

**CONTENT ANALYSIS: THE INTEGRATION OF CRITICAL THINKING,
CREATIVITY, COMMUNICATION, AND COLLABORATION
(4C SKILLS) IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION
PROGRAM CURRICULUM AT UNIVERSITAS
LANCANG KUNING**

THESIS

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One of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

Saberna Yulis, 2026 : Content Analysis: The Integration of Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration (4C Skills) in The English Language Education Program Curriculum at Universitas Lancang Kuning

The integration of twenty-first-century competencies in higher education requires English Language Education programs to incorporate Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration (4C skills) within curriculum documents. However, the extent to which these competencies are represented in the Semester Lesson Plans (RPS) needs to be examined. This study aims to identify the types of 4C skill indicators integrated into the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning and to determine the most dominantly represented skills as reflected in the RPS. This research employed a qualitative content analysis design supported by quantitative data. The data consisted of RPS documents from selected compulsory courses offered in semesters one, three, and five, with two elective courses included as supporting sources. The units of analysis revealed that all four 4C skills have been integrated across various structural components of the Semester Lesson Plans (RPS) documents, including Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Course Description, Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs), Sub-Course Learning Outcomes (Sub-CLOs), Learning Indicators, Instructional Activities, Learning Materials, Assessment Components. The findings reveal a total of 155 units representing 4C skill indicators identified in the RPS documents. Among these, Critical Thinking appeared as the most dominant skill (48 units, 30.97%), followed by Communication (46 units, 29.68%), Creativity (33 units, 21.29%), and Collaboration (28 units, 18.06%). The results indicate that the RPS documents incorporate all four competencies with greater emphasis on analytical and communicative abilities.

Keywords: 4C Skills, Curriculum Analysis, Semester Lesson Plan

ABSTRAK

Saberna Yulis, 2026 : Analisis Konten: *Integrasi Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration* (Keterampilan 4C) dalam Kurikulum Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Lancang Kuning

Integrasi kompetensi abad ke-21 dalam pendidikan tinggi menuntut Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris untuk mengintegrasikan Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, dan Collaboration (keterampilan 4C) ke dalam dokumen kurikulum. Namun, sejauh mana kompetensi tersebut direpresentasikan dalam Rencana Pembelajaran Semester (RPS) perlu dikaji. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis indikator keterampilan 4C yang terintegrasi dalam Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Lancang Kuning serta untuk menentukan keterampilan yang paling dominan sebagaimana tercermin dalam dokumen RPS. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain analisis isi kualitatif yang didukung oleh data kuantitatif. Data penelitian berupa dokumen Rencana Pembelajaran Semester (RPS) dari beberapa mata kuliah wajib yang ditawarkan pada semester satu, tiga, dan lima, serta dilengkapi dengan dua mata kuliah pilihan sebagai data pendukung. Unit analisis menunjukkan bahwa keempat keterampilan 4C telah terintegrasi dalam berbagai komponen struktural dokumen RPS, termasuk CPL, deskripsi mata kuliah, CPMK dan Sub-CPMK, indikator pembelajaran, kegiatan pembelajaran, materi pembelajaran, serta komponen penilaian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan terdapat 155 unit yang merepresentasikan indikator keterampilan 4C yang teridentifikasi dalam dokumen RPS. Di antara jumlah tersebut, *Critical Thinking* merupakan keterampilan yang paling dominan (48 unit, 30,97%), diikuti oleh *Communication* (46 unit, 29,68%), *Creativity* (33 unit, 21,29%), dan *Collaboration* (28 unit, 18,06%). Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa dokumen RPS telah mengintegrasikan keempat kompetensi tersebut dengan penekanan yang lebih besar pada kemampuan analitis dan komunikatif.

Kata kunci: Keterampilan 4C, Analisis Kurikulum, Rencana Pembelajaran Semester

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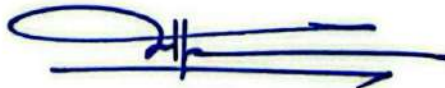
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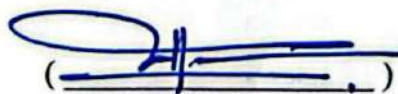
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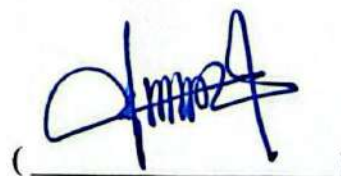
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PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN TULISAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa :

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Pekanbaru, 18th February 2026

The Researcher



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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

In the past decade, educational systems worldwide have increasingly emphasized the mastery of twenty-first-century competencies, widely known as the 4C skills: critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. This shift reflects a growing recognition that traditional, content-centered instruction is no longer adequate for preparing students to meet complex academic, professional, and social demands. Modern learning environments require learners to analyze information critically, produce innovative solutions, communicate effectively across diverse contexts, and collaborate within multidisciplinary teams. Accordingly, recent studies highlight that higher education institutions must intentionally embed these competencies within instructional design and curriculum planning to ensure students' readiness for future challenges (Trilling & Fadel, 2009).

As global industries become increasingly interconnected, the demand for graduates equipped with strong 4C competencies critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration continues to rise. These competencies are widely recognized as key drivers of innovation and effective problem-solving, while also enabling individuals to function productively in diverse, technology-mediated workplaces. Educational researchers emphasize that the 4C competencies form the foundation of lifelong learning and digital-age citizenship, as they support learners in adapting to rapid changes in information, technology, and workforce expectations. Consequently, the integration of 4C skills into educational curricula is considered a crucial indicator of graduate readiness in the twenty-first century (Edwin et al., 2025).

In Indonesia, the urgency to strengthen 4C competencies is reflected in recent curriculum reforms, including *Kurikulum Merdeka* and other competency-based frameworks that emphasize higher-order thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration as fundamental learning outcomes. Contemporary research also shows that the 4C model rather than the expanded 6C

version remains the predominant conceptual framework within Indonesian educational settings. For example, a study on language learning reported that elementary students' 4C abilities can be enhanced effectively through activities such as problem-solving, peer interaction, and creative expression (Indriyani et al., 2025). These findings demonstrate that the development of 4C competencies is a national priority and a central component of classroom practice across various educational levels.

Within English language learning in Indonesia, the integration of 4C skills has gained increasing prominence. Empirical studies indicate that ICT-supported English learning environments can significantly enhance communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking (Siregar & Harida, 2023). In addition, Project-Based Learning (PBL), one of the most widely implemented pedagogical approaches in Indonesian EFL contexts, has been shown to strengthen critical thinking, creativity, and cooperative learning through inquiry-driven and collaborative tasks (Indriyani et al., 2025). These findings affirm that the 4C skills serve as foundational competencies for effective English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction.

At the higher education level, universities worldwide are increasingly responsible for preparing graduates who can respond effectively to complex societal and technological changes. In response to twenty-first-century demands that emphasize innovation, adaptability, and interdisciplinary collaboration, higher education institutions are redesigning learning environments to prioritize holistic competencies rather than focusing solely on content mastery. This global shift places the 4C competencies critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication at the core of curriculum reform across academic disciplines. Empirical evidence supports this transformation, as demonstrated by Edwin et al. (2025), who report that higher education curriculum reforms systematically integrate 4C skills through blended learning models, interdisciplinary projects, and technology-enhanced instructional strategies.

These global developments significantly influence how universities conceptualize curriculum design. Institutions are now expected to embed 4C skills

explicitly into program outcomes, course structures, and instructional activities to ensure that graduates are both academically proficient and professionally adaptable. When institutions adopt a 4C-oriented curriculum approach, teaching practices shift from content transmission toward inquiry-based, creative, and collaborative learning. (Hammond., & Oakes, 2021) emphasize that well-designed curricula guide students toward learner-centered instructional practices aligned with twenty-first-century expectations.

In Indonesia, higher education institutions have increasingly aligned their curriculum policies with 4C-based standards. National accreditation frameworks encourage study programs to integrate critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration systematically within syllabi and assessment mechanisms. However, the degree to which this integration is implemented varies widely, making it essential to examine how effectively Indonesian universities particularly English Language Education programs translate global 4C expectations into curriculum practice.

Within the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning, the integration of the 4C competencies has become an important focus as the program seeks alignment with national and global expectations for modern English language education. Given this condition, examining how the English Language Education Program curriculum positions the 4C competencies across course descriptions, learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessment systems becomes necessary. Although some aspects of the 4C skills may emerge implicitly through group presentations, peer teaching, reflective activities, or classroom demonstrations, the absence of clearly articulated 4C-based outcomes may cause these competencies to develop incidentally rather than through intentional planning. This raises concerns regarding whether all components of the 4C framework receive balanced and systematic emphasis within the program curriculum.

As English Language Education programs in Indonesia increasingly respond to twenty-first-century expectations, institutions such as Universitas Lancang Kuning must ensure that their curricula adequately prepare graduates for

progressively complex instructional environments. This concern is particularly relevant given the diverse range of courses within the program, including theoretical subjects, skill-focused courses, practicum experiences, and teaching simulations.

To obtain preliminary information regarding the implementation of 4C competencies within the English Language Education Program curriculum, an interview was conducted with the Head of the English Language Education Department at Universitas Lancang Kuning on 8 December 2025. The interview revealed that, conceptually, all courses in the program are expected to facilitate the development of critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration, as these competencies form the foundation of modern and digital-era learning. However, the Head of Department acknowledged that although 4C elements are present, the extent and clarity of their implementation vary across subjects. She noted that the development of 4C competencies often depends on each course instructor's teaching methods, strategies, and time allocation. Consequently, the integration of the four competencies is not always implemented optimally or systematically in every course.

The interview further indicated that although elements of the 4C competencies are present across courses, the extent of their integration varies, with creativity and collaboration appearing less consistently facilitated compared to critical thinking and communication. The Head of Department mentioned that time constraints and differences in lecturers' instructional approaches may contribute to these inconsistencies. Despite these challenges, she emphasized that embedding 4C competencies in the curriculum remains crucial to meet the demands of contemporary English language education. These preliminary insights confirm the need for a comprehensive curriculum analysis to determine how intentionally and consistently the 4C competencies are integrated into the English Language Education Program.

Given the importance of equipping graduates with strong 4C competencies, higher education institutions must ensure that their curricula provide intentional and systematic opportunities for competency development. Curriculum serves as

the foundational blueprint that shapes instructional design, assessment practices, and overall learning experiences. A curriculum that consistently integrates the 4C skills across subjects promotes gradual and holistic competency development aligned with global expectations for educational professionalism.

Curriculum also plays a crucial role in bridging theoretical understanding with practical readiness. When course outcomes and structures intentionally reflect the 4C framework, graduates are guided toward the problem-solving, innovation, collaboration, and communication skills essential for effective English language education. Consistent integration of the 4C competencies across multiple subjects ensures repeated exposure and progressive mastery, enabling learners to advance from basic understanding to applied proficiency.

Therefore, analyzing curriculum quality is essential for evaluating how well English Language Education programs prepare graduates for real instructional challenges. By examining course descriptions, learning outcomes, and pedagogical structures within the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning, this study aims to offer meaningful insights for EFL curriculum development. Strengthening the curriculum through clearer and more systematic integration of the 4C competencies will help ensure that graduates are better prepared to meet the instructional demands of twenty-first-century education.

Although the 4C framework has long been recognized as a foundation for preparing future educators, most prior studies in Indonesia have examined the 4C competencies from the perspective of instructional practice rather than curriculum design. Existing research largely focuses on how lecturers implement 4C skills during teaching activities or how students perceive their development. For example, studies by Anggraini et al. (2024), Ashadi, (2024), Hidayatullah et al. (2025), Marwa et al. (2023), Tamela & Dwi (2021) report that 4C development is predominantly addressed at the classroom level through group projects, PjBL integration, learning assessments, or lesson-plan design, while curriculum-level integration receives limited scrutiny.

Because prior research has focused mainly on classroom instruction, a clear gap remains regarding how 4C skills are embedded at the curricular level, particularly within English Language Education programs. While research on higher education curriculum exists more broadly, curriculum analyses that specifically examine English Language Education program curriculum where competency development is formally structured are still limited. This gap is evident across English Language Education programs in Indonesian universities, including Universitas Lancang Kuning, where explicit documentation of 4C integration has not yet been thoroughly investigated. To address this gap, the present study analyzes the English Language Education Program curriculum at Universitas Lancang Kuning by examining course descriptions, learning outcomes, and pedagogical structures to determine the extent to which the 4C competencies are intentionally facilitated throughout the program.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background discussed above, the following phenomena are identified:

1. There is a need to examine the types of 4C skill indicators critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration embedded within the English Language Education Program curriculum at Universitas Lancang Kuning. This examination focuses on how these competencies are represented in the components of the Semester Lesson Plan (RPS).
2. There is a need to identify which 4C skill indicators are most frequently represented within the curriculum documents.

Since the curriculum serves as the primary framework for instructional implementation, a systematic analysis of the RPS is required to determine the dominant patterns of 4C skill representation across courses.

C. Limitation of the Problem

The researcher limited the study to the analysis of semester lesson plan documents (*Rencana Pembelajaran Semester/RPS*) as formal curriculum documents within the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The analysis focused on Semester Lesson Plan (RPS) documents from selected compulsory courses offered in semesters one, three, and five, complemented by two elective courses included as supporting sources. These courses represent the foundational, academic, and pedagogical stages of the program curriculum.

The courses analyzed include Essential Writing, Essential Listening Skills, Essential Reading, Essential Speaking, Academic Speaking, Critical Reading, Functional Grammar, Curriculum and Material Development, Research in Language Education, Writing for Social Media, and English for Business.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background and the identified problems, the researcher formulates the research question as follows:

1. What types of 4C skill indicators critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration are integrated into the English Language Education Program curriculum at Universitas Lancang Kuning as reflected in the semester lesson plans?
2. Which 4C skill indicators are most dominantly represented in the semester lesson plans of compulsory courses within the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning?

E. Purpose of the Research

The purposes of this research are:

1. To identify the types of 4C skill indicators critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration integrated into the English Language Education Program curriculum at Universitas Lancang Kuning as reflected in the semester lesson plans.

2. To determine the dominant 4C skill indicators represented in the semester lesson plans of compulsory courses within the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

F. Significance of the Research

The researcher expects that the findings of this study will provide meaningful contributions to several parties, both theoretically and practically.

a. Theoretical Significances

- a) For students, this research is expected to enhance their understanding of how the 4C skills Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration are integrated within the English Language Education Program curriculum. By examining curriculum documents, students may gain clearer insight into how learning outcomes, activities, and assessments are designed to support the development of twenty-first-century competencies.
- b) For lecturers and curriculum developers, this study is expected to offer theoretical insights into how far the English Language Education Program curriculum aligns with contemporary educational demands. The findings may reveal patterns in the representation of 4C skill indicators across semester lesson plans, providing an academic basis for evaluating the coherence between curriculum objectives and instructional planning. In this sense, the research can function as a reflective reference that encourages lecturers to critically review the alignment between curriculum design and competency-based education principles.
- c) For future researchers, this study may serve as a relevant reference for further investigations related to curriculum analysis, competency-based curriculum design, or 4C skills integration in higher education, particularly within Indonesian EFL contexts. This research may also provide a foundation for comparative curriculum studies across institutions or academic programs.

b. Practical Significances

- a) For students, the results of this research may increase awareness of the types of skills emphasized within their curriculum and how these skills are reflected in semester lesson plans. This awareness may help students better understand the learning focus of each course and encourage more active engagement with learning activities related to critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration.
- b) For lecturers, the findings are expected to serve as a reflective tool for reviewing their semester lesson plans. By identifying which 4C skill indicators are frequently emphasized and which receive less attention, lecturers may use the results as a basis for refining learning objectives, instructional activities, and assessment strategies. This reflection can support more intentional and balanced integration of the 4C competencies across courses.
- c) For the institution (Universitas Lancang Kuning), this study may provide empirical input for curriculum evaluation and development. The findings can assist the study program in assessing how well the documented curriculum reflects twenty-first-century competency expectations and in identifying areas that may require improvement to strengthen curriculum quality and consistency.

G. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation, several key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

1. Curriculum

In this study, curriculum refers to the structured academic framework of the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. It encompasses course objectives, learning outcomes, instructional planning, learning activities, and assessment components as formally documented in

the semester lesson plans. The curriculum serves as the primary reference for understanding how learning is systematically organized and how competencies are intended to be developed throughout the program.

2. Semester Lesson Plan

Semester lesson plan refers to the official instructional document used by lecturers in the English Language Education Program to plan and guide teaching and learning activities for each course over one semester. This document includes course identity, learning outcomes, instructional materials, teaching and learning activities, assessment methods, and learning resources. In this research, the semester lesson plan functions as the main data source for analyzing the integration of 4C skills within the curriculum.

3. 4C Skills

In this study, 4C skills refer to four core twenty-first-century competencies: Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration. These skills are examined as curriculum-oriented competencies that are intended to be integrated into the English Language Education Program curriculum. The definition of 4C skills in this research focuses on how these competencies are represented, emphasized, and articulated within curriculum documents, rather than on their measurement through classroom performance or learning outcomes.

4. Integration of 4C Skills

The integration of 4C skills in this study refers to the inclusion and representation of critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration within curriculum documents of the English Language Education Program. This includes how the 4C skills are reflected in learning outcomes, instructional activities, assessment strategies, and course structures as documented in the semester lesson plans. Integration in this context is understood as curriculum-level planning, not as the actual implementation of teaching practices in the classroom.

5. Content Analysis

Content analysis in this study refers to a qualitative research method used to systematically examine and interpret curriculum documents, particularly semester lesson plans, to identify patterns related to the integration of 4C skills. Through this method, the researcher analyzes written curriculum content to determine the types of 4C skill indicators present and to identify which competencies are most dominantly represented across compulsory courses within the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

Based on the findings presented in the previous chapter, this study reveals that the four 21st-century skills Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration (4C skills) have been integrated into the Semester Lesson Plans (RPS) of the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. The integration of these skills is reflected in several components of the Semester Lesson Plan (RPS), including learning outcomes, learning activities, and assessment tasks. The findings show that all four 4C skills are represented in the RPS documents with different levels of emphasis. Critical Thinking appears as the most dominant skill with 48 recording units (30.97%), followed by Communication with 46 recording units (29.68%). Creativity occupies the third position with 33 recording units (21.29%), while Collaboration appears as the least dominant skill with 28 recording units (18.06%). Therefore, this study concludes that the English Language Education Curriculum has systematically embedded 4C skills within its semester lesson plans, with stronger emphasis on Critical Thinking and Communication. This distribution indicates that the curriculum prioritizes analytical reasoning and communicative competence while still incorporating opportunities for creative and collaborative learning. These findings imply that the integration of 21st-century skills in curriculum documents has been conceptually established within the program, although the balance among the four skills may still require further attention. Strengthening the representation of creativity and collaboration in instructional planning may support a more comprehensive development of students' 21st-century competencies.

B. Suggestion

The findings of this study provide important information regarding the integration of 4C skills Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration in the Semester Lesson Plans (RPS) of the English Language Education Program at Universitas Lancang Kuning. In terms of practical implications, this study may serve as a reference for curriculum developers and English lecturers in designing learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessment components that systematically incorporate 21st-century skills into classroom practice. This study may also function as a reflective foundation for lecturers in evaluating and improving their instructional design, particularly for courses that have not explicitly integrated all four 4C skills. Special attention is recommended for strengthening the implementation of Creativity and Collaboration within structured academic tasks. Furthermore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct in-depth investigations of how 4C skills are implemented in actual classroom teaching in order to examine the consistency between curriculum documents and real instructional practices.

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