An Analysis of the 4C Framework (Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity) in the Arabic Texts of the Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah Textbook at Universitas Darussalam Gontor

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Abstract

In the era of 21st century learning, studying a language is no longer just about mastering grammar and vocabulary. Language education is now expected to foster essential skills such as critical thinking, effective communication, collaboration, and creativity collectively known as the 4C. This study aims to explore how these 4C values are reflected in the Arabic texts found in Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah, a textbook used in the Arabic Language Education Program at the University of Darussalam Gontor. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and content analysis technique, this research found that all four 21st century skills are indeed present in the analyzed texts. Critical thinking is evident in narratives containing moral dilemmas that encourage readers to draw conclusions; communication appears through the storyline collaboration is reflected in values such as discussion and teamwork and creativity is found in the engaging and varied narrative style. In short, this book is not merely a textbook for learning Arabic, but also a medium that helps students develop essential life skills needed in today's world.
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Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has profoundly transformed various aspects of human life, including the field of education. In the digital era, the integration of information and communication technology (ICT) has become an essential component in supporting effective and contemporary learning processes (Budiarto et al., 2024). Serrano et al. (2019) and Zhao et al. (2024) emphasized that incorporating technology into education enhances access to information, diversifies learning resources, and fosters active student engagement. At the same time, multicultural education plays a pivotal role in shaping a generation capable of coexisting peacefully within a culturally diverse society (Devaki et al., 2025; Jajat, 2025). In the

Indonesian context where cultural heterogeneity is deeply embedded instilling values of tolerance and respect for cultural differences from an early age is imperative.

Education in the modern era requires competencies that extend beyond mere academic proficiency. Educational systems are expected to equip students with the ability to communicate effectively, adapt to change, and collaborate in addressing global challenges such as digital transformation, the globalization of values, and rapid social change. In this context, UNESCO and the World Economic Forum emphasize the importance of 21st-century skills, which are commonly structured around four core pillars: Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity widely known as the 4Cs. These skills are not only essential for the modern workforce but are also highly relevant to language learning, including Arabic language education.(Tareh Aziz et al., n.d.)

Universitas Darussalam Gontor is an Islamic higher education institution that integrates Islamic values with modern scientific knowledge through a holistic educational approach. Within its curriculum, mastery of the Arabic language constitutes a fundamental component, particularly in the Department of Arabic Language Education. One of the main instructional resources used in Arabic language learning at this institution is Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah. This textbook functions as a primary learning material aimed at enhancing students' reading skills and textual comprehension, while simultaneously instilling moral and ethical values in their daily lives.

Nevertheless, a critical question emerges: to what extent does Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah incorporate the principles of 21st-century skills, specifically the 4Cs such as Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity? In the context of language learning, can Arabic reading texts serve as a medium for fostering critical, creative, and collaborative thinking? Reading materials are no longer viewed merely as tools for vocabulary acquisition and grammatical instruction, but also as instruments for developing critical awareness and dialogical engagement.

Previous studies support this shift. Munif Chatib (2020) found that students' critical and creative thinking skills could be sharpened through narrative readings rich in dialogue and reflective values. A study by Al-Batsh (2021) showed that contextual qira'ah texts could enhance students' ability to collaborate during group discussions and presentations. Furthermore, Zainuddin (2022), in his study on Arabic language textbooks in teacher training institutions, concluded that while not all textbooks explicitly include 4C values, some elements are implicitly present.(Rahman, 2023)

To date, no academic research has specifically analyzed the representation of the 4C framework in the Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah textbook used at Universitas Darussalam Gontor. Yet, this textbook is a core material in the Arabic Language Education curriculum and plays a vital role in shaping students' mindsets and skill development.

Based on this background, the aim of this study is to evaluate how extensively the values of Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity are embedded and applied in the Arabic texts of Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah at Universitas Darussalam Gontor. It is expected that the results of this study will contribute to the development of more relevant, contextual, and need-based Arabic language teaching materials in line with the demands of modern education.

This study aims to describe the 4C elements in the Arabic texts of the Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah book used at UNIDA Gontor.

Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at describing and analyzing how the 4C theory (*Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity*) is represented in the Arabic texts found in the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* book used at Universitas Darussalam Gontor. This approach is chosen because it allows the researcher to explore the meanings embedded in the text more deeply, holistically, and contextually. In qualitative research, the main focus is not on numerical data or statistics, but rather on the process of interpretation and understanding of existing phenomena, in this case, related to the reading content of Arabic teaching materials.(Yuliani, n.d.)

The descriptive qualitative approach is considered highly relevant in this research, as its purpose is not only to collect data but also to interpret the values of 21st-century skills contained within Arabic reading texts. By using this approach, the researcher can identify how elements such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity appear or are represented in the texts presented to students.(Amran et al., n.d.)

The data source in this study is derived from selected reading texts in the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* book, an official textbook used in the learning process at the Arabic Language Education Study Program, Universitas Darussalam Gontor. This book offers a variety of text types, which are structured based on students' language proficiency and the educational messages intended to be conveyed. Interestingly, the book does not merely present reading exercises but also includes stories that contain moral values. This content diversity makes *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* a very suitable material for analysis, particularly in relation to 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

In practice, the researcher does not analyze the entire book, but rather selects specific texts deemed most relevant. These selected texts typically contain strong values and moral conflicts that encourage readers to think more deeply. The aim is to explore the extent to which the 4C skills are reflected in the content. By using these texts as the main research objects, this study seeks to demonstrate that *Qira'ah* learning is not only useful for enhancing Arabic language skills but also serves as a medium for developing students' life competencies. The expectation is that instructional materials such as *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* can be optimized as contextual, relevant learning tools that meet contemporary educational needs.

The data collection technique used in this study is the documentation method, utilizing written documents as the primary source of information. In this case, the document refers to the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* textbook officially used in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Universitas Darussalam Gontor. The researcher read the content of this book thoroughly and carefully, then identified parts of the text considered to potentially represent 21st-century skills, particularly the 4C elements: Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity.

Relevant quotations were recorded and categorized based on the respective skill elements. This process was conducted systematically to ensure the accuracy of the collected data and allow for in-depth analysis. Attention was given not only to the content of the texts but also to the way in which the messages and values were presented.

Finding and Discussion

The 4C Theory in the 21st Century Education Approach

The concept of the 4C's, consisting of Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity, is an educational approach that began gaining recognition around the year 2000. This idea was developed by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in collaboration with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) as part of the learning standards expected to be achieved by students in school environments.(Ismail & Ismail, 2018)

In 2002, both institutions released a document titled *"Standards for the 21st-Century Learner"*, which emphasized the importance of critical thinking skills, effective communication, teamwork, and creativity development in the learning process.(Lee, 2009) These standards aimed to improve the quality of education and equip students with relevant skills to face the challenges of the digital age.

Since then, the 4C concept has spread and been applied across various educational programs, including Arabic language education. Today, the 4C's serve as a primary reference in education to enhance the quality of learning, prepare students for the future, and equip them with the necessary competencies to compete in the digital era.(Realitawati et al., 2024)

Upon deeper examination, 21st-century education emphasizes a shift from conventional or traditional learning systems toward more modern approaches. The goal is to ensure that learners not only master knowledge but also possess the ability to learn independently, innovate optimally, and effectively utilize technology as a means of information-seeking and developing life skills essential for navigating today's changing world.

Qira'ah Learning in Arabic Language Education

Qira'ah learning, or reading Arabic texts, is an essential component in the process of learning the Arabic language. This activity is not limited to recognizing letters or understanding word-by-word meanings. More than that, Qira'ah learning invites students to grasp the text's meaning deeply, observe how a passage is structured, and comprehend the messages and values conveyed within.(Hai & Harianto, n.d.)

In the 21st-century educational context, Qira'ah learning is expected to expand beyond vocabulary and grammar mastery. It must also nurture critical thinking skills, effective communication, collaboration, and creativity collectively known as the 4C's.(Trisnawati & Sari, n.d.) This aligns with the new direction in education, which does not focus solely on academic aspects, but also on life skills that can be sharpened through interaction with various reading texts.(Khalilullah, 2011)

In the Arabic Language Education Program at Universitas Darussalam Gontor, the use of the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* textbook plays a strategic role in supporting learning aligned with 21st-century demands. Through analysis of the content within this book, it is evident that the four 4C skills critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity can be trained in practical ways. For example, some passages present moral conflicts that encourage readers to reflect and draw their own conclusions, dialogues that feel dynamic and help train communication skills, stories that emphasize teamwork between characters, and creative, non-monotonous writing styles. Thus, Qira'ah learning is no longer just a practice of reading Arabic texts, but also serves as a medium for instilling character values and essential life skills for today's students.(Erlina, 2017)

In this section, the researcher will examine the findings of the analysis regarding the 21st-century skills known as the 4C's (Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity) as reflected in selected texts from the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* textbook. The analysis is conducted thematically using a content analysis approach, aiming to illustrate the extent to which these values are present in Arabic readings used as core teaching materials in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at Universitas Darussalam Gontor.

In this study, three primary texts were analyzed. These texts were deliberately selected because their content and style of presentation are considered most relevant in representing the 4C skill elements. The first text discussed is titled **"التربية الأخلاقية في الإسلام"** or *Moral Education in Islam*. This text was chosen because it contains numerous moral messages and calls for reflection, which relate closely to critical thinking, clear value expression, cooperation with others, and creative ways of delivering messages. Through close reading and analysis of this text, the researcher aims to demonstrate that the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* textbook is not merely a tool for learning Arabic but also plays a crucial role in character formation and the cultivation of essential 21st-century life skills.

The following section presents the analysis and representation of the 4C values found within the Arabic texts of the *Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah* textbook.

Arabic Manuscript التربية الأخلاقية في الإسلام :

التربية الأخلاقية في الإسلام

التربية الأخلاقية من الأسس والمبادئ التي تقوم عليها التربية الإسلامية. وقد أكد القرآن الكريم والسنة النبوية على أهمية التربية الأخلاقية.

وقد مدح الله نبيه محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم قائلا: وإنك لعلى خلق عظيم، وقد وصفت عائشة رضي الله عنها خلق الرسول: كان خلقه القرآن. وأمره بمحاسن الأخلاق وبعث بإتمامها كما قال: إنما بعثت لأتمم مكارم الأخلاق. وأكد على أهمية ذلك في قوله: البر حسن.

والتربية وسيلة مثلى في النهوض بالأمة والرقي بها إلى سلم المجد والمعرفة والوعي والعرفان وصياغة العقول. فهي تغرس القيم النبيلة والسلوك السوي الرشيد الذي هو الأساس في نجاح الأمم. وللتربية الأخلاقية دور حيوي مهم، فهي حجر الزاوية وذات أولوية في بناء الإنسان وتطويره ومفاهيمه. ولقد ركزت التربية على أهمية السلوك الإنساني وتطويره في إطار من عادات الأمة وتقاليد المجتمع وأخلاقياته والأخلاق الفاضلة، منها: الإخلاص، الصبر، الحياء، الحلم، الرحمة، التعاون، الوفاء، الإيثار، الإحسان، التواضع، إلى غير ذلك.

Representation of the 4C Values contained:

Table 1. Representation of the 4C Values contained

4C Elements	Text Quotes	Thema	Representation Analysis
Critical Thinking	وقد مدح الله نبيه محمدا صلى الله عليه وسلم قائلا: (وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى خُلُقٍ عظيم)	The Prophet's Exemplary Moral Values	This text encourages readers to reflect on and evaluate behavior based on the moral standards of the Prophet Muhammad as a model of critical moral thinking.
	إنما بعثت لأتمم مكارم الأخلاق	Vision,Mision, and Morals	Encourage readers to understand the great purpose of prophecy from a value perspective, not just a historical one, thus inviting deep thought about morals.
Communication	كان خلقه القرآن	Communicating values throught example	This text conveys meaning implicitly and concisely, training readers to capture implied messages and reflective meaning, a form of narrative communication.
	البر حسن الخلق	Definition of Ethics	Inviting readers to understand the communication of values symbolically and make it a tool for communicating values between humans in society.
Collaboration	والتربية وسيلة مثلى في النهوض بالأمة والرقي بها . . .	The Rise of Civilization throught Education	Demonstrating that education and morality are collective projects of the nation, emphasizing the importance of cooperation to form a moral society.
	فهي تغرس القيم النبيلة...	Internalization of Values	Emphasizing the role of all parties (family, teachers, community) in character education cooperation as the foundation of advanced civilization.

Creativity	...الإخلاص والصبر والحياء والإحسان والتواضع	Variation of Moral Values	The delivery of moral values is arranged in the form of a rich and varied list, showing the creativity of the narrative and the choice of diction to inspire.
	صياغة العقول	Formation of ways of thinking	This term indicates the process of forming a creative and critical mentality to adapt to the times.

Arabic Manuscript العلاقات الأسرية في النظر الإسلامي:

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العلاقات الأسرية في النظر الإسلامي

نظر الإسلام إلى العلاقات في الأسرة نظرة إيجابية، وسعى المنظور الإسلامي دومًا حل الصراعات داخل الأسرة وتذويب الخلافات والعمل على إقامة وحدة مجتمعية مترابطة ومؤثرة.

فعلى مستوى العلاقة بين الزوج والزوجة فإن العلاقة بينهم علاقة وثيقة للغاية، سماها القرآن الكريم ميثاقًا غليظًا، فقال :(وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنكُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا) النساء: ٢١

واعتبر القرآن الكريم أن المودة والرحمة هما أساسا البناء الأسري النفسي، فقال الله تعالى :(وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُم مِّنْ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُم مَّوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً) الروم: ٢١

كما اعتبر الإسلام العلاقة بين الآباء والأبناء هي علاقة عطاء متبادل، قائمة على البر والرحمة، فالوالدان يقومان بتربية الأبناء ورعايتهما كاملة منذ الصغر وحتى يكبروا ويستدوا ويستطيعوا الكسب والحماية لأنفسهم، والأبناء يرون آباءهم بالغًا تحيطه الرعاية والبذل والعطاء في حياتهم وأثناء كبر عمرهم وحتى موتهم برًا.

وقد صور القرآن الكريم هذه العلاقة في أكثر من آية قرآنية تصويرًا بديعًا، كما يلي: قال سبحانه وتعالى :(وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ إِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِندَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُل لَّهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُل لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا، وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُل رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا) الإسراء: ٢٣–٢٤

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وعلى مستوى العلاقة بين الأبناء، فإن الإسلام أمر الوالدين بمراعاة العدل بينهم في التربية والعطاء حتى تذوب الخلافات والأحقاد بينهم، وأمر بحسن علاقة الآخر بأخيه، كما أمر أن يُربط بينهم رباط الإيمان مع رباط القربى والرحم.

Representation of the 4C Values contained:

Table 2. Representation of the 4C Values contained

4C Elements	Text Quotes	Theme	Representation Analysis
Critical Thinking	فإن العلاقة بينهما علاقة وثيقة للغاية... ميثاقا غليظا (النساء: 21)	The sanctity of the husband-wife relationship	This verse invites readers to reflect on the deep meaning of the bonds of marriage, building a critical understanding of the responsibilities and positions of each partner.
	وجعل بينكم مودة ورحمة (الروم: 21)	Emotional Foundations in the Family	Encourages readers to think about the importance of love and affection as psychological foundations, not just social structures.
Communication	ولا تقل لهما أف ولا تنهرهما وقل لهما قولا كريما (الإسراء: 23)	Manners of communication with parents	This commandment emphasizes the importance of gentle, polite, and respectful communication ethics in family relationships, as a foundation for intergenerational communication.
	وقل رب ارحمهما كما ربياني صغيرا	Prayer as a form of spiritual communication	Examples of forms of inner and emotional communication from children to parents, reflect communication that is not only verbal but full of meaning.
Collaboration	الوالدان يقومان بتربية الأبناء ورعايتهم كاملة	The reciprocal role between parents and children	Shows the importance of cooperation in educating children between father and mother, and children who also repay their parents' kindness with loyalty and service.

	الإسلام أمر بمراعاة العدل بينهم في التربية والعطاء	Justice between Brothers	Encouragement to avoid conflict and build harmonious relationships between children through collaboration and distribution of roles and responsibilities.
Creativity	فقال الله تعالى... وجعل بينكم مودة ورحمة	The concept of love and affection in the family	The presentation of emotional values in symbolic form (muwaddah & rahmah) shows linguistic creativity and expression of values through the style of the Qur'anic language.

Arabic Manuscript واقع تعليم اللغة العربية في المعاهد والمدارس بإندونيسيا:

واقع تعليم اللغة العربية في المعاهد والمدارس بإندونيسيا

إن سياسة حكومة إندونيسيا في تعليم اللغة العربية ثابتة ولم تتغير حتى الآن وهي بإبقاء اللغة العربية ضمن مواد اللغة الأجنبية. يمثل المسلمون ٨٨٪ من سكان إندونيسيا الذين بلغ عددهم ٢٥٠ مليون نسمة، وتدرس العربية في المدارس العامة الحكومية حصة واحدة في الأس واحدة في الأسبوع، وذلك ضمن اللغات الأجنبية الاختيارية الإنجليزية والفرنسية والعربية والألمانية وغيرها). ولكن واقع تعليم اللغة العربية في المعاهد الإسلامية والمدارس الدينية إلى حد ما مدهش وذلك بالنظر إلى الأمور الآتية:

منها أن تدريس اللغة العربية في المدارس المتوسطة والثانوية حكومية كانت أم أهلية تأتي من جهود المدرسين وجديتهم، بالإضافة إلى دعم الوزارة للشؤون الدينية بالمناهج والكتب المقررة.

ومنها استقامة المعاهد الإسلامية الحديثة والتقليدية في التمسك برسالتها وخصوصاً في تعليم اللغة العربية على الطريقة القديمة أو الطريقة الحديثة بل على الطريقة الازدواجية أو الانتقائية أو طريقة الجمع.

وواقع تعليم اللغة العربية في المعاهد والمدارس بإندونيسيا تعتبر من أعلى ثروة تجارب المجاهدين في تعليم اللغة العربية للناطقين بغيرها في إندونيسيا. وأوصلت هذه التجارب المسلمين إلى مرحلة النضوج في تعليم و توجد كلمة أحسن الطريقة ولا أفضلها في تعليم اللغة العربية، بحيث بحيث لا توجد . اللغة العربية، وإنما حاجتنا إلى الطريقة الأنسب بالهدف المرسوم بالظروف الخاصة.

فكل الطريقة التي تناسب وتوصل إلى الهدف هي الأحوج. لأن الطريقة القديمة وهي طريقة النحو والترجمة تناسب
الهدف في المعاهد والطريقة المباشرة المدعم بجميع الطرق الحديثة المبنية على نظرية التقليدية. والطريقة الوحدة والفروع
تناسب هدف المعاهد الحديثة، وكما أن طريقة الجمع أو الطريقة الازدواجية المبنية على نظرية الوحدة تناسب ظروف
مدارس إندونيسيا وحلها الأنسب .

Representation of the 4C Values contained:

Table 3 Representation of the 4C Values contained

4C Elements	Text Quotes	Theme	Representation Analysis
Critical Thinking	ولا توجد كلمة أحسن الطريقة ولا أفضلها في تعليم اللغة العربية، وإنما حاجتنا إلى الطريقة الأنسب بالهدف المرسوم بالظروف الخاصة.	Evaluation of learning approaches	This text explicitly calls for critical thinking in selecting learning methods that suit local needs and contexts.
	فكل الطريقة التي تناسب وتوصل إلى الهدف هي الأحوج.	Relativity Method	Encourage open and critical thinking that no single method is absolute, but rather adapts to educational goals.
Communication	وتدرس العربية في المدارس العامة الحكومية حصة واحدة في الأسبوع، وذلك ضمن اللغات الأجنبية الاختيارية...	Foreign Language Communication in Public Schools	Describes the state of language policy as part of a cross-cultural and linguistic communication system in formal institutions.
Collaboration	تأتي من جهود المدرسين وجديتهم، بالإضافة إلى دعم الوزارة للشؤون الدينية بالمناهج والكتب المقررة.	Collaboration between teachers and ministry institutions	The text shows the existence of cooperation between teachers and the government, especially in the provision of curriculum and textbooks.

Creativity	بل على الطريقة الازدواجية أو الانتقائية أو طريقة الجمع.	Combination of methods	There is a value of creativity in developing mixed methods (a combination of old and new), adapting to the local context and students' needs.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of three main texts from the Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah textbook used in the Arabic Language Education Program at Universitas Darussalam Gontor, it can be concluded that the book profoundly incorporates and reflects the 21st-century skills known as the 4C concept: Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration, and Creativity. Through a thematic content analysis approach, the three texts demonstrate the presence of values such as critical thinking skills shown through reflection on moral messages and evaluation of educational methods; communication skills through the narration of values, dialogues, and expressive language; collaboration represented by collective roles within educational institutions; and creativity illustrated in the organization of ideas and narratives, both explicitly and implicitly embedded in the learning materials.

This study proves that Qira'ah learning is not merely a medium for enhancing students' Arabic language proficiency, but also a strategic tool for instilling essential life skills in the modern era. The presence of 4C elements in these texts highlights the importance of thematic and contextual approaches in developing Arabic teaching materials. Therefore, the Qira'ah 'Arabiyyah textbook holds great potential to be continuously improved and adapted to meet the demands of 21st-century education, thus producing graduates who are not only academically competent but also excel in character, communication skills, collaboration spirit, and the ability to think creatively and critically.

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