

ASSESSING UNPI'S STUDENTS CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The research aims to show the students in Universitas Putra Indonesia (UNPI) represent impact of Critical Thinking their idea in Discourse Analysis and to identify the students in showing their scientific interpreting, analyzing and evaluating idea in Discourse Analysis. The purpose of this study is to investigate the students critical thinking skills in Discourse Analysis. In the processing of this research, the writer applies descriptive quantitative research using one group pretest-posttest design method by Mike Allen (2017). This research used theories of Formative Assessment by William & Black on International Journal (2012), Critical Thinking Skill by Facione (2015) and Discourse Analysis by Brian Paltridge (2012). The researcher conducts three stages of research (pre-assessment – treatment – post-assessment). The result of this research shows that the students represents an improvement of six aspects critical thinking (interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation, explanation, self-regulatory) in Discourse Analysis.

Keywords: *Critical Thinking, Discourse Analysis, UNPI's Students*

Introduction

Nowadays students are rarely read the text, like news / articles / history books, as comprehensively. They prefer to “read” some picture with simple caption (subtitle or explanation) rather than a complete or a full discourse/text because they tend to understand the visual easier. The students usually read text as fast as possible and conclude it even faster. In fact, many of them will misinterpreting the content, misunderstanding the situation and getting wrong conclusion the idea of the text.

First stage of learning and studying a language usually contains at least listening, reading, speaking and writing skills. Students, in their last year program, should pass all those skills to take another level in studying a language. The higher level of their study is divided into two departments. First, Linguistic department which concerns in scientific study of language. Meanwhile the second department is Literature which concerns in written works as a collective body, the whole sum of writing belonging to a particular era, language, or people (Morner 1988)¹. Generally, students in linguistic and literature department are depends on basic student's

¹ NTC's Dictionary of Literary Terms, 1988

skills such as reading comprehensive and scientific writing to help them in higher level of the study.

Discourse Analysis is one of the subjects in Linguistics department, Brian Paltridge stated that this subject focuses on knowledge about language beyond the word, clause, phrase, and sentence that is needed for successful communication (Paltridge 2012)². Reading comprehensive basically is the first skill that everyone should have from early time when people start to learn a language. But, understanding in advance of the language means the students need to know so much knowledge in many other aspects rather than to know knowledge in language itself. Beside those skills, Critical Thinking is one of the ability that we can use to help the researcher and the students to figure out Discourse Analysis in studying the language.

Critical Thinking ability becomes an essential element in studying language in both field, Linguistic and Literature departments. English Literature students should master this ability first in order to form their interpreting, analyzing and evaluating idea specifically in Discourse Analysis subject. According to Fisher, students usually want to move on to the task of evaluating the arguments and presenting their own (Fisher 2013)³. It is a good thing that students try to presenting their perception, but sometimes they present the result of a simple thinking too fast instead of a critical one. Simple thinking behavior should be avoided in learning discourse analysis because the students need go higher above the language.

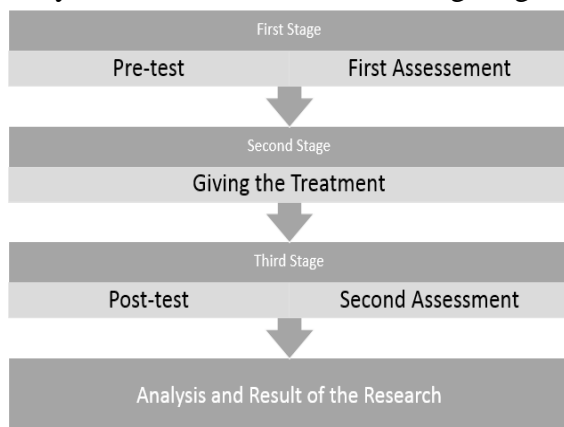


Figure 1 One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design (Allen 2017)

To examine those assumptions, the researcher aims to conduct the problem in a statement:

1. How does Critical Thinking have impact on students to interpret, to analyze and to evaluate the ideas in Discourse Analysis?
2. What are the effect on students by applying Critical Thinking in Discourse Analysis?

Based on the statement of the problem above, the researcher presumes the purpose of the study as:

1. The students represent impact of Critical Thinking in interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating their idea in Discourse Analysis.
2. The students showing their scientific interpreting, analyzing and evaluating idea in Discourse Analysis

² Paltridge, 2012, Discourse Analysis: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc. Page 7

³ Alec Fisher, 2013, Critical Thinking: An Introduction: Cambridge University Press. Page i

There are some differences of this research from some previous research: 1). the purpose of the research is to find out the impact and the effect of Critical Thinking in Discourse Analysis subject. 2). The research using *one group pretest-posttest design* method. The researcher put the other two previous research below is to avoid the plagiarism issues and to present the contrast of the research:

1. “Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Thinking: An Experimental Study in EFL Context” by Mohammad Reza Hashemi & Afsaneh Ghanizahed (2012). The purpose of the research is to find out the impact of CDA on EFL learners’ CT ability.
2. “Improving Student’s Argumentation Style Ability in Writing Essay through DA model CT in Map Oriented” by R. Panca Pertiwi Hidayati (2017). The purpose of this research is obtaining the objective discourse analysis model CT map oriented in improving students’ argumentation style skills in writing an essay, hence can be used as a modelling.

Formative Assessment

In order to know the treatment is successful or not, the researcher need to make an assessment for the students. The researcher tends to use Formative Assessment theory that suitable with this experiment. According to Black and William, formative assessment holds that: 1). thinking and learning processes are supported when students are given information and feedback regarding the learning criteria and standards by which they are assessed; and 2). when there is subsequent use of that feedback by students and teachers as they plan the next steps of the learning process together. (Hidayati 2017)⁴ The process of this research is handling by the researcher itself as a lecturer of Discourse Analysis subject. The participant of this research is last year students of English Literature of UNPI. The criteria and standard assessment of this research is completing and passing all the component of learning outcomes in Discourse Analysis subject.

There are three big steps of assessments so that the researcher can confirm this observation is showing the impact and the effect of critical thinking in Discourse Analysis. First, the researcher will take a pre-test to know the basic knowledge of the students and the result will be a raw thinking of the student in Discourse Analysis. Second, in line with Black and William statement above, learning process or giving a treatment to the students aims to stimulate the critical thinking of the students in Discourse Analysis. Third, the researcher takes a posttest that showing the feedback of the students after took a treatment of critical thinking in Discourse Analysis.

Critical Thinking

John Dewey, who knows as “father” of modern critical thinking stated critical thinking is an active, persistent, and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds which support it and the further conclusions to which it tends. (Fisher 2013)⁵He defines that critical thinking is an active action, it means you are not only receiving an idea or statements from others but you have to questioning yourself continuously about the idea. Dewey thinking that hearing or reading a speech or written text actually is a passive activity, but

⁴ Hidayati, Journal Education Teaching Learning Improving Students’ Style ability in Writing Essay Through Discourse Analysis Model Critical Thinking Map Oriented, <https://journal.stkipingkawang.ac.id/index.php/JETL/index> accessed Februari 2021.

⁵ John Dewey cited in Alec Fisher, Critical Thinking, 2013, Page 2

in critical thinking it is not relevant. Other than that, persistent and meticulous is related to the conclusion after all. It is the opposite characteristic that most our students have. The students are often doubt themselves and tend to careless about their thinking because they took a fast-track to gain their knowledge.

A scholar viewed CT as learning how to ask and answer questions of analysis, synthesis and evaluation and the ability to reach sound conclusions based on observations and information (Mohammad Reza Hashemi 2012)⁶. 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 (Fisher 2013)⁷. This explanation is viewing that critical thinking can be useful for any major or wider subject. Learning of critical thinking is necessary not only for certain context but also for long life education.

Based on Hashemi, critical thinking skills can be taught and reinforced via different techniques and activities implemented in classroom setting. Facione describes that as to the cognitive skills here is what the experts include as being at the very core of critical thinking:

1. Interpretation (3 sub-skills)

To comprehend and express the meaning or significance of a wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgments, convention, beliefs, rules, procedures, or criteria.

2. Analysis (3 sub-skills)

To identify the intended and actual inferential relationship among statements, questions, concepts, descriptions, or other forms of representations intended to express belief, judgment, experience, reason, information or opinions.

3. Inference (3 sub-skills)

To identify and secure the elements needed to draw reasonable conclusion; to form conjectures and hypotheses; to consider relevant information and to reduce the consequences flowing from data, statements, principles, evidence, judgements, beliefs, opinions, concept, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation.

4. Evaluation (2 sub-skills)

To assess the credibility of statements or other representations that are accounts or descriptions of a person's perceptions, experiences, situation, judgment, belief, or opinion; and to assess the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationship among statements, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation.

5. Explanation (3 sub-skills)

To states and to justify that reasoning in terms of evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, and contextual considerations upon which one's results were based; and to represent one's reasoning in the form of cogent arguments.

6. Self-regulation (2 sub-skills)

⁶ Mohammad Reza Hashemi, Critical Discourse Analysis and Caritical Thinking: An Experimental study in an EFL Context, Page 3

⁷ Paul, Fisher, Nosich, Critical Thinking, Page 3

Self-consciously to monitor one's cognitive activities, the element used in those activities, and the result educed, particularly by applying skills in analysis, and evaluation to one's own inferential judgements with a view towards questioning, confirming, validating, or correcting either one's reasoning or one's results (Peter Facione 2016)⁸.

Those skills above are general approach to stimulate the way of critical thinking. Facione belief those 6 critical thinking skills are really effective to help improve their critical thinking skill.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is discussing about 'what happens when people draw on the knowledge they have about language to do things in the world' (Paltridge 2012)⁹. Johnstone stated that Discourse Analysis is discussing about the knowledge, the language and the relation between knowledge & language and the world. This description show that Discourse Analysis encompass many field related beyond language. Paltridge is also claim that Discourse analysts are also interested in how people organize what they say in the sense of what they typically say first, and what they say next and so on in a conversation or in a piece of writing (Paltridge 2012)¹⁰. This is something that varies across cultures and is by no means the same across languages. *Discourse analysis* examines patterns of language across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used. Discourse analysis also considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings. It examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships between participants as well as the effects the use of language has upon social identities and relations. It also considers how views of the world, and identities, are constructed through the use of discourse (Paltridge 2012)¹¹. Discourse analysis encourage people to analyze the language that influenced by other affecting factor. Critical thinking is stimulating the student to interpreting of what people saying about one idea through language.

The CDA shows not only the analysis of the text or the language it contains, but also how the language is used and manipulated to express the opaque and transparent intent of the speaker or author (Yunianti 2019) ¹²because the discourse is inseparable from the efforts of the author, speaker, or the person who conveys the discourse to convey the message to others. By "critical" in the CDA, we do not take things for granted, but rather open up complexity and question reductionism, dogmatism, and dichotomy. It also means proposing alternatives to reveal the unclear structure of power relations and idealism (Yunianti 2019)¹³. Discourse analysts want recipients to recognize the meaning of the text, not just the text it sees. In the CDA sense, critical thinking also motivates learners to think clearly and rationally. It is a cognitive skill that uses mental or mental processes related to "reason" or "rational thinking," including the analysis of

⁸ Facione Gittens, *Think Critically* (USA: PEARSON), p. 27.

⁹ Brian Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis* (London: Bloomsbury), p.3

¹⁰ Brian Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis* (London: Bloomsbury), p.4

¹¹ Brian Paltridge, *Discourse Analysis* (London: Bloomsbury), p.2

¹² Dwijani Ratnadewi, Sofi Yunianti, "Indonesian Student Teacher Critical Thinking Skills in Text Analysis with CDA Approach", *Humanities and Social Science Review*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2019.7362>, accessed October 2021, p.3

¹³ Dwijani Ratnadewi, Sofi Yunianti, "Indonesian Student Teacher Critical Thinking Skills in Text Analysis with CDA Approach", *Humanities and Social Science Review*, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2019.7362>, accessed October 2021, p.2

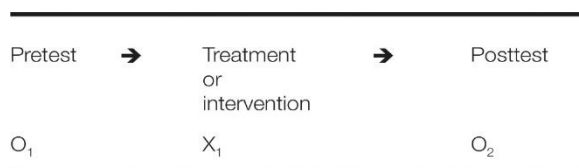
evidence and the drawing of conclusions from it. As Halpern states, being involved in problem solving, conclusion drawing, probability analysis, and decision making is considered thinking ability (Facione 2015)¹⁴. On the other hand, it is why critical thinking basically understands the information contained, observes ideas and information objectively, scrutinizes the information based on values, attitudes, and personal philosophies, and is given the reason. It states that it is an activity to ensure that is sound and verified.

Participant

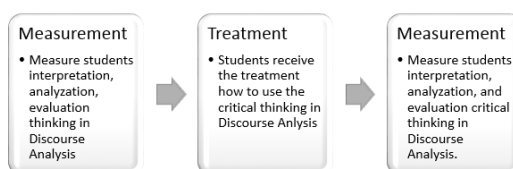
The participant of this research is UNPI's last year students in English Literature major. The students are already pass the writing subject in four level and reading subject in advance level. Besides English skills subjects, the students are also already pass all Micro Linguistics subjects (Phonetics & Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics) and Literature subjects (Prose, Poetry, and Drama).

Method

This research is conducting one group pretest-posttest design method. Based on McCaleb, Anderson, and Hueston, in The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Method, one group pretest-posttest design is a quasi-experimental research design in which the same dependent variable is measured in one group of participant before (pretest) and after (posttest) a treatment is administered. (Allen 2017)¹⁵ There are three stages that will conducted in this method: *pretest*, *t-test*, *posttest*.



The first stage is the researcher giving the first test as a *pretest* to measure the student interpretation, analyzation, and evaluation thinking in Discourse Analysis. Second, students are receiving *t-test* as the treatment by learning and studying Critical Thinking Skill in Discourse Analysis. The last one is *posttest* that the researcher is re-measuring the students' interpretation, analyzation, and evaluation critical thinking in Discourse Analysis after receiving Critical Thinking skills.



Procedure

The researcher is conducting four procedures in this study, the four stages of the procedures are implemented in twelve sessions. The first step is assessing the students critical

¹⁴ Facione Gittens, "Critical Thinking: what it is and why it counts", Research Gate, accessed October 2021.

¹⁵ Mike Allen, The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Method, 2017, <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n.3888>

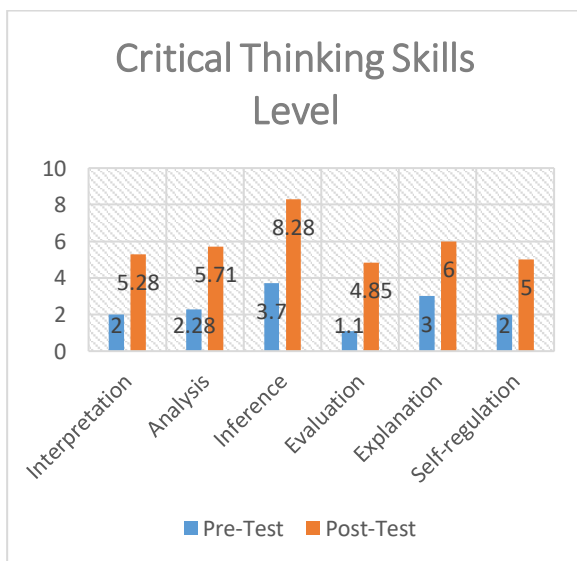
thinking skill in discourse analysis as a pre-test from. Second step, the researcher, also as a lecturer, and the students in class are having discussion in six-session meetings regarding how to use critical thinking skills in every aspect. Third step is quiet similar with the previous one, the researcher and the students are having two ways discussion concerning on discourse analysis subject and how to apply critical thinking skill into the subject. Lastly, the researcher conducting the post-test to assess the students critical thinking after got the treatment before.

Result of the Pretest

The result before treatment from interpretation is 26%, analysis level is in 38%, inference level is in 37%, evaluation level is in 23%, explanation level is in 50%, and self-regulation level is in 33% out of 100%. The average level of the students critical thinking skills before treatment is 35%.

Result of the Posttest

There are 39 questions of 6 skills and 14 sub-skills in the test regarding critical thinking in critical discourse analysis. The result of the post-test is quite significant. The students show some improvements regarding critical thinking skills in discourse analysis subject. The average level of the students critical thinking skill after the treatment in discourse analysis subject is on 91% out of 100%. The skill that improve the most is explanation and evaluation skills.



The post-test result explains that the treatment is really suitable with the student needs to understand discourse analysis subject.

Conclusion

This study proves that the critical thinking skills has made students think critically when analyzing the text in discourse analysis. This is because the students are already have reached a high level in sub-skill in critical thinking component, especially in evaluation, analysis, and explanation skills. The use of critical thinking skills in discourse analysis allows the students to see and to explore the messages conveyed implicitly in the text. Other than that, students are not only to see one possible hidden meaning, but also to see various possibilities from various points of view.

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