same time I shall teach exam-wise because this is what it counts. When it comes to results numbers talk. Parents are prone to see tangible results..."

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### **Textbooks**

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## APPENDIX A

Incorporating the 4 Cs in ESL (English as second language) Classes

Before replying to any of the following, I want to assure that this study aims at exploring the incorporation of the 4Cs (collaboration, communication, critical thinking & creativity) in the Lebanese context across cycle two ESL classes i.e. grades (4, 5 & 6). The information from the questionnaire will aim at better understanding of the incorporation of the 4 Cs. Also, you should know that the questionnaire will be anonymous and all of your answers will remain confidential. No one will know how you answered and that it is voluntary i.e. you don't have to answer all of the questions. The questionnaire takes 10 minutes to complete.

**Answer the following questions by choosing the item that corresponds to you.**

**1. What is your age Group?**

- 18-24
- 25-30
- 31-39
- Above 39

**2. Which grade level do you teach? \_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Years of Teaching Experience.-----**

**4. Are you male or female?**

Male

Female

**5. You teach at**      **Private school**     

**Public school**     

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out more about incorporating the 4 Cs and the challenges teachers face while employing them.

Please take the time to complete this questionnaire to the best of your knowledge.

For each item choose the number that best describes your answer.

It is important for us that you complete the entire questionnaire in order to obtain accurate results.

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Used almost all the time
1. I teach English classes using English only. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
2. I allow my students to answer in Arabic (code-switching). Q1	1	2	3	4	5
3. I employ different teaching methods while teaching. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
4. I encourage my students to use critical thinking while responding. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
5. I elicit students' answers and induce their responses using many strategies. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
6. I assign group work. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
7. I cater for different learning styles Q1	1	2	3	4	5
8. We have frequent debates and discussions in class. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
9. I allow the use of the bilingual approach in my classes. (allow mother language and second language) Q1	1	2	3	4	5
10. In my class, I have out-of-school learning activities. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
11. In my outcomes, there is one allocated for students' collaboration. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
12. My students' limited knowledge in vocabulary hinders their communication. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
13. The curriculum is flexible, in regards to allowing lots of activities and collaboration among students. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
14. Examinations pose difficulties on my students and lead them to rote learning, i.e. memorization Q2	1	2	3	4	5
15. Examination outcomes lead me to focus more on teaching exam-wise. Q2	1	2	3	4	5

16. Time constraints demolish the way for critical thinking driven activities. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
17. My ESL lessons are highly connected to their environment/surroundings. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am flexible with students regarding their answers. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
19. Time is not an issue in regards to incorporating creative and critical skills. Q2	1	2	3	4	5
20. It is not a problem if a learner uses his/her mother tongue to express himself/herself and communicate. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
21. I use technology frequently in my class. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
22. I redirect the question for learners in case they didn't answer properly. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
23. I wait for a learner to respond after posing a question Q1	1	2	3	4	5
24. My learners are engaged all of the time Q2	1	2	3	4	5
25. Learners' level of participation in my classes is high Q2	1	2	3	4	5
26. We allow inquiry activities (information-gathering skills) Q1	1	2	3	4	5
27. I allow my learners to be active participants Q2	1	2	3	4	5
28. I acknowledge every learner's response. Q1	1	2	3	4	5
29. My learners accept any belief without any further argument or discussion Q2	1	2	3	4	5

**Answer the following questions briefly.**

1. What teaching methods/styles do you implement? Specify.
  
2. How do you act with a student who doesn't know how to respond due to lack of vocabulary repertoire?
  
3. How much time is allotted to a student to respond to a question?
  
4. Which topics make students more engaged?
  
5. What kind of technology do you use? Specify.
  
6. How do you evaluate the climate (environment) of your class?
  
7. In your opinion what are the difficulties of incorporating the 4 Cs in English classrooms?
  
8. As a teacher of cycle two classes, does integrating the 4 Cs hinder tackling the objectives stated by your lesson plan/curriculum? How often?
  
9. How can you describe the role of a teacher in a classroom that incorporates the 4 Cs?
  
10. What are you as a teacher preparing your learners for?

## APPENDIX B

Before replying to any of the following, I want to assure that this study aims at exploring the incorporation of the 4Cs (collaboration, communication, critical thinking & creativity) in the Lebanese context across cycle two ESL classes i.e. grades (4, 5 & 6). The information from the interview will aim at better understanding of the incorporation of the 4 Cs. Also, you should know that the interview will be anonymous and all of your answers will remain confidential. No one will know how you answered and that it is voluntary i.e. you don't have to answer all of the questions. The interview is 10 minutes long.

**Answer the following questions briefly.**

1. What teaching methods/styles do you implement? Specify.
2. How do you approach /act with a student who doesn't know how to respond due to lack of vocabulary repertoire?
3. How much time is allotted to a student to respond to a question?
4. Which topics make students more engaged?
5. What kind of technology do you use? Specify.
6. How do you evaluate the climate of your class?
7. In your opinion what are the difficulties of incorporating the 4 Cs in English classrooms?
8. As a teacher of cycle two classes, does integrating the 4 Cs hinder tackling the objectives stated by your lesson plan/curriculum? How often?
9. How can you describe the role of a teacher in a classroom that incorporates the 4 Cs??
10. What are you as a teacher preparing learners for?

## APPENDIX C

### Checklist for Assessing the Books:

1. Group work criteria:
  - Demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively with diverse teams.
  - Assume shared responsibility for collaborative work
  - Value individual contributions
  - Encourages direct and mediated communication
  - Highlights grouping strategies: individual, pair, group & team work
  
2. Teaching methods/Practices:
  - Employs different methods (project-based learning/ problem-based learning/design-based learning).
  - The materials address a variety of learning styles.
  - Incorporates higher level thinking skills and problem solving
  - Performance-based learning and assessment
  - Includes Game-Based Learning
  - The material integrates four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing
  - Integrates different learning styles: aural, oral, visual, kinesthetic
  - Interactive/communicative approaches
  - Includes critical thinking and problem solving skills :
    - a) Reason effectively
    - b) Ask pointed questions and solve problems,
    - c) Analyze and evaluate alternative points of view
    - d) Reflect critically on decisions and processes information.
  
3. Class environment:
  - Creates learning environments that supports 21<sup>st</sup> century skill outcomes.
  - Supports professional learning communities that enable educators to collaborate, share best practices, and integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into classroom practice.
  
4. Outcomes:
  - Enables students to learn in relevant, real world 21st century contexts (project-based).
  - The learning outcomes that can be expected are clearly described.
  - The opportunities created allow learners to apply content to their own lives.
  
5. Textbook :
  - Allows equitable access to quality learning tools, technologies, and resources.
  - The book contains learner-centered materials and content.
  - The book contains teacher-friendly instructions and reference material.
  - Design (including art work, layout, font style/size etc.)
  - The layout and formatting (including font size) is appropriate for the students.
  - The textbook series is affordable.
  - The textbook progresses at a comfortable pace.

- They are up to date (published within the past 10 years).
6. Relevant to culture/students:
- They contain relevant content/ appropriate for learners and culturally sensitive.
  - They take into account the linguistic and cultural diversity of the student population.
  - Promotes cross-cultural awareness
  - Authentic language is used in the lesson content.
  - The instructional material is appropriate for learners regardless of the person's gender, race, ethnicity, and primary language.
  - Includes level-appropriate questionnaires/ activities that ask for learners' opinion on content.

## APPENDIX D

Those were the teachers' answers in regards to questions related to research question 1 which is : “ How are cycle two ESL teachers incorporating the 4Cs in their classes?”

Interview questions	Answers of teachers
What Teaching Methods do you implement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiate</li> <li>• Depend on sensory(visual/auditory)</li> <li>• Cater for different learning styles</li> <li>• Student-centered &amp; games driven</li> </ul>
How do you approach /act with a student in case of a communication breakdown, i.e. doesn't know how to respond due to lack of vocabulary repertoire?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simplify &amp; rephrase</li> <li>• Probe to elicit students' responses</li> <li>• Use synonyms or descriptive words</li> <li>• Use context clues</li> <li>• Redirect the question</li> <li>• Give enough time to think and answer</li> <li>• Allow for help from peer</li> </ul>
Which language do you allow your learners to respond with?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow answers in Arabic</li> <li>• Totally ignore Arabic answers</li> <li>• Sometimes allow /sometimes urge English answers</li> </ul>
How do you foster incorporating 4Cs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep on encouraging my students to use critical thinking</li> <li>• Assign group work</li> <li>• Frequent debates &amp; discussions</li> <li>• Outcomes specifying collaboration</li> </ul>
How do you prepare your students for their exams?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice &amp; drill</li> <li>• Teach sample exams</li> <li>• Show steps</li> <li>• Don't prepare for exams</li> <li>• Assess based on competencies</li> </ul>
Technology-orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use everything needed</li> <li>• Deal with what is available</li> <li>• Basic technology</li> <li>• High digital literacy acquisition (Moodle, Google docs, own websites, discussion forums)</li> </ul>

“What are the challenges that face teachers while incorporating the 4Cs?”

What challenges does the curriculum pose regarding the incorporation of the 4Cs?	
1. books	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-engaging topics (some books)</li> <li>• teachers have no say in choosing engaging topics</li> <li>• don't reflect students' environment/surrounding</li> <li>• students feel detached from books</li> <li>• irrelevant topics</li> </ul>
2. assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rote –learning valued</li> <li>• exams outcomes measured by grades rather than innovation</li> </ul>
3. curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tight &amp; heavy content</li> <li>• curriculum contradiction(cater for 21<sup>st</sup> century learner &amp; attain high grades)</li> <li>• hectic lesson plans</li> <li>• product vs process curriculum</li> <li>• demanding</li> <li>• no room for creativity</li> <li>• no out-of –school learning</li> </ul>
4. teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• underqualified teachers</li> <li>• demotivated teachers</li> <li>• teachers habits&amp; beliefs obstacles</li> <li>• teachers' safety strategies(coordinators attend classes)</li> </ul>
5. time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited</li> <li>• limits critical thinking activities &amp; creativity</li> <li>• wasted time in group work</li> </ul>
6. cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of interest in another culture</li> <li>• learners don't know how to think critically</li> <li>• students' cultural respect</li> <li>• parents' mindsets that value tangible results</li> <li>• schools' measurement of success</li> </ul>
7. class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of students in class</li> <li>• behavioral issues/management</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX E

### Book Analysis Results

Book Title	Implemented at Private/public	Grade level	Factual Details
1. Journeys	Used at Private school	Implemented at grade 4 Complemented by a workbook & a magazine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates collaborative work</li> <li>• Highlights grouping strategies</li> <li>• book employs different learning methods (project-based/ problem-based/design-based/ game –based /performance-based &amp; assessment</li> <li>• Incorporates higher level thinking skills and problem solving</li> <li>• Enables students to learn in relevant, real world 21st century contexts.</li> <li>• Allows equitable access to quality learning tools, technologies, and online resources</li> <li>• The book contains relevant content appropriate for learners</li> <li>• It takes into account linguistic diversity of student population</li> <li>• The book is intended to focus on Western culture</li> <li>• The material is specific to one culture</li> <li>• Authentic language is used in CDs.</li> </ul>
2. Expeditions	Private School Complemented by a workbook & a magazine	Taught to grade 5 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book highlights grouping strategies: pair, group, team work</li> <li>• book employs different learning methods (project-based/ problem-based/design-based/ game –based /performance-based &amp; assessment</li> <li>• Integrates higher level thinking &amp; problem solving</li> <li>• enables educators to collaborate, share best practices, and integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into classroom practice</li> <li>• The opportunities created allow learners to apply content to their own lives</li> <li>• Allows equal access to technological and online resources</li> <li>• The material is too culturally biased or specific to one culture (Western Culture)</li> </ul>
3. Treasures	Private School Complemented by a workbook & a magazine	Taught to grade 4 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book highlights grouping strategies</li> <li>• Employs different learning methods(design a poem/perform a play)</li> <li>• Incorporates higher level thinking skills and problem solving(problem &amp; solution)</li> <li>• integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into classroom practice(collaboration/creativity/critical thinking/communication, leading debates)</li> <li>• create opportunities that allow learners to apply content to their own lives</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The book allows equitable access to quality learning tools, technologies, and resources.</li> <li>• The book contains relevant content appropriate for learners(child labor)</li> <li>• The book promotes cultural awareness</li> <li>• Authentic language is used in content language</li> </ul>
4. Treasures	Private school complimented by a workbook And a magazine	Taught to grade 6 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• highlights grouping strategies: individual, pair, group &amp; team work</li> <li>• Instills higher level thinking skills and problem solving (analyze how can they be safer?)</li> <li>• enable educators to collaborate, share best practices, and integrate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into classroom practice(A Care Package of Technology for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)</li> <li>• Enables students to learn in relevant, real world 21st century contexts (find out more about rescue teams at <a href="http://www.macmillanmh.com">www.macmillanmh.com</a> )</li> <li>• The opportunities created allow learners to apply content to their own lives( connect &amp; compare)</li> <li>• The book takes into account the cultural diversity of the student population E.g. Lost City (Andes) The origin of Ghana Hollywood Here You Come</li> <li>• The book promotes cross-cultural awareness but stresses on western civilizations e.g. Vaqueros/emperors/Leonardo da Vinci</li> </ul>
5. Treasures	Private school Complimented by a workbook & magazine	Taught to grade 5 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The book demonstrates the ability to work collaboratively with diverse teams (discuss in pairs why Debra Frasier chose this ending?)</li> <li>• Implements different collaborative strategies (Design in groups a Spelling Bee competition)</li> <li>• The book employs different learning methods (project-based/ problem-based/design-based/ game –based /performance-based &amp; assessment (perform a play/advertise your own work)</li> <li>• Incorporates critical thinking, creativity&amp; problem solving (If you were President whom would you ask to save the world? Explain your answer/should you believe everything said about Davy Crockett? why or why not?(analyze)</li> <li>• Enables students to learn in relevant, real world 21st century contexts</li> <li>• Allows equitable access to quality learning tools, technologies, and</li> </ul>

			<p>resources(If you were on this web page what features would you select to help find out more about Babe, Paul Bunyan's ox? (using toolbars and links)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The book contains relevant content appropriate for learners.</li> <li>• But is Culturally- oriented/biased: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e.g. American Legends</li> <li>The Caribbean Islands</li> <li>Cowboys and Cowgirls</li> <li>The American Revolution</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
6. Journeys	Private school A workbook & magazine compliment it	Intended for grade 6 students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration is clearly demonstrated (work in groups/discuss in pairs)</li> <li>• Book employs differentiated learning methods(problem-based/design-based/game –based /performance-based/drama-based)</li> <li>• Incorporates critical thinking &amp; creativity (what clues hint at the author's purpose for writing this selection? (analyze)/ improvise a song inspired from Goal to Go or that tells about the author's experience</li> <li>• Supports professional learning communities enabling educators as well as learners to collaborate together</li> <li>• Opportunities created allow learners to apply content to their own lives.</li> <li>• Contains learner-centered materials and content</li> <li>• The book contains relevant content appropriate for learners(Robotics/the voice that challenged a nation/young pilots set records)</li> <li>• It is Culturally- specific: The book is intended to inform and introduce the Western cultures (the boy who saved baseball/time trek: Mexico/Native American poetry/The Real Vikings/The Emperor's Silent Army</li> <li>• The book is intended for American students yet it has national themes (challenging voices/science fiction/robotic/ All alone in the universe)</li> <li>• CDs used in listening activities are in authentic language (Native American speakers)</li> </ul>
7. Let's Learn Together	Public School	Intended to grade 4 students Reinforced by a workbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the teachers' version there is collaboration stated among teachers but not among learners.</li> <li>• Doesn't state the learning methods included in it nor the teaching strategies</li> <li>• Timidly states critical questions</li> <li>• No space for student creativity at all was noticed</li> <li>• The book is extremely outdated (2000).</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is intended only for Lebanese learners (very limited scope of instruction &amp; population)</li> <li>• Comprehensible simple English language is used.</li> </ul>
8. Let's Learn Together	Public School	Intended to grade 5 learners A workbook compliments it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The book neither demonstrates nor highlights grouping strategies</li> <li>• No differentiation between learning methods is stated</li> <li>• It integrates the four language skills: speaking, listening, writing, reading</li> <li>• No support for professional learning communities was noticed</li> <li>• Learning outcomes described in teachers' copy only</li> <li>• Doesn't allow or has the opportunity of access to quality learning tools, technologies, and resources</li> <li>• The book is outdated (2000)</li> <li>• It is intended for Lebanese learners only</li> <li>• The book is culturally bound to the Lebanese context</li> <li>• No alignment with international standards</li> </ul>
9. Let's Learn Together	Public School	Intended for grade 6 learners Reinforced by a student workbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No observation for collaboration</li> <li>• Teaching methods weren't insinuated not even hinted</li> <li>• Only integration of the 4 language skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking</li> <li>• Stresses lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy (retrieve/deduce/memorize)</li> <li>• No suggestions for specific e-learning tools or platforms for further readings or researches</li> <li>• Is acceptably up to date (2011)</li> <li>• The book is bound for the Lebanese context and culture</li> <li>• Simple easy language is used</li> </ul>