

# Pedagogical Competence of Christian Teachers as Facilitators in the Process of Developing 21st Century Thinking Skills

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## Abstract

In the 21st century, national education required to reformulate its learning system to optimally meet the demands of students' thinking skills. However, assessments of Indonesian students' abilities in mathematics, science, literacy, and numeracy remained relatively low. To address this gap, students required teachers with strong pedagogical competence to help them improve their 21st-century thinking skills. This research aimed to examine the role of Christian teachers as facilitators in developing such skills. Their pedagogical responsibilities included guiding students toward learning that met student's thinking needs, implementing problem-based learning, integrating technology in line with Christian values, and providing constructive feedback on students' thinking development. Christian teachers also needed to recognize sin as a human reality and understand the restoration of human's relationship with God through redemption, ensuring that educational practices remained untainted by secular postmodern philosophies. The author suggested that problem-based learning methods be explored to help students cultivate the thinking skills essential for the 21st century.

Keywords: Facilitator, thinking skills, pedagogical competence, Christian teachers, Christian values

## **Introduction**

The 21st century has brought about various fundamental shifts in human life. These shifts have significantly influenced many aspects of human existence, including education (Usmaedi, 2021). The challenges of the 21st century have become more complex with the introduction of the Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0 eras (Berlian et al., 2021). These concepts present two essential issues to society: human labor increasingly being replaced by automated machines and the use of technology to create innovations aimed at addressing welfare concerns (Mudzar & Chew, 2022). The rapid development in these areas has prompted the educational world to reformulate learning processes to align with the demands of the 21st century (Sugiyarti, 2018). Christian education responds to these challenges by promoting the 6C competencies that students must master within the context of pastoral service. These competencies include showing compassion in every act of service (compassion), thinking critically to solve dynamic problems (critical thinking), communicating effectively to express new information (communication), collaborating to achieve shared goals (collaboration), being creative to reach innovative outcomes (creativity), and maintaining hope for eternal life, assured in the glory of God (consummation) (Siswanto et al., 2023).

Trilling (2009) states that education plays a key role in enhancing human resource capacity, enabling society to compete globally. Since students are the central focus of education, learning must aim to develop the whole self, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. The 21st century demands that students possess critical and deep-thinking skills through a process of independent knowledge construction (Gunadi et al., 2022). The development of 21st-century thinking skills must also align with Biblical truth, as reason is part of the human capacity given by God, who created humanity in His image and likeness. God equips humans with reason and common sense so they can fulfill the cultural mandate to rule over, subdue, and take care for the earth, as written in Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 2:15 (Erickson, 2013). Critical thinking, as a 21st-century skill, is not only useful for solving contextual problems in daily life but also serves as a tool God can use to optimize human reason, reflecting His image and likeness.

The 21st century demands that students develop the ability to tackle complex challenges in daily life through optimal thinking skills. Addressing

these challenges requires human resources with a high level of thinking maturity, prompting students to undergo a transformation in their thinking skills, becoming adept at navigating dynamic changes and adjusting to new environments (Wijaya et al., 2016). The rapid advancement of technology and information, such as online learning platforms offering various sources of information and academic videos, enables students to actively acquire the thinking skills required for the 21st century. Education acknowledges that students must construct their own knowledge independently (Fristadi & Bharata, 2015). This has led to a shift in the learning system, focusing on the personal development of students, with teachers being directed to enhance their pedagogical competence as classroom facilitators. With teachers serving as facilitators, students can actively engage in constructing new knowledge and assigning real meaning to that knowledge.

The advancement of a nation is difficult to achieve if it has human resources with poor thinking skills to address various global challenges. Critical thinking has become a key focus in overcoming the rapid changes of the 21st century (Prayogi, 2020). Good critical thinking skills help students make comprehensive decisions, present contextual problem-solving solutions, and enhance personal capacity (R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022). Moreover, Fristadi & Bharata (2015) emphasize that thinking skills enable students to approach problem-solving logically and accurately, which in turn helps them find solutions to future challenges. In the process of developing thinking skills, students are expected to be more adept at generating ideas based on the material and knowledge gained in class, and projecting solutions that align with real-life challenges, as a form of meaningful learning implementation.

The 2021 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted by the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) revealed that Indonesia continues to rank poorly in critical thinking skills, placing 74th out of 80 participating countries in both mathematics and science. Indonesian students' ability to analyze exam questions remains low, ranking last among the 40 countries involved (Abroad, 2017). In terms of mathematical, scientific, literacy, and numeracy thinking skills, Indonesia ranks 44th out of 49 participating countries (Hadi & Novaliyosi, 2019). These findings clearly indicate that Indonesian students' critical thinking skills need significant improvement. Enhancing 21st-century thinking skills can be achieved through

the pedagogical competence of teachers. Pedagogical competence is an essential skill that every teacher must possess (Munawwarah et al., 2020), distinguishing the teaching profession from others. Through this competence, teachers must understand their students, as reflected in how they manage the learning process. Effective classroom management includes designing and implementing lessons, fostering student potential, and evaluating learning outcomes. The ultimate goal is for students to not only grasp theoretical knowledge but also to analyze and apply it in their daily lives.

Teacher pedagogical competence is essential for students to enhance their thinking skills in the 21st century. There are several pedagogical competencies that teachers must master to improve students' thinking skills in line with the demands of the 21st century, including understanding learning styles, mastery of the foundations or philosophy of educational practice, curriculum development, and the ability to manage learning (Hatta, 2018). According to Sulistriani (2021), one crucial pedagogical competence that helps develop students' thinking skills and scientific values is the teacher's role as a learning facilitator. The teacher's pedagogical competence as a facilitator is vital in guiding and facilitating students with various explanations, allowing them to develop reasoning abilities and construct solutions to global problems in the 21st century (Mudzar & Chew, 2022). The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is also expected to create a learning atmosphere that meets students' needs, enabling them to independently construct knowledge from the abundance of information amidst increasingly complex issues (Fristadi & Bharata, 2015). Students are also encouraged to be more active in developing critical, creative, and metacognitive thinking skills across various global problem contexts (Berlian et al., 2021). The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators emphasizes the teacher's role as a learning agent, inspiring students, giving motivation, guiding the learning process, and facilitating their learning needs. This competence transforms the classroom into a space where students can grow and think independently.

The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is expected to reduce the influence of postmodernism in educational practices. It helps students optimize their thinking skills without altering the fundamental philosophy of Christian education, which places Christ at the center of learning (D. Lase, 2022). The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators plays a role in

guiding students to avoid various misconceptions that could lead to lives deviating from the truth of God, especially in meeting the demands of the 21st century (Gaghunting & Bermuli, 2022). The overall fulfillment of these teaching components directs Christian teachers toward their primary task, which is the introduction of Christ (Tampenawas et al., 2020). Christian teachers as facilitators provide students with the space to construct their knowledge by making the Bible the principle of true truth (Purba & Chrismastianto, 2021).

Christian teachers must understand the concept of pedagogical competence as facilitators based on biblical insights and principles. Christian teachers are expected to have a strong foundational understanding of the values and teachings within the Bible, enabling them to integrate biblical principles into their teaching (Gaghunting & Bermuli, 2022). A solid understanding of the Bible assists Christian teachers in exercising their pedagogical competence as facilitators, allowing them to guide students with wisdom and love in Jesus Christ (Knight, 2008). The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators is expected to present learning that is integrated with the principles of the Word of God, enabling students to optimize their overall thinking capacity as the image and likeness of God in accordance with the demands of the 21st century (Berkhof, 2013). In fulfilling this competence, Christian teachers must have a strong commitment by fully relying on Christ so that the Holy Spirit can empower them to fulfill their calling (D. Lase, 2022). A steadfast commitment emerges from a heart that has experienced new birth in Jesus Christ (Tampenawas et al., 2020). A personal relationship and ownership of love for Christ are the main keys that Christian teachers must possess in guiding students to the Word of God. Christian teachers act as facilitators of learning as well as agents of transformation, helping to introduce Christ through educational activities (Brummelen, 2015).

### **Method**

Based on the overall presentation above, this study aims to examine the pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators in the process of developing 21st-century thinking skills. This research employs a religious study method with a philosophical approach to Christianity through various relevant sources. The application of this method aims to deeply and comprehensively understand the phenomenon of the pedagogical competence of Christian

teachers as facilitators in the context of developing students' thinking skills in the 21st century (Banjarnahor & Naibaho, 2023). This study focuses on the pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators in the process of developing 21st-century thinking skills.

## **Findings**

### *The Pedagogical Competence of Teachers as Facilitators*

Christian education plays a crucial role in redeeming the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators to align with the principles of the Word of God. The philosophy of Christian education outlines four roles of teachers as learning facilitators: to present, to organize structure, to empower, and to guide (Brummelen, 2015). Gagahunting & Bermuli (2022) state that a teacher as a facilitator has the task of presenting so that students possess various forms of knowledge based on the Word of God. Through the role of Christian teachers as facilitators, students can understand the meaning of life, the power of sin, and redemption (Hoekema, 2010). The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators encompasses their ability to organize learning structures that fulfill various personal values of students, such as peace, respect, love, and others (Christofer & Irawati, 2022). Teachers as facilitators can also empower students to engage in each sequence of learning, enabling them to fulfill commitments and responsibilities (Knight, 2008). This can be observed when students in the classroom complete every assigned task and follow the established procedures. Based on the above experts' explanations, it can be concluded that Christian education identifies four pedagogical competencies of teachers as facilitators: presenting, organizing structure, empowering, and guiding. These four pedagogical competencies enable students to understand their meaning as God's creations redeemed from sin, thereby embodying various forms of Christian values such as peace, respect, and love in fulfilling their mandates and responsibilities. The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators also assists each student in developing critical thinking skills (Brummelen, 2015; Christofer & Irawati, 2022; Gagahunting & Bermuli, 2022; Hoekema, 2010; Knight, 2008).

The success of learning is closely linked to the role and responsibilities of a teacher in the classroom. Teachers are responsible for educating and delivering

the learning needed by students so that they can achieve their learning objectives (Shofiya & Sartika, 2020). Teachers serve as key agents in realizing national educational success (Muadzin, 2021). The effectiveness of a teacher can be measured by the learning experiences encountered by students (Yestiani & Zahwa, 2020). Students engaged in the learning process can experience progress in reasoning, scientific values, skills, and attitudes (Srirahmawati, 2021). The Teacher and Lecturer Law No. 14 of 2005 states that educators have the primary duty to teach, guide, facilitate, direct, and evaluate students toward better outcomes in the learning process. Sanjani (2020) supports this by stating that the teaching process by teachers not only involves the transfer of knowledge but also the development of values of life and living. The actualization of students' self-capacity development is expected to manifest through the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators, allowing students to become future generations ready to contribute to community service (D. Lase, 2022). Teachers are tasked with accompanying students throughout the learning process so that students can engage effectively and acquire the skills necessary to solve various problems in the future (Nathania & Yoedo, 2020). According to Sulistriani et al. (2021), the presence of teachers is crucial for student engagement and optimal self-potential development. Based on the insights from the experts above, it can be concluded that teachers, as educational drivers, are essential for students to achieve learning objectives and experience transformations across all aspects of their self-capacity through teaching, guidance, direction, and evaluation of learning. The success of a teacher can be observed through the meaningful values acquired by students during the learning process in their daily lives. Through the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators, students actively engage in optimally developing their potential, enabling them to make significant contributions to society in the future (D. Lase, 2022; Muadzin, 2021; Nathania & Yoedo, 2020; Sanjani, 2020; Shofiya & Sartika, 2020; Srirahmawati, 2021; Sulistriani et al., 2021; Yestiani & Zahwa, 2020).

The Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 74 of 2008 outlines four competencies that a teacher must possess in order to achieve the main objectives of national education: pedagogical, professional, character, and social competencies. Pedagogical competence refers to the teacher's ability to facilitate learning based on the needs of students in the classroom, allowing them to experience optimal development in thinking capacity, skills, and

attitudes (Hasnawati, 2020). This competence includes the teacher's ability to create an inclusive learning environment so that students can participate actively and collaboratively during the learning process (Fathorrahman, 2017). Professional competence encompasses the strengthening of learning content in a broad and deep manner by the teacher (Hatta, 2018). Character competence involves the authoritative character of the teacher in the classroom, which includes emotional maturity (Kirana, 2017). Social competence relates to the teacher's ability to communicate with various parties involved in educational practices (Novauli M, 2015). The shift in the learning system that prioritizes students' independent knowledge construction has made the role of teachers as facilitators increasingly necessary (Nuraini, 2017). Based on the opinions of experts outlined above, there are four competencies that teachers need to support the growth process of students during learning: pedagogical, professional, character, and social competencies. The role of teachers as facilitators can be classified as part of pedagogical competence. The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators can provide meaningful learning experiences to encourage the optimal development of students' self-capacity, particularly in developing their critical thinking skills (Fathorrahman, 2017; Hasnawati, 2020; Hatta, 2018; Kirana, 2017; Novauli M, 2015; Nuraini, 2017).

Anthropology is a discipline that comprehensively understands the various dimensions of human life. Christian anthropology further examines the position of humanity as God's creation through the lens of Christian faith. It views humans as the crown of God's creation, reflecting His image and likeness (Grudem, 2009). Christian anthropology emphasizes the calling of humanity to participate in God's plan of salvation (Prijanto, 2017a). It also asserts that the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators can be analyzed through the relationship between humans and their calling to participate in God's plan of salvation (Gaghunting & Bermuli, 2022). The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is crucial in awakening students' potential and abilities in line with their identity as images of God. Thus, the pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators provides guidance to students to avoid falling into or being trapped in the empty philosophies offered by the world, which are not grounded in the Word of God (Paparang, 2018). Teachers encourage the holistic growth of students, including their spiritual, moral, intellectual, and emotional development (D. Lase, 2022). As facilitators, teachers help students create a

learning environment that integrates biblical principles. This enables students to develop critical thinking, self-reflection, and the application of Christian principles in their actions and decision-making (Septiarti, 2017). Based on the expert opinions presented above, Christian anthropology emphasizes the existence of teachers as facilitators who serve as agents of transformation for students' knowledge as *Imago Dei*, enabling them to participate in God's call for salvation. Christian teachers, as facilitators, guide students to know God as the Creator through learning that is integrated with the ultimate truth, which is the Bible (Gaghunting & Bermuli, 2022; Grudem, 2009; R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022; Paparang, 2018; Prijanto, 2017b; Septiarti, 2017).

Christian education views the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators as more than just facilitating learning to develop students' skills. This can be viewed through the study of the epistemology of education, which leads to an understanding of the sources of knowledge, the origins of knowledge, and the processes and goals of teaching practices (Greene et al., 2016). The epistemology of Christian education establishes God and His revelation as the primary foundation in the practice of learning (Knight, 2008). Teachers, as facilitators in the study of the epistemology of Christian education, are directed to respect the authority of the Bible and to integrate the principles of Christian truth into their learning (Gaghunting & Bermuli, 2022). According to D. Lase (2022), teachers have the responsibility to help students understand Christian truth and implement it in their lives. They are responsible for introducing God and Christ based on the truth of God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit (Christofer & Irawati, 2022). Based on the expert opinions above, the epistemology of Christian education guides teachers as facilitators and as guides who assist students in knowing God and His work of salvation through Jesus Christ. The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators has implications for the process of character formation based on Christian values, the deepening of thinking skills, and the creation of interpersonal relationships to support the holistic growth of students (Christofer & Irawati, 2022; Gaghunting & Bermuli, 2022; Greene et al., 2016; Knight, 2008).

### ***21st Century Thinking Skills***

The development of 21st-century thinking skills has become an urgency in the field of education. These skills encompass all cognitive aspects, including

the ability to adapt and tackle various complex challenges in everyday life (Abdullah & Osman, 2010). Students are expected to undergo a transformation in thinking to become accustomed to constant change and to be adept at accommodating new environments (Zubaidah, 2016). According to Mardhiyah et al. (2021), 21st-century thinking skills also require elements of creativity as actions to produce original ideas. These skills can be defined as high-level reasoning abilities that involve analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and synthesis (Rustamana, 2020). Mashudi (2021) states that 21st-century thinking skills introduce critical, creative, analytical, and systematic thinking capabilities. Furthermore, these skills are integrated with the digital world to solve various concrete problems in daily life (Dwijayanti, 2021). Based on the overall exposition above, it can be concluded that the process of developing 21st-century thinking skills is essential for education to produce human resources capable of addressing global issues. These skills include high-level, critical, analytical, systematic, solution-oriented, and innovative thinking that integrates with technology to resolve various problems encountered in everyday life. A concrete example of 21st-century thinking skills is that an individual with critical and analytical thinking abilities can utilize technology to identify and address problems or phenomena in their surroundings, such as analyzing data to make strategic decisions or finding innovative solutions in product or service development (Abdullah & Osman, 2010; Dwijayanti, 2021; Mardhiyah et al., 2021; Mashudi, 2021; Rustamana, 2020; Zubaidah, 2016).

The 21st-century thinking skills are viewed as aligned with biblical perspectives. The Bible considers these thinking skills as part of the status of being made in the image and likeness of God in His creation (Tobeli & Zelda, 2017). These skills demand the optimal use of cognitive aspects within humans (Basongan, 2022). This indicates that the process of developing thinking skills poses a challenge for humans, as God's creation, to optimize the capacities that He has given them (Eliasaputra et al., 2020). Hoekema (2009) emphasizes that 21st-century thinking skills can express God's existence within humanity. The rational mindset present in humans reflects God's reason, as humans are made in His image and likeness (R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022). Based on the expert opinions above, it can be concluded that 21st-century thinking skills are regarded as relevant from the perspective of Christian faith. These skills require humans,

as images of God, to use their rational capacities optimally (Basongan, 2022; Eliasaputra et al., 2020; Hoekema, 2009; D. Lase, 2022; Tobeli & Zelda, 2017).

The development of 21st-century thinking skills based on biblical principles is considered highly important from the perspective of Christian faith. The rapid advancement of technology significantly impacts various dimensions of human life, including research and education (D. Lase, 2022). The challenges of the 21st century, which demand innovative ideas, are deemed essential by Christianity as they align with three commandments in the Bible: The Cultural Mandate, the Mandate of Love, and the Mandate of Evangelism (Gea & Darmawan, 2021). God has revealed commands to humanity to care for and serve His creation for His glory, as written in Genesis 1:28 and Genesis 2:15 (Eliasaputra et al., 2020). Thinking skills align with God's Word in helping humanity, as the crown of His creation, make wise decisions and evaluate various secular philosophies that often instinctively arise in the lives of Christians (Tarigan, 2019). The Bible views thinking skills as essential for aiding believers in understanding and responding to differing viewpoints in ways that respect Christian values such as love, truth, and tolerance (Panggabean, 2022). Christianity also regards critical thinking skills as a necessity in the 21st century, serving as a means to deepen faith, strengthen wisdom in decision-making, and appreciate freedom of thinking with Christian integrity (Pardede, 2016). From the insights provided by experts above, it can be concluded that 21st-century thinking skills are considered in line with the mandates expressed by God in the lives of Christians through the Bible. These skills can serve as tools to express God's glory, deepen faith, and make wise decisions. Thinking skills assist God's people in critiquing various empty philosophies that contradict the Christian perspective (Eliasaputra et al., 2020; Gea & Darmawan, 2021; Panggabean, 2022; Pardede, 2016; Tarigan, 2019).

High-level thinking skills in the context of the 21st century from a Christian faith perspective can be understood as the application of critical and reflective thinking abilities based on biblical principles. The 21st-century thinking skills encourage every believer to implement the values contained in the Bible in the process of elaborating on high-level problems (Gea & Darmawan, 2021). Solving high-level problems involves the ability to analyze situations or issues from a Christian faith perspective, considering biblical teachings, and evaluating solutions based on principles of faith (*regula fidei*) (Listiania et al.,

2021). Pardede (2016) argues that the Bible states that making good decisions regarding problem-solving enables a person to comply with the command to love God with all their mind (Matthew 22:37). Romans 12:2 also encourages every believer not to conform to the world but to know and be able to discern God's will in their lives (Panggabean, 2022). A renewed mind, informed by God's Word, refers to the action of testing everything based on biblical values (Karlau & Rukua, 2023). This indicates that thinking skills require diligence to examine and choose various matters that are good and pleasing to God (R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022). From the insights provided by experts above, it can be concluded that 21st-century thinking skills from a Christian faith perspective can be interpreted as the capability to think critically, deeply, and reflectively, grounded in biblical truth. The Christian faith perspective encourages individuals to question, analyze, and evaluate information using a mindset based on the principles of biblical truth (Gea & Darmawan, 2021; Karlau & Rukua, 2023; R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022; Listiania et al., 2021; Panggabean, 2022; Pardede, 2016).

### ***Christian Teacher's Pedagogical Competence as a Facilitator in the Development of 21st Century Thinking Skills***

The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is essential for guiding learning based on biblical Christian principles in an effort to enhance students' thinking skills according to the demands of the 21st century. Teachers trust students as responsible individuals, and thus they need to provide guidance to develop problem-solving and creative thinking skills that are aligned with the Word of God (R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022). Teachers should ask questions and present various simple case studies from daily life. As facilitators, teachers do not dominate the learning process but rather direct students to sources of information, allowing them to solve problems actively and independently (Naibaho, 2018). The efforts students make in finding solutions to these case studies can serve as indicators of high-level thinking skills, as they apply the knowledge gained during the learning process to real-life situations (Priyanto, 2017b). The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators should guide students to implement biblical principles in critical thinking and problem-solving synthesis that are relevant to the 21st century (Bano & Tangkin, 2022). By facilitating problem-solving skills with the application of biblical values, students can make wiser decisions that involve comprehensive thinking from a spiritual

and moral perspective grounded in Christian faith (Knight, 2008). From the experts' explanations, it can be concluded that teachers need to facilitate students with learning guidance by applying material to everyday life. Teachers also guide students to use a biblical perspective in every problem-solving scenario presented during the learning process (Knight, 2008; D. Lase, 2022; Naibaho, 2018; Prijanto, 2017b).

The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is essential for creating a learning environment that encourages students in the process of developing 21st-century thinking skills. Teachers as facilitators must present learning discussions that involve problem-solving and in-depth analysis of the subject matter (Riyanto, 2014). According to Sudira (2016), students are challenged to think innovatively through activities that explore new ideas from various sources of information within study groups. Student involvement in study groups is believed to enhance their thinking skills, as they are required to share ideas and view problems from different perspectives (Lisnawati et al., 2022). Diverse perspectives can enrich students' knowledge as they must engage in discussions to identify situations, think critically, and develop creative and effective problem-solving strategies (Nainggolan et al., 2022). The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators is required to encourage students to reflect on their chosen actions or solutions so that they can reflect God's love within them (Christofer & Irawati, 2022). Based on the experts' opinions above, it can be concluded that the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is crucial in creating a learning environment that offers various opportunities for students to construct problem-solving and effective thinking skills. Christian teachers as facilitators provide opportunities for students to collaborate in groups to produce innovative and efficient problem-solving actions from diverse perspectives (Christofer & Irawati, 2022; Lisnawati et al., 2022; Nainggolan et al., 2022; Riyanto, 2014; Sudira, 2016).

Teachers as facilitators present learning that wisely utilizes technology as an effort to meet the challenges of thinking skills in the 21st century. Teachers who integrate technology into the learning process can help develop students' thinking skills through various stages, such as accessing, sorting, understanding, analyzing, verifying, evaluating, distributing, and synthesizing information (Nainggolan et al., 2022). The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators is expected to involve selecting and integrating technology tools and

resources that are relevant to biblical learning contexts (Tobeli & Zelda, 2017). According to Telaumbanua (2020), Christian teachers also guide students in using technology responsibly while upholding Christian values. Through the facilities provided by teachers in the classroom, students can actively participate in learning, feel more connected to the material, and increase their interest in exploring topics in-depth based on Christian faith principles (R. K. Lase & Tangkin, 2022). Increased learning interest can serve as an indicator of students' progress in thinking, as they are encouraged to seek in-depth information to make holistic decisions (Basongan, 2022). Based on the experts' views, it can be concluded that the pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is essential for providing technology-based learning that aligns with Christian values. Proper learning facilities can help students actively engage and connect deeply with the lesson material, as teachers encourage them to analyze all information to produce comprehensive decisions (Andriani et al., 2018; Basongan, 2022; D. Lase, 2022; Nainggolan et al., 2022; Telaumbanua, 2020; Tobeli & Zelda, 2017).

Christian teachers as facilitators need to provide constructive feedback and guidance to students in developing 21st-century thinking skills. They can offer specific and clear guidance to students regarding their strengths and areas that need improvement in their 21st-century thinking skills (Kristianto, 2018). Through the feedback given by the teacher, students can reflect and identify ways to enhance their higher-order thinking skills (Susanti Telaumbanua et al., 2023). According to Intarti (2016), the guidance process by a teacher with pedagogical competence as a good facilitator can help students develop more structured, logical, reflective, analytical, and solution-oriented thinking. Constructive feedback provided by teachers can increase intrinsic motivation and boost students' confidence during the learning process (Dewi, 2020). Teacher guidance can facilitate the understanding of the thinking process and help students become independent learners (Patandung & Saragih, 2020). Based on the opinions of experts, teachers as facilitators are also responsible for providing constructive and specific feedback to students. Constructive and specific feedback can help students reflect on their thinking processes and identify ways to develop more critical and analytical thinking (Dewi, 2020; Intarti, 2016; Kristianto, 2018; Patandung & Saragih, 2020; Susanti Telaumbanua et al., 2023).

## **Discussion**

The 21st century demands education to reformulate its learning system to address the dynamic and complex challenges of the future. The traditional learning system, where teachers are the primary subjects of education, has begun to shift in the 21st century (Fristadi & Bharata, 2015). According to Gag hunting & Bermuli (2022), the pedagogical competence of teachers as learning facilitators, which tends to focus on the personal development of students through the active and independent construction of knowledge, has become more necessary. The development of technology influencing the educational world has led to a more progressive approach in learning systems (Dwijayanti, 2021). The pedagogical competence of teachers as facilitators is crucial in delivering active, collaborative learning that focuses on the self-development of students according to the 21st-century needs (Naibaho, 2018). Teachers as facilitators have proven to be more effective in developing students' thinking skills in line with the needs of the 21st century, as teachers tend to ask questions that encourage students to analyze, evaluate, and draw their own conclusions (Sudira, 2016). This approach enables students to develop higher-order thinking skills rather than merely receiving information passively (Nainggolan et al., 2022).

The development of 21st-century thinking skills is fundamentally in line with the values, principles, and ethics of Christianity. The advancement of technology that supports the success of the learning process is also viewed positively from a Christian perspective (Tobeli & Zelda, 2017). Technology is viewed as a result of human thinking skills given by God from a Christian faith perspective. This has significant implications, as it suggests that God is actively involved in the existence of technology today as a product of human thought (Eliasaputra et al., 2020). The development of students' thinking skills, driven by the demands of the times, has led to the foundational practices of education being influenced by postmodern philosophy (Agustinova, 2020). This philosophy serves as a basis for many educational practices, including the development of 21st-century skills and the application of the teacher's role as a facilitator in the classroom. The truths upheld by this philosophy are in conflict with Christian education, as postmodern truth is heavily influenced by individual interpretation, context, and thought, which are inherently relative. Christian education influenced by postmodern relativism can lead to the dilution or

distortion of fundamental Christian values such as the authority of the Bible, morality, and the oneness of God (Williamson, 2017).

Christ is present as the Savior who restores humanity as the image and likeness of God from the distortion of sin. Redemption is carried out so that every person who has fallen into sin can experience a transformation of life to become more like Christ, who is the perfect Image of God (Grudem, 2009). According to Hoekema (2009), there are two emphases on the transformational life that resembles Christ: first, humans are empowered by the Holy Spirit as God's grace to live in a manner similar to Christ, and second, humans are responsible for the grace that God provides to become more like Christ. The practice of 21st-century Christian education is important for emphasizing the understanding of sin as a human reality that must be acknowledged and the urgency of restoring the relationship between humanity and God through redemption (Hoekema, 2009). This aims to counter the contamination of postmodern relativism in Christian educational practices.

Christian Educational Philosophy regards the Bible as the foundation and the primary source of true knowledge. The epistemological study of Christian educational philosophy explains that biblical values are the main basis for teaching practices in constructing true knowledge (Brummelen, 2015). The pedagogical competencies of Christian teachers as facilitators are essential for addressing the challenges of postmodern philosophy while also assisting students in developing thinking skills in accordance with the demands of the 21st century (Knight, 2008). Christian teachers, as facilitators, need to actively and clearly uphold Christian values throughout the learning process (Basongan, 2022). The pedagogical competencies of teachers as facilitators are crucial to encourage students to actively develop metacognitive thinking skills through guidance, feedback, and problem-based learning, as well as projects undertaken in learning groups (Eliasaputra et al., 2020). Learning practices that optimize students' thinking skills in line with the demands of the 21st century is relevant to God's mandate in Genesis 1:28, in which humanity is given the responsibility to lead, care for, and have dominion over the earth (Bavinck, 2011). The implementation of this mandate can be achieved by God's grace through knowledge (Hodge, 1871). Humans need to recognize that God is the source of knowledge so that when they utilize that knowledge, it should be for the glory of God (Berkhof, 2013). The learning process facilitated by a teacher can

determine the success of students in achieving learning objectives. Teachers, as facilitators, strive to engage students more actively through learning activities filled with challenges, open-ended questions, and collaborative projects (Sudira, 2016).

Teachers, as facilitators in meeting the demands of 21st-century thinking, must implement their pedagogical competencies by applying a problem-based learning approach to teach students how to think analytically and solve real-world problems. According to Sudira (2016), teachers act as facilitators and guides to help students identify situations, design problem-solving methods, and apply the knowledge they have gained during the learning process in relevant contexts. They provide guidance during the problem-solving process by posing open-ended questions to students, allowing them to build an effective framework for addressing complex issues (Nainggolan et al., 2022). Christian teachers assist students in identifying problems based on Christian values relevant to the context of the issues. As facilitators, they present learning that refers to principles, stories, teachings of Jesus, or ethical values of Christianity (Lase, 2022). This aims to help students understand how to think Christianly when facing complex problems and to make wise decisions (Christofer & Irawati, 2022). Teachers as facilitators also need to ensure that the solutions proposed by students are aligned and contextualized with Christian values or the teachings of Jesus Christ (Riyanto, 2014). This can serve as a form of evangelism that teachers perform in the classroom, helping students to recognize Christ as their Savior (Tobeli & Zelda, 2017). Through their pedagogical competencies, Christian teachers, as facilitators of learning grounded in a biblical Christian perspective, can fulfill their calling as agents of transformation for students, helping them understand their position as the image and likeness of God, which has been restored through the redemption of Christ, particularly in the process of developing thinking skills appropriate to the context of the 21st century (Naibaho, 2018).

Teachers, as facilitators, play a crucial role in delivering technology-based learning and providing feedback to meet the thinking skills required in the 21st century. The pedagogical competence of teachers is essential for designing learning experiences that effectively use technology to enhance students' metacognitive thinking skills and active engagement (Riyanto, 2014). Teachers as facilitators teach students to gather, analyze, and evaluate information found online (Sudira, 2016). They also encourage students to solve complex problems

by utilizing appropriate technological tools (Eliasaputra et al., 2020). According to Dewi (2020), teachers as facilitators must recognize the progress of students' thinking skills during the learning process. Providing constructive feedback is believed to motivate students to improve their thinking skills. The feedback given by teachers to students should include Christian values such as grace, truth, love, justice, or integrity (Kristianto, 2018). Christian teachers, as facilitators, must ensure that the feedback given to students is clear and specific by offering guidance for improving the quality of their thinking skills (Patandung & Saragih, 2020).

### **Implication**

The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators is crucial in developing 21st-century thinking skills in students, in line with Christian values. The application of biblical principles in teaching practices is considered essential, since the teacher's role as a facilitator must be redeemed through spiritual renewal, preventing the learning process from being influenced by the relativism of postmodernism. A teacher's pedagogical competence as a facilitator should serve as a tool for fulfilling the call to salvation by upholding Christian values while developing 21st-century thinking skills in students. This competence includes several key responsibilities: guiding students by presenting learning that integrates subject matter with Christian values, implementing problem-based learning to enhance innovative and solution-oriented thinking skills, utilizing technology to improve the quality of thought, and providing constructive feedback to help students evaluate their thinking skills.

### **Recommendation for Further Research**

The author suggests further exploring problem-based and collaborative learning methods, such as problem-based learning, experiential learning, and problem posing, to help students enhance their thinking skills in line with the demands of the 21st century. Teachers are also encouraged to sharpen their pedagogical competence, particularly in applying technology to improve students' thinking skills, by participating in various seminars. This will enable teachers to provide interactive and innovative learning environments that align with Christian values.

## Conclusion

The pedagogical competence of Christian teachers as facilitators is essential for developing students' thinking skills in the 21st century. Christian teachers, as learning facilitators, have several tasks and responsibilities in fostering students' thinking skills. These include guiding students to create a learning environment that aligns with their needs or learning styles, presenting problem-based learning, implementing technology that aligns with Christian values, and providing constructive feedback on the development of students' thinking. The author reflects that teachers, as facilitators, can be viewed as agents of transformation, helping students to know God through the learning process. Learning grounded in biblical values and principles can help students grow in their understanding of their calling as the image and likeness of God, redeemed through Christ.

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