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**Teacher's Strategies in Developing Students' Critical Thinking Skills
Through Reading Activities (A Case Study at A High School in
Indonesia)**

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Abstract

This paper discusses the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activities. The aims of this research are to investigate the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activities and to find out the students' response towards those strategies. This research used case study method and the subjects of this research are the English teacher and the seven students of Grade XII which consist of five male and two female students. The data in this research are collected from observation, interview, and documentation. The results of this research show that the teacher used several strategies to develop the students' critical thinking skill through reading activities, such as (1) started the reading activity from literature to critical thinking; (2) Predicting and Previewing Strategy; (3) Vocabulary Preview Strategy; (4) Questioning Strategy; (5) Outlining and Summarizing Strategy; (6) Reasoning and Evaluating Strategy; (7) Recognizing Context Strategy; (8) Reflecting Strategy. Moreover, most of the students' response to the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activities are positive, and they feel the improvement in their critical thinking skills after the teacher applied these strategies in developing their critical thinking skills through different reading activities.

Keywords: *teaching strategy, critical thinking, reading activity.*

INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem which involves the ability to think precisely and systematically, and follow the rules of logic and scientific reasoning, among other things. Based on this concept, critical thinking enables the students to not only working with existing concept or ideas, but also enables the students to transform the ideas, conceptions, or processes to make decisions and find new solutions of an issue or problem. In line with the concept of critical thinking that has been explained, Chaffee (2000) states that by

applying critical thinking, the critical thinkers are expected to have a capability in making knowledgeable decision, explaining their idea, and solving the new/unfamiliar problem.

According to Lai (2011), critical thinking is an important element that has an actual relationship with language learning and an important component of education in this century. Therefore, developing critical thinking in learning process is considered important for the life skill especially for the students to help them deal with real situations or real problem with responsibility.

To develop students' critical thinking knowledge and ability, teachers can instruct an instructional pedagogy with designed learning activities that encourage students' critical thinking abilities. Therefore, teachers need to have a basic knowledge about critical thinking as the students will explore deeply into critical thinking. Teachers have to implement the concept of critical thinking and connect it with learning activities, such as enable students collecting, evaluating and using information appropriately and effectively. Not only that, the implementation of critical thinking in learning activities should enables students to transform the ideas, conceptions, or processes to make decisions and find new solutions of an issue or problem. One of the skill that has close relation with critical thinking is reading. Kurland (2000) states that "readers can only think critically about a text (critical thinking) if they have understood it (critical reading)". It means that critical thinking appeared after the reader fully understood about the text that they have read.

Furthermore, in order to achieve one of educational purposes which is develop citizens who will have the ability to read and think critically, teachers have responsibility to develop students' critical thinking ability. Through reading activity in English class, teacher can facilitate and guide students through various activities and questions which require them to understand, analyze and evaluate the information they get from texts. This way, it is expected that students not only can show comprehension towards information or issue from the texts, but also can compare it with their background knowledge and perspectives to give an objective judgment.

There are many previous studies related to the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity. Fadhillah (2017), for instance, did a research to find out whether the students' critical thinking can be improved through critical reading strategies and the process of critical reading strategies implementation that can help students to think critically in reading narrative text. The result showed that critical thinking strategies could help the students improve their critical thinking skills in reading narrative text.

Similar research also conducted by Husna (2019) to find out about the possibilities of developing critical thinking skills through an Extensive Reading (ER) program and the students' perspective about the program. The result of this research showed the indication of improvement in the students' critical thinking skills after the program based on their result in critical reading test. Another research done by Din (2020) that has purpose to evaluate university students' critical thinking ability

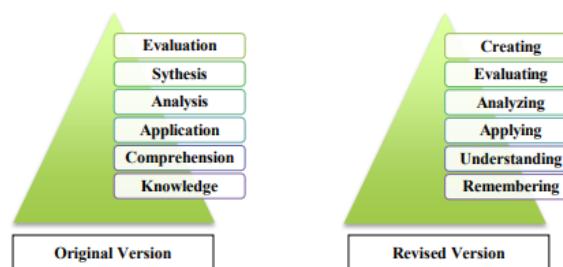
that is reflected in their critical reading skill. The result of this research showed that the participants have very positive attitude towards critical thinking.

Based on those three previous research related to the critical reading in reading activity which have done by some rightful researchers, it is obvious that none of the previous studies offer information about the strategies used by the teachers to develop students' critical thinking through reading activity. The researcher needs to find the teacher's strategies that can integrate reading activity with critical thinking in order to practice students' critical thinking ability that will bring benefit to the development of their critical thinking skill outside the class. Coming from the missing part of the previous studies, this research specifically focuses to discover teachers' strategies in developing students' critical thinking through reading activity, and students' response toward the strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Critical Thinking

The concept of critical thinking can be defined from Bloom's Taxonomy (1956), which is divide individual's human nature into four dimensions including affective domain, psychomotor domain, ethical domain, and cognitive domain. Among those four dimensions, critical thinking is related to the cognitive domain which involves humans' knowledge and the development of intellectual skills. However, there is also Bloom's Revised Taxonomy arranged by The Anderson and Krathwohl (2001). The revised one is maintain the six cognitive process categories including: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. The difference between the original version and the revised one can be seen in the scheme below:



Picture 1.2 Original Bloom's Taxonomy vs Revised Bloom's Taxonomy

Furthermore, based on Kennedy et.al (1991), the top three levels which include analyzing, evaluating, and creating are often represented as critical thinking. In line with Kennedy's statement, Nordvall and Braxton(1996) also declare the top three levels of the taxonomy represent Higher Order Thinking and critical thinking.

There are many ideas or arguments about the term of critical thinking according to the experts. According to Lau (2011) "critical thinking is a rational and clear thinking which involves thinking precisely and systematically, and following the rules of logic and scientific reasoning, among other things" (p.1). While Din (2020) defines critical thinking as "the ability of collecting, evaluating and using information effectively and appropriately" (p.1). Also, there is another definition about critical thinking which is stated by Paul and Elder (2010), "Critical thinking is

that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them". Based on those three definitions, it can be summarized that critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem which involves the ability to think precisely and systematically, and follow the rules of logic and scientific reasoning, among other things.

Critical thinking also includes a complex combination of skills. Kurland (2000) and Nosich (2001) states some characteristics of critical thinking skills. They are including (1) rationality in stating reasonable arguments or ideas, (2) clarity in stating their ideas or arguments clearly to avoid misunderstanding, (3) accuracy in describing things precisely, and (4) open-mindedness in accepting the new argument, ideas or mindset.

Teaching Strategy

According to Strasser (1964), "teaching strategy is a generalized plan for a lesson or a lesson which includes structure, desired learner behavior, in terms of the goals of instruction, and an outline of tactics necessary to implement the strategy". In line with Strasser's definition, Sanjaya (2008) states that, "at the academy level, a strategy is a plan, method, or series of activities designed to achieve certain educational goals" (p. 2). Based on those two definitions above, it means that a teaching strategy usually includes plan or structure, desired learner behavior, the goals of instruction, and an outline of the tactic needed to implement the strategy in the form of a series of activities to achieve the learning goals. Therefore, in order to make a good teaching strategy, a teaching strategy at least includes all of the points in the definition.

Kindsvatter et al (1996) in their definition of teaching strategy, states that "Teaching strategy is an instructional major component which is a sequential combination of methods designed to accomplish the learning objectives" (p. 168). Based on Kindsvatter's opinion, the teacher surely needs to make the learning process in the class run smoothly by letting the students to engage and participate in the subject to achieve the learning goals. This also means that the teacher may need to modify the teaching strategies with a combination of some methods to achieve the learning objectives. Thus, the teacher has to know the suitable strategy that will be implemented in the classroom based on the students' needs and the subject's accuracy.

Teaching Reading

There are many definitions about reading by experts. Based on Carmie (1990), "Reading is the ability to get information from the text". While according to Daiek and Anter (2004), "Reading is an active process that depends on both an author's ability to convey meaning using words and your ability to create meaning from them". Similarly, Tarigan (2008) defines reading as "a process carried out and used by a reader to acquire a message which is conveyed by a writer through words, could

be seen and known by the reader" (p. 7). Based on those definitions about reading, it can be concluded that reading is a process that depends on both the author's ability to convey meaning using words and readers' ability to acquire a message which is conveyed by a writer through words in order to get information from the text.

At the high school level, most English teachers apply intensive reading activity which is the type of reading activity that is also known as text reading or passage reading. The aims of this reading activity is to read the text and find certain knowledge, certain analysis, or certain information. Teacher can use some analysis activity about certain information in text or passage to practice students' critical thinking skills and used that as a basic for writing exercises in further activity. It also means that the students are not only understanding, but they are also interpreting, analyzing and evaluating a text with the focus on the pattern, belief, and the meaning beyond the text. Furthermore, by letting the students analyze and interpret the text, it also practices their critical thinking skills because of the reading process that needs the process of interpretation and critical thinking.

Strategies to Develop Students' Critical Thinking Skills Through Reading Activity

Critical thinking could be developed through reading activity. According to Kurland (2000), as the readers read a text, critical thinking will enable readers to keep track of their understanding of the text. Furthermore, Kurland (2000) declares that readers have to understand the text in order to think critically about the text. This also means, the readers will develop their critical ability by verifying the text deeper to test their understanding, if the readers find that some statements in the text do not make sense.

Belinda Hakes (2008), in the book titled "When Critical Thinking Met English Literature" provides several practical examples of how to apply critical thinking in teaching English literature. Overall, Hakes differentiates two different approaches of introducing students to critical thinking in literature class which the teacher either starts from literature to critical thinking or from critical thinking to a literary text (from reading activity to critical thinking or from critical thinking to reading activity). Other experts such as Greenall and Swan (1986) and Sull (1985) propose several particular techniques and strategies of developing critical thinking in reading activity including extracting the main ideas of the text, reading for specific information, understanding text organization, checking comprehension, inferring, dealing with unfamiliar words, linking ideas, etc. Those strategies that the experts have proposed can be used in reading activity as one of the strategies for developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity.

Hughes (2014) also suggest four strategies to develop critical thinking skills in reading activity, including (1) reasoning strategy or asking the students to practice stating the opinion about certain topics and providing the reasons that support the opinion using the conjunction "because", (2) questioning strategy or giving the students several higher order thinking questions about the text, (3) recognizing context strategy or asking the students to view other arguments from many perspectives, and (4) predicting strategy or asking the students to predict the content

of the text. Similar with Hughes, Sousa (2004) and WSSU (2013) also mention several strategies that can be applied to develop critical thinking in reading activity, including (1) previewing strategy or asking the students to study about a text before they read the entire text, (2) outlining and summarizing strategy or asking the students to write or retell the main ideas of the text concisely by using the students' own words, (3) questioning strategy or giving the students several higher order thinking questions about the text, (4) reflecting strategy or asking the students whether their attitudes, beliefs, and positions toward the issues in the text are change after they read the text, (5) evaluating strategy asking the students to practice stating the opinion about certain topics and providing the reasons that support the opinion.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher used case study method in this research. According to Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 15), a case study is "a strategy of inquiry that explores in depth a program, activity, event, process, or one or more individuals". Case study methods are attached by time and activity, and researchers collect related information in detail using several data collection techniques over a continued period of time. This method was chosen because the main purpose of the research is to describe teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking through reading activity which needs a further explanation and further study that occurs in real situations. In addition, this method is able to produce the data in the form of written words rather than numbers or statistics which is suitable for the purpose of the study that needs description and explanation in written form.

The researcher conducted this research at a high school in Indonesia with the English teacher and the seven students of Grade XII which consist of five male and two female students as a subjects of this research. To collect the data, the researcher used observation, interview, and documentation in this research. The researcher also used methodological triangulation technique to increase the credibility and check the validity of the data collected. Furthermore, the researcher used interactive analysis techniques by Miles and Huberman (1994) to analyze the data which include data collection, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity and its implementation

Based on the observation, the strategies used by the teacher to develop students' critical thinking skills through reading activity were (1) started the reading activity from literature to critical thinking; (2) Predicting and Previewing Strategy; (3) Vocabulary Preview Strategy; (4) Questioning Strategy; (5) Outlining and Summarizing Strategy; (6) Reasoning and Evaluating Strategy; (7) Recognizing Context Strategy; (8) Reflecting Strategy.

The teacher started the reading activities from literature to critical thinking by showing the sample/example of the analytical exposition text to the students before continuing to explain the material so that the students could understand the content of the text first and feel familiar with analytical exposition text first before studied about other aspects of analytical exposition text. As stated by Kurland (2000) that readers have to understand the text in order to think critically about the text.

Then, the teacher applied the Predicting and Previewing Strategy by asking the students to predict the content of the text based on their knowledge before they read the entire text to activate the students' critical thinking skills by comparing their background knowledge about the text and their prediction of the text. As stated by Hughes (2014) that the objective of this strategy is to compare students' previous knowledge and prediction of the text.

Next, the teacher applied the Vocabulary Preview Strategy by asking one or two students to write all of the unfamiliar words and the other students also wrote the unfamiliar words in the book after they read the entire text to help students develop their critical thinking skills in understanding the text by dealing with the unfamiliar words. This is supported by Greenall and Swan (1986) and Sull (1985) statement about several particular techniques and strategies of developing critical thinking in reading activity including dealing with unfamiliar words.

The teacher also applied the Questioning Strategy by giving the students some questions in form of higher order thinking questions related to the text such as 'what is the purpose of the text', 'what does the text mainly talk about', words reference in the text (i.e. pronoun it, they, them, etc) after the students read and understand the entire text, in the purpose to practice and develop students' critical thinking skills in understanding the text and analyzing the content of the text before they answer the questions. It is supported by Hughes (2014) that if the teacher uses higher order thinking questions, students have to think and analyze it before answering the questions because the answer could not be found directly in the text.

After that, the teacher applied the Outlining and Summarizing Strategy by letting the students retell the main ideas of the text concisely with their own words after they read and understand the entire text to help the students develop their critical thinking skills in order to find the main idea and retell it with their own words. It is also supported by Sousa (2004) and WSSU (2013) that this strategy could be applied to develop the students' critical thinking in reading activities.

Furthermore, there is Reasoning and Evaluating Strategy in which the teacher asked the students to tell their opinion about the issues in the text in form 'I agree' or 'I disagree' and provide the reasons that could support the opinion using the conjunction 'because' to help the students judge and analyze the text before they tell their arguments or opinions about the issues in the text. As stated by Kurland (2000) and Nosich (2001) about the characteristics of critical thinking skills that critical thinkers always state reasonable arguments or ideas.

Before wrapped up the reading activities, the teacher applied Recognizing Context Strategy by asking the students to respond the other students' opinion in a form of small discussion forum. This strategy was applied to develop their critical

thinking skills especially in observing the arguments from different points of view or the other students. As stated by Hughes (2014) that the students have to develop the skill of viewing arguments from many perspectives as part of developing critical thinking.

To wrap up the reading activities, the teacher applied the Reflecting Strategy by asking whether the students' opinion about the issue in the text are changed after they read the text to help the students develop their critical thinking skills in reflecting their arguments after reading the text. It is supported by Dewey (1909 as cited in Fisher, 2001) that this reflecting strategy can help the students to implement the reflective thinking.

In addition, the teacher applied the strategies for some reasons. These strategies could help the students understand the content of the text better and think critically about the content of the text since they could relate it with their previous knowledge especially in the material about analytical exposition text. Then, these strategies could help the teacher to analyze the students' critical thinking level and pay more attention to the students who still felt difficult to follow the strategies and develop their critical thinking skills. These strategies also could make the students felt engaged in the activities in the class and it makes the students actively participate in the activities and actively participate in the learning activities.

Students' response to the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity

Based on the interview with the students, these are the students' response to the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity. The students agreed that they could understand the text better when the teacher started the reading activity by introducing the text because they could see the text first and they could know about the material that would be explained or discussed by the teacher. It is supported by Kurland (2000) that critical thinking will enable readers to keep track of their understanding of the text.

The students also believed that the Vocabulary Preview Strategy could help the students to activate their critical thinking skills when they tried to think about the words' meaning by looking for the context of the unfamiliar words in certain sentences when they read the text and tried to understand the text. As stated by Roland Barthes (1967) that critical thinking skills can be developed when the readers try to find specific information in a text such as find and give meaning to words.

When the teacher applied the Questioning Strategy, the students believed that this strategy could help them to understand the text better and practice their critical thinking in order to find the proper answer before they answer the questions. It is supported by Hughes (2014) that the students have to think and analyze before answering the higher order thinking questions because the answer could not be found directly in the text.

Then, the students agreed that Outlining and Summarizing Strategy could help them understand the text better and develop their critical thinking skills in order to

retell the main ideas that they had found after reading the text. As stated by Sousa (2004) and WSSU (2013) that this strategies could be applied to develop critical thinking in reading activities.

The students also agreed that the Reasoning and Evaluating Strategy, two student participants agreed that this strategy could help them understand the text better and develop their critical thinking skills to find the reasons that could support their opinion. This is supported by Kurland (2000) and Nosich (2001) that critical thinkers need to use the most credible references to produce reasonable thinking in stating their ideas or arguments and critical thinkers always state reasonable arguments or ideas.

Furthermore, the students believed that the Recognizing Context Strategy could help them to develop their critical thinking skills in viewing things or opinions from several perspectives or points of view. As stated by Hughes (2014) that the students have to develop the skill of viewing arguments from many perspectives as part of developing critical thinking.

Regarding the Reflecting Strategy, some students were not change their opinion after read the text and the others were change their opinion because they think again about the issue in the text and open their new perspective after they read the text. It is related with the statement by Kurland (2000) and Nosich (2001) about the characteristics of critical thinking skills which is open-mindedness in the critical thinking characteristics that refers to the critical thinkers' ability to accept the new argument, ideas or mindset because it clarifies the evidence clearly.

In conclusion, the students' response to the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity are positive. Also, most of the students feel the improvement in their critical thinking skills after the teacher applied these strategies in developing their critical thinking skills through reading activity.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the research finding, the strategies used by the English teacher in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activities were (1) started the reading activity from literature to critical thinking; (2) Predicting and Previewing Strategy; (3) Vocabulary Preview Strategy; (4) Questioning Strategy; (5) Outlining and Summarizing Strategy; (6) Reasoning and Evaluating Strategy; (7) Recognizing Context Strategy; (8) Reflecting Strategy.

There were some reasons why the teacher applied those strategies. Those strategies not only helped the students understand the content of the text better, but also could help the students to think critically about the content of the text since they could relate it with their previous knowledge especially in the material about analytical exposition text. Then, those strategies could help the teacher to analyze the students' critical thinking level and pay more attention to the students who still felt difficult to follow the teacher's strategies and develop their critical thinking skills. Furthermore, those strategies could make the students felt engaged in the activities in

the class so they could actively participate in the learning process.

Moreover, two strategies that mostly could help the students to understand more about the text and develop their critical thinking skills are started the reading activity by introducing the text and Outlining and Summarizing Strategy. Also, most of the students' response to the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity was positive. To conclude, most of the students felt the improvement in their critical thinking skills after the teacher applied these strategies in developing their critical thinking skills through reading activity.

In addition, to improve the teacher's strategies in developing students' critical thinking skills through reading activity, the researcher would like to give some suggestions for the teacher. The teacher could give the texts that contains the recent issues, so that the students could practice their critical thinking to deal with the recent issues. Also, the teacher should use various media to presents the text to give the students motivation in joining the class. Besides that, the teacher should add various higher order thinking questions to help the students develop their critical thinking skills maximally and change the discussion session when the students respond to the other students' opinion into small debate activity to encourage the students to speak. Last, the teacher must encourage active learning and try to make the students feel engaged in the learning activity.

For other researchers, the researcher suggests to investigate the strategies in developing students' critical thinking in other skills or activities such as writing, speaking, listening, etc or the types of questions which the teachers use in reading activity and relate it with the Bloom Taxonomy as a benchmark of cognitive skill. The researcher also hopes that this research can be used as a reference and additional source for information to expand further research or extend a similar research.

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