



## The Perspective of FBS Students on 21st Century Skills in Universitas Negeri Medan

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<i>Article history:</i>	<p>The 21st century is characterized by rapid technological advancements and globalization, demanding new skills for individuals to thrive in an ever-changing world. This study explores the perspectives of students at the Faculty of Languages and Arts (FBS) at Universitas Negeri Medan regarding their preparedness and familiarity with 21st century skills, which include critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy, and adaptability. A descriptive qualitative research methodology was employed, using a structured questionnaire to gather students' insights on their readiness to apply these skills. Results indicate that the majority of students understand the importance of these skills and feel confident in their ability to apply them, particularly in critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative work. The findings also highlight the students' adeptness in using technology for learning, communication, and research, demonstrating strong digital literacy. However, challenges remain in evaluating the credibility of online information. Overall, the study shows that FBS students are prepared to navigate the demands of the 21st century, utilizing critical thinking, collaboration, and digital literacy to adapt to the evolving technological landscape. This study underscores the importance of integrating 21st century skills into education to ensure students are equipped for future challenges.</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

As the development of knowledge of humans, there are more and more demands to be able to survive and develop in an era. Similarly, in this era, where the age we are currently living and we know as the 21st century. The 21st century is a century that presents a different life landscape from previous centuries and is characterized by rapid technological development and globalization (Oktari et al., 2021). In line with Daryanto (2017) the 21st century is a century where science and technology develop, this can be indicated by the spread of information and technology in the current era of globalization. We can also see the real condition of the 21st century with many jobs being replaced by machines (Oktari et al., 2021).

Considering this, every human being must be able to try to deal with these changes in order to survive and continue to develop, move forward in life within this century. In line with the progress of the times or era, there are inseparable from the barriers or problems that can be experienced by each individual. Therefore, it is necessary to have enough preparation from each individual to be able to face these changes. The preparation in question is knowledge. According to Mukhadis (2013), the 21st century is a knowledge age where knowledge has been used as the basis for fulfilling the needs of human life both from problem solving and the development of every aspect of life both from education, economy and social.

With this change in perspective in the 21st century also changes the purpose of education itself. Education in the 21st century tends to ask for quality in everything both in terms of human effort and hard work. Meanwhile, according to Susianti et al. (2024) is different from education in the previous century where education was formed to support the formation of civil society and also industrialization. Education in the 21st century is intended so that every learner can compete in a fast-paced world both in terms of knowledge and skills to work and live.

In responding to these changes and seeing the importance of knowledge and skills in the 21st century, the world of education requires adaptation to the demands of the times. The adaptation is an effort to integrate education with the skills needed in this century, namely 21st century skills.

The 21st century skills are the skills needed by each individual to be able to compete in the present and the future (Mays, 2020). These skills include critical

thinking skills, communication skills, collaboration skills, and creativity. According to Birru (2024) 21st century skills are important because they provide students with essential skills such as creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration, which are crucial for future workplace success (Kivunja, 2015). Integrating these skills into the higher education curriculum addresses contemporary challenges and improves student preparedness. According to Todorova (2024) 21st century skills are essential due to rapid technological, economic, and social changes, which require individuals to adapt and evolve. College students as individuals whose urgency is closest to the sustainability of a nation's life are required to have good 21st century skills.

In the context of modern education, 21st-century skills continue to rise in importance as students are prepared to navigate a complex and connected world. These skills, also known as the 4Cs (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity), are crucial for success in both life and work. The Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture encourages the incorporation of these abilities into the curriculum to provide students with the necessary competencies for the future (Hosnan, 2014). Understanding the indications that reflect the achievement of each skill is important for school to develop their students 4Cs skills.

### **Communication**

Communication refers to having the ability to express thoughts clearly and effectively in a variety of forms, including spoken, nonverbal, and written communication. Effective communication skills include the ability to convey concepts effectively during discussions, the ability to actively listen and respond correctly, and the ability to provide information in a systematic manner (Mulyana, 2014). In addition, students should be able to adapt their communication style for various audiences and environments, demonstrating an awareness of the complexities of effective interaction. Participating in group conversations, presentations, and joint projects can help students improve their communication abilities.

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration is necessary for effective teamwork and accomplishing shared goals. Successful cooperation is characterized by the ability to share responsibilities take part in discussions between teammates, and contribute to group problem-solving efforts (Soepriyanto, 2018). Students ought to show conflict resolution abilities, including the capacity to manage conflicts constructively and reach an end point. Furthermore, good collaborators are open to criticism and willing to help their colleagues, resulting in a positive and inclusive team environment. Group projects and cooperative learning activities can help students develop collaborative abilities

and prepare them for future teamwork in a variety of environments.

### **Critical thinking**

Critical thinking is entails in analyzing information, evaluating different viewpoints of opinion, and making informed decisions. Critical thinking abilities include the ability to identify biases, evaluate the credibility of sources, and develop logical conclusions based on facts (Usmeldi, 2017). Students should also be able to ask probing questions, analyze critically, and use reasoning to solve complex problems. Encouraging inquiry-based learning and giving students opportunity to participate in debates and conversations can help them develop critical thinking skills, allowing them to approach problems with a thoughtful and analytical mindset.

### **Creativity**

Creativity means someone coming up with creative ideas and innovative solutions to issues. The ability to think differently, provide various solutions to a given problem, and think with flexibility are all indicators of creativity (Wang & Adesope, 2016). Students should also be willing to take risks and try out new ideas, as well as the ability to combine seemingly unconnected topics to create unique solutions. By creating a climate that encourages inquiry and experimentation, educators may help students improve their creative talents and prepare them to contribute original ideas in a variety of conditions.

However, looking at the conditions in the real situation, it turns out that many students are still not familiar with the concept of the 21st century which demands critical thinking, good communication and collaboration as well as creativity. Therefore, this article aims to answer how the perspective of UNIMED Faculty of Language and Arts students on skills in the 21st century. So that this article can be a further consideration to improve the quality of learning and skills development especially in UNIMED Faculty of Language and Arts students.

### **METHOD**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research method to explore the perspectives of FBS (Faculty of Languages and Arts) students at Universitas Negeri Medan regarding the implementation of 21st Century Skills. Descriptive qualitative research is a methodology that aims to provide a systematic, accurate, and factual description of phenomena, characteristics, and relationships within a specific context (Furidha, 2023). The aim was to understand how students perceive their familiarity, preparedness, and confidence in applying these skills in various contexts.

The participants in this study were students enrolled in the Faculty of Languages and Arts (FBS) at Universitas Negeri Medan.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to gather qualitative insights into students' perspectives on 21st Century Skills. The questionnaire consisted of 15 closed-ended questions grouped into five categories:

Familiarity and Preparedness

Critical Thinking

Collaboration

Adaptability

Digital Literacy

The closed-ended questions were rated on a five-point Likert scale to measure agreement levels:

1: Strongly Disagree

2: Disagree

3: Neutral

4: Agree

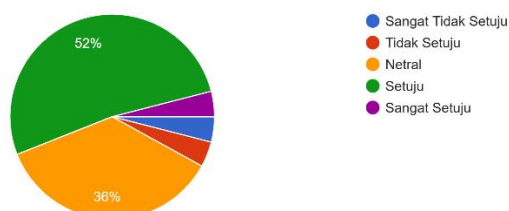
5: Strongly Agree

The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed descriptively qualitatively. Descriptive analysis involved calculating frequencies and percentages for each response to identify trends and patterns in students' perceptions. Qualitative analysis was used to interpret the results in the context of students' experiences, highlighting significant themes related to their familiarity, preparedness, and confidence in implementing 21st Century Skills.

## **FINDINGS (LEVEL 1)**

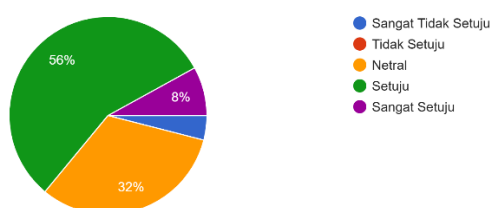
This section is the result of the discovery of how the perspective of FBS students of Medan State University towards 21st Century skills, whether they feel that there is an application of these skills in their environment or even applied to life as a student. This is stated in their answers to the 15-question questionnaire.

Saya familier dengan konsep Keterampilan Abad 21.  
25 jawaban



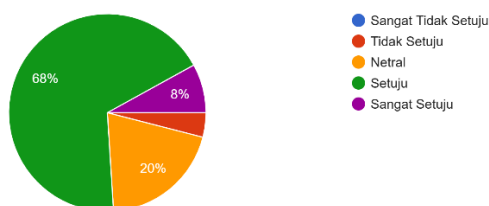
In the statement whether students are familiar with the concept of 21st century skills, the largest number is in the "Agree" section, which shows that they already know and have an understanding of 21st century skills, especially in the learning environment.

Saya merasa siap untuk mengembangkan dan menerapkan Keterampilan Abad 21.  
25 jawaban



In the second statement "I feel ready to develop and apply 21st century skills" and more than 90 percent of respondents stated that they tend to agree with this. This shows that there is an awareness for them to be ready to face and meet the demands of applying 21st century skills as a form of self-development of a modern student.

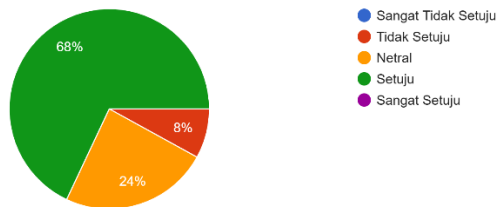
Saya yakin dengan kemampuan saya untuk berpikir kritis dan memecahkan masalah secara mandiri.  
25 jawaban



In the third statement "I am confident in my ability to think critically and solve problems independently" and the largest number of respondents pointed to "agree" which indicates that they believe in the importance of critical thinking and solving problems independently to be applied and they are confident in this where critical thinking and problem solving are 21st

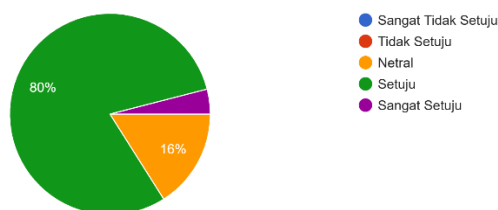
century skills.

Saya mampu mengidentifikasi dan memecahkan masalah menggunakan pendekatan sistematis.  
25 jawaban



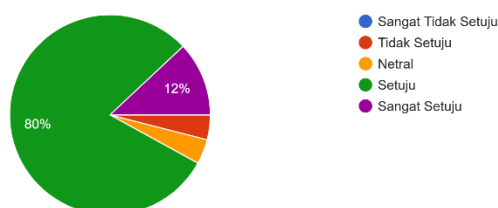
In the fourth statement "I am able to identify and solve problems using a systematic approach" shows the results of respondents who tend to agree, where this shows that students are able to solve a problem (apply 21st century skills) with a systematic or structured approach with new steps (plans).

Saya dapat menerapkan pemikiran kritis pada situasi dunia nyata.  
25 jawaban



In the fifth statement "I can apply critical thinking to real-world situations" shows that most respondents tend to "agree" which shows that students are more interested in linking something or in the form of new education and knowledge in the critical thinking system and flashbacks to real life.

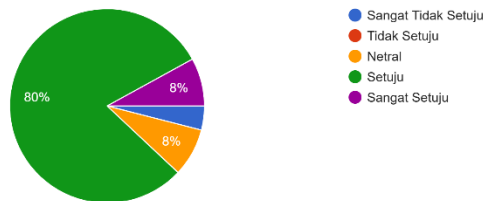
Saya mampu berkolaborasi dengan orang lain untuk mencapai tujuan bersama.  
25 jawaban



In the sixth statement "I am able to collaborate with others to achieve common goals" and respondents stated "agree" and "strongly agree" which shows that the application of 21st century skills, namely collaboration, has been implemented and addressed as positive behavior towards learning and

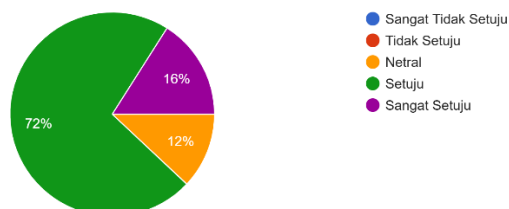
improving the quality of learning through interaction with others in developing learning.

Saya mampu bekerja secara efektif dalam tim yang beragam.  
25 jawaban



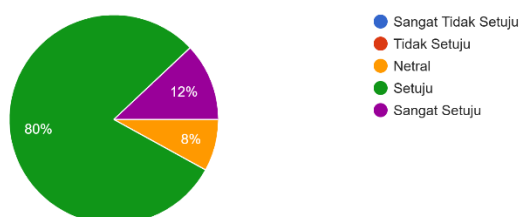
In the seventh statement "I am able to work effectively in a diverse team" shows the dominance of respondents "agree" which means that collaboration skills are an individual skill to apply it to different environmental situations. With the same goal of developing the knowledge they have, the desire to collaborate will not be affected by a diverse team.

Saya mampu menggunakan teknologi untuk terhubung dengan orang-orang dari budaya dan latar belakang yang berbeda.  
25 jawaban



In the eighth statement "I am able to use technology to connect with people from different cultures and backgrounds" shows a large result in respondents "agree" which means that the 21st century shows very advanced technological developments and helps someone in developing socialization, which means that students agree that they also apply 21st century skills, namely digital literacy.

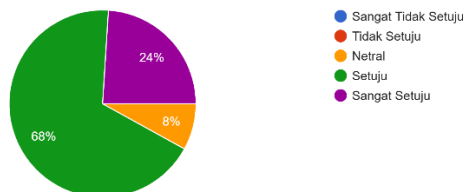
Saya mampu beradaptasi dengan perubahan dan dapat mempelajari keterampilan baru dengan cepat.  
25 jawaban





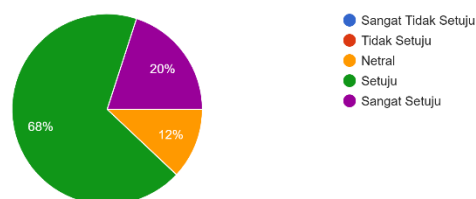
In the ninth statement, namely "I am able to adapt to change and can learn new skills quickly" shows that most respondents chose "agree" which means that applying 21st century skills will have a good impact on life, especially in education, namely being able to adapt easily to change and learn new skills quickly.

Saya mampu menggunakan teknologi untuk mempelajari keterampilan dan pengetahuan baru.  
25 jawaban



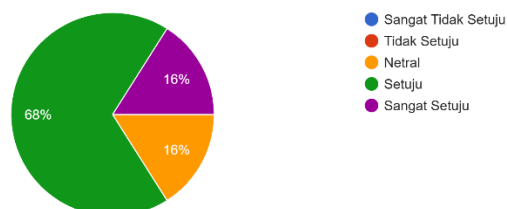
In the tenth statement, namely "I am able to use technology to learn new skills and knowledge" shows 68% agree and 24% strongly agree, which means they have participated in the development of the era and the 21st century of education.

Saya mampu bekerja secara mandiri dan sebagai bagian dari tim.  
25 jawaban



In the eleventh statement "I am able to work independently and as part of a team" shows 68% agree and 20% strongly agree which means that implementing 21st century skills has a very positive impact that a student will still be able to whatever the conditions, both independently and as a

Saya mampu mengakses dan mengevaluasi informasi dari berbagai sumber.  
25 jawaban

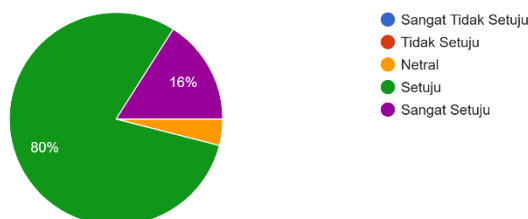


team.

In the twelfth statement "I am able to access and evaluate information from various sources" the figure shows that 68% agree and 16% strongly agree,

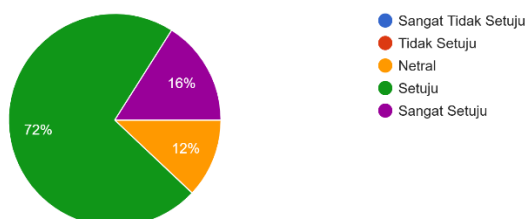
which means that they have implemented one of the 21st century skills, namely digital literacy. In the twelfth statement "I am able to access and evaluate information from various sources" the figure shows that 68% agree and 16% strongly agree, which means that they have implemented one of the 21st century skills, namely digital literacy.

Saya mampu menggunakan perangkat digital untuk membuat dan berbagi informasi.  
25 jawaban



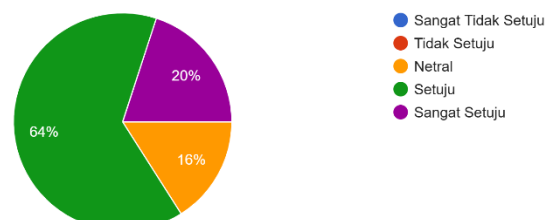
In the thirteenth statement, "I am able to use digital devices to create and share information," more than 90% agreed, which means they have applied one of the 21st century skills, namely digital literacy.

Saya mampu menggunakan teknologi untuk meneliti dan mengumpulkan informasi.  
25 jawaban



In the fourteenth statement "I am able to use technology to research and collect information" shows more than 80% agree, which means they have applied one of the 21st century skills, namely digital literacy.

Saya mampu menggunakan teknologi untuk membuat presentasi dan produk multimedia lainnya.  
25 jawaban



The last statement, "I am able to use technology to create presentations and other multimedia products," shows that more than 80% agree, which means that they have applied one of the 21st century skills, namely digital literacy.

## DISCUSSION

The objective of the study is to identify FBS student's perspective about 21 century skills. Finding shows that most of the students fully understand about 21 century skills and already aware with the readiness in applying 21st century skills as self development of a modern student. 21 century skills contain 4 main skill which is critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy and adaptability. This skills act as "tool" to form student or human beings being ready in facing inevitable changing era which is more developed and fast. FBS students believes that critical thinking and problem solving independently are vital. They are so confident with their ability and they can solve problem either with systematic way or structured approach with plan or steps. On top of that, they also enable to use their critical thinking in real life situation which can show their ability to implement knowledge in other situation. It will help them to think out of the box and reconnect it again with their problem.

In 21st century skills, collaboration will help student to develop their learning quality. FBS students have been having healthy collaboration with peers which will help them to get better understanding with diverse perspective to achieve their goals. The result this study are different with previous study which shows that student collaboration skill in a bad category (Sulistyaningrum et al., 2019).

They implemented 3 category of collaboration which are productive in working, respect to each other and responsible. FBS student have been using advance technology in many purposes. They use it for developing socialization life, enable to research, collect, evaluate information from other sources, in addition to create and share information through this technology around the world. Similar result also found in the previous study by (Mawarni et al., 2021). Students have very good ability in operating technologies to receive information needed. In 21st century, this skill also can be called as digital literacy. Based on that statement can be identified that students have been aware with the usage of technology. Along with that, it will connect to others 21st century skills which is adaptability in world change. FBS student agree that they have to be adaptable with the changing of technology as well as other skills such as critical thinking and collaboration. However, study by (Kasriyati et al., 2024) shows differently which student's ability to evaluate the credibility and reliability of online information sources is still very low. In conclusion, this shows that FBS students have participated in the development of the era and the 21st century of education.

## CONCLUSION

21st century skills has been demanding in today's era. As varsity who act as "agent of change" have to master 21st century skills to face unstoppable changing world specifically technology era. This study found that FBS student 90% have been aware with the importance of 21st century skills. Most of the respondents already have been implementing those skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy, and adaptability. In short, FBS student already been participating in 21st century skills which will help them to have better life and defend with the threat of technology era.

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## THE AUTHOR

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## APPENDIX 1 (optional)

Please add your survey questions /questionnaire /research instrument here.

It is very important to do so. Refer to the appendix 1 somewhere in your main text.