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## INTEGRATING READING AND WRITING INSTRUCTION FOR CULTIVATING STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING

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### Abstract

This study aimed to cultivate students' knowledge and skills imperative for the development of critical thinking. This research employed qualitative method to explore students' critical thinking through an integrated instruction of reading and writing to measure the extent to which the students understood and afford to learn English in reading and writing skills. In this research, researchers collected the data based on three factors, namely treatment, person, and outcome factor. Treatment factor is a technique of collecting data by observing students through the process of reading and writing instruction in classroom. Person factor, on the other hand, is a technique of collecting data by observing students observed directly by the other researchers in the process of English learning in classroom. Last, outcome factor is a technique of collecting data by using an open-ended question in a questionnaire based on students' achievement in learning English. The data were analyzed and interpreted to answer the research questions. Based on the result of the study, we found out that the integration of reading and writing enabled the instruction to construct students' prior knowledge and critical thinking by organizing the appropriate task-based activities. The study also developed the teaching strategies to be more effective in language teaching.

**Keywords:** *Critical Thinking, Reading, Writing,*

## INTRODUCTION

Most students still have problems to develop critical thinking in learning English language. To be able to critically think, students need to practice intensively. Cho and Griffer (2015) said that students who learned reading and writing intensively are able to enhance their reading and writing ability in learning English language. Thus, reading and writing are crucial elements necessary to foster students' critical thinking, and it can help to expand their ability to think.

Most students also face barriers to find out information on passages and still have problem to elaborate the information in written text. Bereiter and Scardamalia (2006) implied that a writer had limited storage of information in knowledge building in understanding the situation and social context of the communication. The limits become a big problem for students to acquire English skills especially in reading and writing. Besides, it is also proved that they do not only have difficulties to discover and respond to information in a text but they also cannot express main ideas retrieved from the text into writing. In other words, students cannot find out the main idea of text to extend their critical thinking. Cook (2008) stated that students' experience or prior knowledge can enlarge ability of students to comprehend a text. Therefore, these reasons are basic problems that have to be solved to increase the students' critical thinking in learning English.

One of reading goals is to find out information in an issue or a topic (Rivers and Temperly, 1978; Nunan, 1999). To find out the information, a time process which grows new knowledge to comprehend a text in the process of reading is needed. Additionally, Weigle (2012) implied that there were four components in the aspect of interactive individual, namely 1) working memory, 2) motivation and affection, 3) cognitive process and 4) long-term memory. Gao (2017) stated that reading and writing have the same component namely prior knowledge and metacognition. Nevertheless, most of

reading and writing put on the cognitive process but they are actually applied in any various ways (Shaw, et.al, 2011). Thus reading and writing have the same role to encourage cognitive process and to achieve successful communication in written text. Yoshimura (2009) discussed that the connection of reading and writing looked to affect EFL learners' behavior positively. As writing can influence the substance reading by actuating the scheme, reading can influence the substance writing by affording valuable input.

Two research questions were addressed in this research:

1. What was the impact of implementation of reading and writing instruction used by practitioner on the process of learning?
2. How did the practitioner implement reading and writing instruction?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Reading and Writing Instruction**

Brandon and Brandon (2011) mentioned *Reading based Writing approach* which clarified that the approach stimulated students to create the substances in writing and to enhance their critical thinking. It could be assumed that the approach is also an integrated reading and writing instruction that helps students cultivate their critical thinking. Shaw et. al (2011) found that students were more concentrating on bottom-up process in writing skill such as syntax, mechanics, and lexical choice than in reading skills. Therefore, writing is the main substance which needs to be learned, whereas in reading, students need to learn the substances of building knowledge so that they are able to read and write critically. Reading includes a process of working metacognition for a text comprehension while writing is considered as metacognition to be applied.

To learn reading, students need to comprehend the context of situation of reading. The context appeared in surrounding environment. The context consists of students' history, cultural, environment either inside or outside learning in their school (McIntyre et.al, 2011). Meanwhile, Flower & Hayes (1981) expressed that writing has task environment which consists of 1) the assignment and the text produced so far 2) the writer's long-term memory included knowledge of topic, knowledge of audience 3) stored writing plans and a number of cognitive process included planning, translating thought into text, and revising. Reading and writing have the same substances in a discourse but there are the different elements in the process of reading and writing (Flower, et al, 1990). Olson and Land (2007) expressed a cognitive strategies approach to reading and writing instruction for the level of secondary school. The approach explored some strategies how to teach reading and writing together to absorb students in a greater use and variety of cognitive strategies. Furthermore, reading and writing instruction should be treated in the teaching process in order to promote students' cognition or critical thinking

### **Reading to write**

Reading and writing can be reflected as equal process of composing (Zsigmond, 2015; Fitzgerald & Shanahan, 2000; Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Linse & Nunan (2005) defined that reading is a set skill that make a sense and derive a meaning from the printed word. In other words, reading is a set skill to realize comprehension and a meaning of word group. Reading to write can cultivate critical literacy in cognitive process. Flower (1990) implied that critical literacy called transforming emphasis. It means that the person is not able to comprehend information critically but he or she is able to transform the information for new purpose. Brandon and Brandon (2011) expressed some techniques namely underlining, annotating,

outlining, taking notes. The techniques assist students to encourage them to learn reading. These techniques help students to construct their cognitive process in reading comprehension to find out the main and supporting ideas. Whereas the essential purpose of writing is reader's comprehension (Zsigmond, 2015). It can be accepted that reading is the first substance that is possessed by students. Then, students start to master effective writing. In order to reach the effective comprehension of reading to write, the ultimate substance is reading comprehension of a text to encourage students to stimulate their critical thinking in writing.

### **Critical Thinking**

Most people used critical thinking skills everyday consciously and unconsciously (Atac, 2015). Sunner as cited in Atac (2015) expressed that critical thinking is a test to value whether men or women correspond to reality about earthly circumstance. Atac (2015) expressed some statements:

Critical thinking involves reading and writing critically. Reading critically means examining different points of view with an open and enquiring mind, evaluating your own position, and drawing conclusions as to whether a particular point of view is persuasive. Writing critically means presenting your conclusions in a clear and well-reasoned way to persuade others (p. 622)

Reading and writing can develop critical thinking to examine point of view more persuasively, to present conclusion in mind clearly, and to persuade the other views to fortify a sound reason. Therefore, reading and writing is the most substantive skill to promote critical mind and to convince the expression of a particular thought to draw the reason.

## **METHOD**

This research used purposive sampling. The subjects constructed by the research were junior high school students. I considered choosing the school because students still have less motivation. Integrating reading and writing instruction can help students to promote their motivation using their mind critically. I also construct the research to produce the development of better teaching for professional teacher.

This research was narrative inquiry to portray the school situation of phenomena of teacher and students. I selected narrative inquiry method because I placed myself in a school area for a whole month to estimate the real situation that happened in the classroom to be an experience for me as researcher (Haydon, et.al 2017). I did classroom observation and did activity to contact the student and teacher outside and inside classroom. During the fieldwork, I stand my position as both outsider and insider of classroom to bridge the gap between the researched participant and me as a researcher (Bruce, C. D., Flynn, T., & Stagg-Peterson, S, 2011). As an outsider, I played a role as a researcher to collect questionnaire data from the participants. As an insider, I played a role as a practitioner to teach the classroom and as participant observer to observe the students activity.

Thus, the position of insider and outsider permit me to authorize ease of access, greater understanding, and openness; extend richer, concentrated description of data; and take flexibility and wholeness to the process of research (Widodo, 2016; Labaree, 2002). This position also created personal and professional reliance in daily social meeting and cooperated participant (Widodo, 2016; Wang, 2013)

## PARTICIPANTS

This research participants were students consisted of 15 students in Junior High School of Beruntung Baru district in South Kalimantan. Besides, the researcher was also participant in this research as practitioner and participant observer. This research conducted non participant observation that was done by the co-researcher and the teacher to measure the process of reading and writing instruction that I had done. Thus, this research was carried out by collaboration of participants.

## PROCEDURE

I collected the data by doing three aspect of process; 1) treatment factor, 2) person factor, and 3) outcome factor (Calfe & Chambliss, 2005). In the treatment factor, I conducted an integrated reading and writing instruction process to discover information directly about the comprehension of students to learn reading and writing. In the person factor, I interpreted intrinsic characteristics of students during their learning in classroom through the result of observation checklist. Then, in outcome factor, I designed measurement to collect data by observation that had been done by the teacher as insider observer and co-researcher as outsider observer. I also organized questionnaire to measure how the students comprehended the instructional material that I had taught.

I planned instructional study as follow:

<b>Processes to be Taught</b>			
<b>Comprehend Author's Idea</b>		<b>Compose Own Idea</b>	
<b>Specific Factors</b>		<b>General Factor</b>	
Treatment factor	<b>Instructional Content</b>	<b>Instructional Content</b>	<b>Teacher Tasks</b>
	Identify text type, find authors' idea	Choose the topic. Brainstorm the	Lecture or small group instruction or a combination

	and topic. Annotate and outline the idea each paragraph.	idea. Write paragraphs. Annotate and outline his or her own writer's idea in paragraphs	<b>Student Tasks</b> Individual practice or small group practice or whole class practice or a combination
Person factor	<b>Author's Knowledge</b> Know author's ideas in text	<b>Writer's Knowledge</b> Know the pattern of the paragraph. Identify the topic sentences, supporting sentences, concluding sentences.	<b>Prior Experience</b> Earlier experience with opinion Earlier experience with whole class, group and/or individual work or not
	<b>Reading Skills</b> Comprehend to find out ideas. Level of Vocabulary	<b>Writing Skills</b> level of spelling skill Level of mechanics skill Level of paragraph development skills	<b>Fill Out Motivation Questionnaire</b> High or low interest
Outcome factor	<b>State Author's Point in Text</b> Accurately or not	<b>Write idea</b> Competently or not	

**DATA COLLECTION**

The data were collected through the documentation of students (photograph, exemplar of observation checklist, and questionnaire answer), and participation classroom observation (instruction and students activity in classroom) which was done by



the teacher as insider observer and co-researcher as outsider. These data provided a description of comprehension process of learning English in reading and writing instruction. In participation classroom observation, the teacher and co-researcher took note by using checklist exemplar, and observed them when I did the instruction in classroom. Then, I collected data by questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to measure students' motivation, experience and whether the instruction implemented went as planned or not.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The data were analyzed qualitatively. This qualitative analysis involved an interpretative scheme (Widodo, 2016). The data analysis was obtained based on the data collection. As a researcher, I analyzed meaning data by describing it narratively. Then, I interpreted each data based on the fact documentation, exemplar of instructional classroom observation, exemplar of student activity observation, and questionnaire to develop finding themes. I analyzed data by using Braun and Clark's thematic analysis (2006) to narrate the data. The goal of thematic analysis made thematized meanings; it is a tool to analyze data for "identifying, analyzing, and reporting pattern (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Then, the data were interpreted in the description of data narrative analysis to generate the findings of research.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the procedure of collecting data, the data were obtained from 3 steps of instructional study; 1) treatment factor, 2) person factor, and 3) outcome factor. The data can be seen detailed as follows:

### **Treatment Factor**

In this research, I conducted teaching process in classroom which was observed by teacher as non-participant observer. I practiced teaching in classroom in order to stimulate students to be more critical to find out ideas of a text and they could express it in

written text. In this classroom activity, I did three phases in this process; 1) pre-activities, 2) while-activities, and 3) post-activities.

### **Pre Activities**

I gave explanation about the theme of instructional material to tailor the students' prior knowledge. Rodrigo et. al (2013) implied that "the prior knowledge had a strong influence on tutor learning– If students do not have sufficient prior knowledge for tutoring". Therefore, as a researcher, I conducted the teaching activity by relating the material to the students' prior knowledge. In this phase, I was able to develop the material based on the students' prior knowledge. In this activity, I was able to explain description of lesson theme to the students well. It also could be proved on the observation checklist of students. During this activity, the practitioner asked question to gain the view points in the lesson. Hudson (2016) inferred that "*Prior knowledge is essential for learning because it helps us make sense of new ideas and information*". It was proved that in pre-activity prior knowledge was needed to create the representation of lesson theme. Then, at point 3 I explained the material to the students. In this activity, the observer valued me that I could explain the material well.



**Fig. 1 Pre-Activities**

### **While-Activities**

In this activity I tried to engage students to recognize the lesson material. In this phase, I tried to engage students to identify

the definition of paragraph and part of paragraph elements by using direct learning or lecturing course. I also explained and conveyed the lesson material about main sentence and supporting sentences in paragraph. Next, I fostered students to be more active in discussing each other to solve the problem in learning, and I also tried to organize students by using an instruction in practices of reading and writing skill. Then I tried to assist students to resolve the problems of lesson that were faced by students.



**Fig.2 While-Activities**

### **Post Activities**

In these activities, I asked students some questions to evaluate the lesson that I had taught. The evaluation only aimed to know how far students understood and identified the main lesson of theme. Then, I concluded it to close the lesson.

### **Person Factor**

In this phase, the co-researcher and I collaborated to do this research. In the classroom, I did teaching and the co-researcher observed me to find out the information. As a result of observation checklist, students were able to understand the material taught by the practitioner. It happened because some students had prior knowledge about the material. It was proved that prior knowledge is

one of important substances to attain new idea and information (Hudson, 2016). Then, students could discover main and supporting ideas in paragraph. It occurred because I made stimulation of curiosity for students to enhance learning (Pluck, 2011). It was proved that students could understand the instructions done by the practitioner. Next, the students were able to respond directly about main and supporting sentences. It also happened because they had prior knowledge. In this activity, I only asked students some questions and asked them to find out the main and supporting ideas in a text. In this activity, I build up some tasks to instruct students to be more active to study and respond. In the next activity, the students were able to write main and supporting sentences after they had stimulation to develop their prior knowledge. In this case, I tried to build up prior knowledge to develop students' knowledge and ability in writing sentences.

I also found some the results of this factor. In this factor, students could analyze the point of view of main and supporting ideas in a text. It can assist students to develop their knowledge in writing. I tried to encourage students to understand how to identify main and supporting ideas in a text. Then, students could summarize the main points of idea in a text and express it exactly in sentences. In this case, I motivated the students to develop their thought to write prompt sentences appropriate with the main idea of the text. After that, the students could write a paragraph well individually. Thus, these factors showed that students had new experience in learning reading and writing to understand how to recognize the context of text in reading and express it in writing skills.

### **Outcome Factor**

In this phase, I collected some information based on students' questionnaire answer. The information is as follows:

#### Student 1

Based on the questionnaire answer, I discovered some information to solve the outcome factor. First, the student could understand the lessons and theme well that was given. He also found

out the main and supporting idea well and could analyze the main and supporting sentences in a paragraph. He can resume the main information in a paragraph well and expressed it in writing a paper. Then, I find out the information that integrated reading and writing instruction made it easier for him to apprehend the instructional explanation when I taught. Besides, it made it easier for him to comprehend reading in a text and to find out main and supporting idea in a text. It also made it easier for him to express it in writing a short paragraph well.

#### Student 2

In this student's factor, by using integrated reading and writing instruction, I noticed that the student could apprehend a little bit about the lesson theme that I gave. He was also good enough to be able to recognize about the main and supporting idea and to be able to determine main and supporting sentences in a paragraph. Next, he could restate the main information of paragraph and rewrite it in a paper. Then, I obtained information based on the questionnaire that reading and writing instruction made the student easier to grasp the instruction. Besides, it also made it rather easier for the student to apprehend reading in a text and to discover main and supporting idea in a text. It also made it rather easier for him to utter it in writing a short paragraph.

#### Student 3

In this case, I found out information that reading and writing instruction was good enough to be used. I found out information that the students apprehended the lesson theme well. He could recognize about the main and supporting idea well and also could determine main and supporting sentences in a paragraph. Next, he could reaffirm the main information of paragraph and express it in writing a paper. Then, I gained information too that reading and writing instruction made it easier for him to comprehend reading in a text and recover main and supporting idea. It also made it easier for him to express it in a short paragraph.

## **DISCUSSION**

In this case, I analyzed that reading and writing instruction needed to organize task-based activities to get the success of learning English especially for comprehension of a text and expressing it in a paper. It can be looked at the result of observation checklist exemplar that I analyzed. Gao (2017) stated that reading and writing have the same components namely prior knowledge and metacognition. To acquire prior knowledge and metacognition, it is needed to manage the tasks in the process of teaching which it can be useful for students to achieve the comprehension of instructional material. During the time I taught integrated reading and writing, I found some information as evidence to prove the result of findings. In pre-activities, I got some evidence. I saw students ask more, pay attention, and participate in the process of classroom activities. In while activities, I organized some tasks activities. I asked students to work individually and in a group. I also gave students more explanation about lesson theme and more giving direction during the process of activities. In post activities, I asked students to retell the story based on the result of students' main idea of information. So integrated reading and writing instructions could be conducted well but it needed the task based activities appropriately.

Based on the findings of treatment, person, and outcome factor, I obtained the information that the use of reading and writing instruction can develop prior knowledge and critical thinking but it is needed to organize some task-based activities well in order to achieve the goal of outcome factor criteria for students in learning reading and writing skill.

## **CONCLUSION**

Reading helped students to raise the prior knowledge and developed their critical thinking based on what information they found out in a text so that they could express their mind in writing. Integrated reading and writing instruction is a strategy that helps students to be more active to use their thought critically when they learned English course. Reading and writing instruction can be

developed well by determining the task-based activities in the process of teaching in classroom. Therefore, reading and writing instruction would be more effective, by embedding the design of task-based activities in the process of teaching to ease the achievement of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspect.

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