FOSTERING STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH READING TEXTS WITH MORAL VALUES

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Abstract

This paper is written to achieve the objectives: 1) to explore the process of teaching CT through reading texts with moral values, (2) To describe know how students' critical thinking responds to teaching critical thinking through reading moral value texts. This research is qualitative research, particularly a case study. This research was conducted in the third semester of class A at the English Education Department of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. The research data were obtained from observation, document analysis, and questionnaires. The data were transcribed, categorized into central themes, and interpreted into a description form and response results. The finding shows that the process of teaching CT through moral value texts is established by implementing the four features of a critical thinking classroom, such as frequent evaluative questions, encouragement of active learning, developmental tension, and fascination with the contingency conclusion (Browne & Freeman, 2000). Moreover, the data from students' papers show strengths and weaknesses of their student abilities. The students could present the aspects of critical thinking skills such as sensitivity, egocentrism, and relative thinking in their answers. In conclusion, the finding shows that teaching CT through reading moral values could foster the students' critical thinking skills. Then, it was recommended that the next research offers various methodologies of how to involve critical thinking skills in the classroom and more variety of materials should be used to encourage students' critical thinking.

Keywords: Critical Thinking; Narrative Text; Moral Values

INTRODUCTION

The development of Critical Thinking (CT) has been an essential skill in 21st-century learning. It is clear that the CT process can make humans capable of deciding and selecting available information. Depdiknas in Emilia (2010) stated that CT has been one aspect that has assumed great importance in the policies and the government, especially in education. Moreover, critical theory has been regarded as a crucial part of culture because it is associated with quality of thinking that provides students with a more adept way of interacting with other people, getting new knowledge, and dealing with ideas, beliefs, and attitudes (Vdovina & Gaibisso, 2013).

In English learning activities in Indonesia, many teachers involve students in their task to think critically, even though the teacher does not teach CT directly in the learning materials. Therefore, teachers should develop students' CT skills because these skills are essential that language learners need to build for their academic life (Asgharheidari & Tahriri, 2015).

Although thinking is the heart of education, it is not often explicitly taken into consideration in pedagogy (Moon, 2008). Based on the researcher's personal experience in one of the universities in Bandung, especially the third semester in reading comprehension class, only a few students could explore and express their understanding of the text they have read. It happened because they did not understand the words, and had unclear purposes for reading.

Furthermore, in the higher education context in Indonesia, especially in the English Department, the lack of CT skills possessed and the lack of meaningful activities that support the development of CT skills are assumed to be the reasons why Indonesian university students are not useful skillful in exchanging ideas and information or writing in English. They are more likely to accept opinions than to express their views, especially in matters they should know, for example, political news and issues, corruption, and current educational conditions, without understanding and assessing whether the report is real or not. It is a serious problem because knowing information less comprehensive can make the students judgmental (Epstein, 2006).

However, this study is different from other research because this research focuses on the students' CT toward moral values in the English texts. There are some reasons why the researcher picks out text with moral values in comparison with other documents. First, the text that contains moral values will usually be controversial, for example, respect for parents. In the Indonesian context, moral value has become a kind of obligation between children to their parents. On the other hand, in the Western context, moral value is not necessary. This condition is possible to happen because of any differences in cultures and customs between the West and East. Second, education in Indonesia is an education that is carrying the importance of character education so using text with moral values is in line with the existing curriculum in Indonesia. Besides, this study expects a teacher that she or he can provide a challenge of tasks that can be taught to students so that they can think critically.

Learning and thinking have long been regarded as interrelated lifelong processes (Chaffee, 1994). People are determined by their thinking for whatever they do, what they feel, and what they want is built based on their quality of thinking (Paul & Elder, 2002). Therefore, thinking cannot be separated from the everyday life of the human being. Furthermore, the term thinking is also defined by the researcher in different meaningful dimensions. Frensch & Funke (2002) define thinking as the cognitive process of internal memory representations that may appear consciously or subconsciously and may not always follow the laws of logic. Moreover, John- Laird as cited in Frensch and Funke (2002) argues that thinking is goal-oriented, does not support a predetermined series of mental steps, and has no precise starting point.

One of the thinking skills that need to be acquired by students is CT. According to Ennis (2011), CT is reasonable, and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. Moreover, Fisher (2001) as cited in Moon (2008) defines CT as a kind of evaluative thinking that involves both criticism and creative thinking and is mainly concerned with the quality of reasoning that is present in support of a belief or a course of action. Another expert defines CT as self-guided, self-disciplined thinking that attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way (Paul & Elder, 2014).

In addition, Facione (1990) argues that good critical thinkers have to meet the cognitive skills that should be involved in the way they think. Therefore, he characterizes specific cognitive abilities as the core of CT skills. The cores of CT skills are interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation.

Thinking needs to be evaluated to avoid the ideas of others controlled it. Fisher (2001) explains that CT emphasizes the importance of reasoning in which individuals are expected to give and evaluate reasons as pleasant as possible by using their ability to evaluate other ideas. Fisher (2001), also emphasizes that CT skills appear when someone is consciously aiming to improve his/her views and create new ideas well reasonably.

CT is believed to have significant contributions to learners' academic context in the era of technology and the explosion of information (Kealey, Holland & Watson, 2005). This statement is supported by Bailin and Siegel (2003) who stated that CT should be the primary goal of education. The critical inculcation of thought in education is essential for reasons to facilitate students to think for themselves and make decisions, to equip them with skills to do well in subjects such as mathematics, science, literature, art, and history, to prepare students for challenges of adulthood and to enable them to lead a democratic life which involves good and analytical thinking (Siegel, 2010).

The relation between CT and reading comprehension is well established in the literature. Norris and Phillips (1987) pointed out that reading is more than just saying what is on the page; it is thinking. It is supported by Ruggiero (1984) who recognized that reading involves thinking. Moreover, Yu-hui (2010) stated that reading is a thinking process to construct meaning. From those statements, it can be drawn that there is a significant relationship between the CT ability of learners and their performance on reading comprehension. Hasbun (2006) highlights the importance of reading by stating that reading skills "lie at the heart of formal education" and it is difficult to achieve many things without having the ability to read fluently and good comprehension on it.

Browne and Freeman (2000) state that CT focuses on a set of skills and attitudes that enable a listener or reader to apply rational criteria to the reasoning of speakers and writers. They continue that classrooms that encourage CT possess distinguishing features that assist program evaluators and teachers themselves to assess whether CT is a regular occurrence in a particular class. The principles are frequent evaluative questions, encouragement of active learning, development tension, and fascination with the contingency of the conclusion. They also suggest that a CT in the classroom commonly reflects the following attributes: frequent evaluative questions, encouragement of active learning, developmental tension, and fascination with the contingency of conclusions. These attributes reinforce one another to provide developmental stimuli for enhanced CT.

a. Frequent Evaluative Questions

According to Browne and Freeman (2000), specific questions have special significance for the CT classroom. They explain that teachers can provide considerable benefit for their students just by systematically asking `why?' and reinforcing the students' reasoning. After identification of the argument, Browne and Freeman (2000) suggest that teachers can provide more evaluative questions focusing on CT:

a. What words of phrase are being used in an ambiguous fashion?
b. What descriptive and value assumptions provide the foundation for the reasoning?
c. What evidence was provided as the claims in the reasoning?
d. What is the quality of the proffered evidence?
e. Are the analogical components of the arguments persuasive?
f. What Why is important omitted information omitted from the reasoning?
g. What rival causes might explain the conclusion?
h. What alternative inference can reasonably be drawn from the evidence?

Additionally to the evaluative question, Golding (2011) asserts that the teacher can provide thought encouraging questions for CT by asking "why do you think…?", "What do you mean by…?", and "Why…?" to encourage the students to give the reasons, to clarify or explain, and to elaborate to make thinking visible and concrete.

b. Encouragement of Active Learning

Encouragement of active learning refers to creating a classroom atmosphere that gives students more opportunities to be active participants which would make them engage in the material they learn (Browne & Freeman, 2000). They add that providing learners with frequent

opportunities for direct practice of evaluation skills and attitudes allows learners to experiment with critical thought.

Therefore, some strategies can be used for promoting active learning in the classroom. One of the strategies promoted by Turner et al. (2014), outlines the instructional approach to enhance the students' engagement by supporting their belongingness, competence, autonomy, and meaningful learning that could be established by the teacher.

c.   Developmental Tension

According to Browne and Freeman (2000), developmental tension means inserting controversy into the classroom activity. Controversy is a topic that expresses conflict and produces a different interpretation that has no consensus, explanations, or solutions (Iglesias. Aceituno, & Toledo, 2017). In the classroom activity, the teacher is expected to be able to encourage the pros and cons argument to show the student's ability to evaluate the dissonance perspective (Browne & Freeman, 2000).

d.   Fascination with the Contingency Conclusion

Browne and Freeman (2000) put forward fascination with the contingency conclusion which refers to a 'spirit of openness' that includes a willingness to consider novel approaches to an issue. They explain that planning ideas forces learners to appreciate contextual subtlety and gain a richer understanding of the position to which they may eventually commit.

Thus, this study focuses on fostering students' CT through reading text with moral values.

METHOD

In this research, the process of teaching reading through moral values text was collected by the observation technique. The observation data were recorded from class A of the 3rd-semester students of the English Education Department of Universitas Islam Negeri of Sunan Gunung Djati. In the learning activity, the students were given texts with moral values such as *"Murder Persija Fans at GBLA Stadium"and "South Korean Parents are Making Their Kids Get Plastic Surgery."*

There are some reasons why the researcher picked out text with moral issues in comparison with other documents. *First*, the text which contains moral values will usually be controversial, for example, respect for parents. In the Indonesian context, moral value has become a kind of obligation between children to their parents. While, in the Western context, moral value is not necessarily. This condition is possible happens because of any differences in cultures and customs between West and East.

The teaching reading process in this research is analyzed based on Browne and Freeman's theory about the features of the CT classroom. Browne and Freeman (2000) state that there are four principles of teaching CT skills that tend to emerge in classroom activities: frequent evaluative questions, encouragement of active learning, developmental tension, and fascination with the contingency of conclusion.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS
Teaching CT through Reading Texts with Moral Values
1.   Frequent Evaluative Questions

The first principle of CT skills in classroom activity is frequent evaluative questions. According to Browne and Freeman (2000), an assortment of questioning techniques exists to promote CT. Depending on how a question is asked, the students may use various CT skills such as interpretation, analysis, and recognition of assumptions to form a conclusion. After identifying the observation data, here are some frequent evaluative questions that occur in this research.

Transcript 1. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.16.35)	: [Wait, **what**[1] is the context of the text did we discuss**?**
Students (00.16.43)	: [Moral]
Teacher (00.16.50)	: [Moral. What moral?]
Students (00.17.00)	: Humanity, and Social[3]

Based on the Transcript 1, the teacher posed a question to the students to identify the context of the text by saying "*what* is the context of the text?" (see sentence #1) as Browne and Freeman (2000) say that teachers can provide a question by asking "what" to promote knowledge of the students. Meanwhile, evaluative question "what" emerged in classroom activity which was offered by the teacher and it can prove the students were able to identify the context of the text "Moral" (see sentence #2) by answering the question that addressed by the teacher. In line with Facione (1998), identifying the intended and actual inferential relationships among statements, questions, concepts, or descriptions is considered as analysis skill of CT.

Transcript 2. Teacher-students Interaction

Dini (00.18.12)	: The reasons **why**[1] this text only talked about Haringga that is oppression by bobotoh in the GBLA stadium.
Teacher (00.19.16)	: Yes, the reasons **why?**[2]
Dini (00.20.18)	: **Because Haringga is a Persija Fans, as we know**[3] which is the mistake of the victim is still coming to the stadium even though there is an appeal not to go to the stadium for security reasons.
Teacher (00.22.15)	: Okay, good. It feels like exited.

In transcript 2, the teacher posed a question to Dini by saying "*the reason Why?*" (see sentence #2) This question indicates that the teacher asked Dini to give the reason for her statement "**why** this text only talked about Haringga that is oppression by bobotoh in the GBLA stadium?" (see sentence #1) It is in line with Golding (2011) who states that "*why*" question is aimed to get the students' reason for their answer.

Transcript 2 indicates that Dini could answer the question that delivered by the teacher by saying "*Because Haringga is a Persija Fans, as we know.*" (see sentence #3). Dini's answer shows the student's ability of reasoning skill. Her answer was equipped by the reason indicator "because" which indicates the presence of the reason to reinforce her statement.

Transcript 3. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.22.49)	: **What do you think**[1] about Bobotoh think that it is not fair enough. One issue is blowing up, but another issue even did not discuss.
Student (00.23.18)	: I think it is not fair. **Because**, if we see in another side, PSSI as an authorized institution that accommodates football in Indonesia only judging those who are considered to have made a mistake without giving any solution[2].

In Transcript 3, the teacher posed the question "*what do you think?*" (see sentence #1). Based on dialogue in transcript e, it can be interpreted that the teacher was trying to relate the students' prior knowledge with the issue that exists in the text to connect them to their prominent activity. It is line Golding (2011) who state the question "what do you think?" is an evaluative question that asked for clarifying or explaining the answer.

Transcript 3 also indicates that student was able to answer the reason for the question "what do you think?" by saying "I think it is not fair. Because, if we see in another side, PSSI as an authorized institution that accommodates football in Indonesia only judging those who are considered to have made a mistake without giving any solution "(see sentence #2). Furthermore, this student said "because" in her answer, as Golding (2011) says that the word "because" is a reasonable indicator that is used to indicate the presence of the reason.

Transcript 4. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.02.12) : Here, raise up your hand. If I look at from the title, I prefer this, raise up your hand. Okey. Which one do you chose Amran?
Amran (00.03.14) : Ratna Sarumpaet.
Teacher (00.04.20) : Amran tell me. **Why** did you prefer to read Ratna Sarumpaet story?[1]
Amran (00.04.30) : **Because** she has acknowledged and clarified that all the news published in the media about the incidents of persecution he experienced were hoaxes.[2]

Data observation in Transcript 4 shows that Amran was asked to find the reason why he chose Ratna Sarumpaet story (see #1). Amran pointed out his reason by saying "*because she has acknowledged and clarified that all the news published in the media about the incidents of persecution her experienced were hoaxes*" (see #2). The word "*why*" is an evaluative question, because it is aimed to get the students' reason for their answer (Golding, 2011).

Transcript 4 indicates that Amran could address the subjective judgment by giving evidence and making a reasonable judgment to the text (see #11). According to Golding (2011), to develop CT, students need to be confronted by multiple viewpoints and reasoned discussions where some views are demonstrated to be backed up with stronger evidence or reasons than others. Furthermore, Amran's answer consists of the reason indicator "*because*" which is regarded as the fundamental of CT skills (Golding, 2011). Therefore, the evaluative question in Dialogue 4.4 was automatically able to encourage the student's reasoning ability.

To summarize, the process of teaching CT is established by accommodating frequent evaluative questions as the principle of CT classroom. It is proven by the evaluative questions which emerged four times in two meetings during the learning activity through moral issues text. Those evaluative questions are: "What?", "What do you think?", and "Why?." These evaluative questions help students to foster CT skills such as analyzing ability, reasoning ability, giving the reason for their answers, and providing evidence of their reasons.

2. Encouragement of Active Learning

The second principle is the encouragement of active learning. According to Browne and Freeman (2000), encouragement of active learning refers to creating a classroom atmosphere that gives students more opportunities to be active participants rather than passive that would make them engage in the material they learn. Some strategies can be used for promoting active learning in the classroom. One of the strategies is promoted by Turner et al. (2014) that outlines the instructional strategies to improve the students' engagement by supporting students' belongingness, competence, autonomy, and meaningful learning that could be established by the teacher.

a. Supporting Students' Belongingness

According to Turner et al. (2014), belongingness is the need to establish close relationships with others.

Transcript 5. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.17.55) : [Okey, fifteen minutes. I will devide you into some group. You may work **together** in a group of three to four].[1]

The data observation in Transcript 5 shows that the teacher allowed the students to work in a group with the classmates (see sentence #1). Observation of data in Transcript 5 shows that the teacher allows students to work in groups with classmates (see sentence # 1). Based on the dialogue, the teacher tries to encourage students to be able to share knowledge through ideas that they had.

On the other hand, with the group discussion, it is expected that students who are initially passive can work together with active students to produce a productive idea. It is line with Tharp et at. (2000) as cited in Turner et al. (2014) state that there are two ways that teachers

can offer opportunities for belongingness. Those are model and encourage mutual respect and to teach students to work together productively.

b.   Supporting Students' Competence

According to Deci and Ryan (1985), as cited in Turner et al. (2014), students' competence is the ability to organize and perform specific tasks to achieve their goal in the learning environment.

Transcript 6. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.20.40) : We've got this article by Camille Standen: " South Korean Parents are Making Their Kids Get Plastic Surgery". Okay, number: **1. What kind of culture perspective regarding to women and their beauty? Compare to the way of Indonesia perspective**[1] **2. What critism you provide toward the article?**[2] **3. What moral lesson you learn from the article.**[3] Explain.

Transcript 6 shows that the teacher posed three questions related to the text "What kind of culture perspective regarding women and their beauty? Compare to the way of Indonesia perspective" (see sentence #1). It means that the teacher was trying to improve and trigger prior student knowledge by stating sentence 1 explained the students to solve the problems and giving the solution about the issue based on the experience they had. Based on dialogue 4.6, in sentence 2 "What criticism did you give to the article?" The question is the question posed by the teacher to challenge students to think critically to produce ideas that are accurate and logical. It is in line with Turner et al. (2014), posing open-ended questions is one of the challenging tasks as the instructional practices that offer opportunities to enhance the students' competence.

c.   Supporting Students' Autonomy

Reeve (2013) as cited in Turner et al. (2014) states that students' autonomy is the psychological need to have according to one's interests and values. He adds that students act autonomy when they learn to satisfy their curiosity, volitionally engage themselves in schoolwork, and initiate contributions during the flow of instruction.

Transcript 7. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.18.15)   : [Go on discussion with your group][1]

Transcript 7 shows that the teacher gave the students instruction to work in a group discussion by saying "*Silakan berdiskusi dengan kelompok kalian*" (see sentence #1). This activity indicates that the teacher created a group discussion in the classroom. This is supported by Turner et al. (2014) who state that students' cognitive autonomy support includes opportunities for students to discuss multiple approaches, to justify thinking, to receive feedback and to self-evaluate, to ask questions, and to debate freely.

d.   Supporting Students' Meaningfulness

Instructional strategies that support meaningful learning include building on students' prior knowledge, providing opportunities for students to do complex thinking by addressing the central ideas of a subject, and offering opportunities for students to participate in extended conversations that build shared understanding (Newmann et al., 1996, as cited in Turner et al., 2014).

Transcript 8. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.47.33) : **Find the issues**. There are some issues. What is the first issue?][1]
Students (00.47.38) : The first issue is about Korean people behavior about their beauty, and especially the plastic surgery trend has become a running joke in Seoul.

In this research, data observation in Transcript 8 shows the question given by the teacher to the students to find out some issues of the text (see sentence #1). It is line with Newman et al. (1996) as cited in Turner et al. (2014) that providing opportunities for students to do complex

thinking by addressing the central ideas of a subject is one of the strategies that support meaningful learning.

3. Developmental Tension

The third principle is developmental tension. According to Browne and Freeman (2000), developmental tension means inserting controversy in the classroom activity. They also state that providing controversy in the classroom is an effective strategy for developing CT skills.

However, the process of teaching CT is established by developing tension as the principle of the CT classroom. The teacher inserts any controversy to stimulate pros and cons about the text to encourage the students' CT skills. Therefore, developing tension as the principle of CT classroom in the process of teaching CT emerges in the classroom activity.

4. Fascination with the Contingency Conclusion

The last principle of CT in classroom activity is the fascination with the contingency conclusion. According to Browne and Freeman (2000), fascination with the contingency conclusion refers to a `spirit of openness' that includes a willingness to consider novel approaches to an issue. They explain that plan to ideas forces learners to appreciate context distinctly and gain a richer understanding of the position to which they may eventually commit. a Question about the fascination with the Contingency Conclusion:

Transcript 9. Teacher-students Interaction

Teacher (00.20.40)	: We've got this article by Camille Standen: " South Korean Parents are Making Their Kids Get Plastic Surgery". Okay, number: **1. What kind of culture perspective regarding to women and their beauty? Compare to the way of Indonesia perspective**[1] **2. What critism you provide toward the article?**[2] **3. What moral lesson you learn from the article.**[3]Explain.

Table 9 shows that the students had different answers about the issues with the text. The students' responses were not correct at all, but the teacher appreciated their answers by saying "okay," "good," and "very good." Table 4.1 shows that the teacher facilitated the students to confront alternative possibilities of meaning by not telling them the mistakes. This learning activity is supported by Browne and Freeman (2000) who state that facilitating multiple perspectives requires students to accept the contingency of personal conclusions and to allow further information to shape their opinions continually.

The process of teaching CT is established by the fascination with the contingency conclusion as one of the four principles of CT classroom. It is shown that the teacher had a spirit of openness by facilitating the students' multiple perspectives in classroom activity.

In this research, the frequent evaluative questions emerged four times in two meeting during the learning activity. Those evaluative questions are: "What?", "What do you think?", And "Why?". The encouragement of active learning is also emerged by supporting the students' belongingness, competence, autonomy, and meaningfulness. The developmental tension features in this research did not emerge by not inserting any controversy to the learning activity. The last, the fascination with the contingency of conclusion feature emerged because the teacher showed the spirit of openness by facilitating the students' multiple perspectives in classroom activity.

In conclusion, the process of teaching CT through reading text with moral value is established by Browne and Freeman (2000) theory of features of the CT classroom. The features are frequent evaluative questions, encouragement of active learning, developmental tension, and fascination with the contingency of conclusion.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions of the research that are found based on the findings and analysis deal with two research questions: (l) the process of teaching CT through reading text with moral value and (2) the student's responses to teaching CT through reading moral value text.

Firstly, the process of teaching CT through reading text moral values is established by implementing the four features of the CT classroom. In the teaching process, the teacher could implement the four features of the CT classroom proposed by Browne & Freeman (2000). Those four features are frequent evaluative questions, encouragement of active learning, developmental tension, and fascination with the contingency conclusion. The first feature is frequent evaluative questions. The teacher could provide the evaluative questions four times that help students to emerge the CT skill such as reasoning ability, giving the reason of their answers, and providing evidence of their reason. These evaluative questions are: What?, Why?, What do you think?, and Why? The second feature is the encouragement of active learning. The teacher could engage the students to be active learners by supporting their belongingness, competence, autonomy, and meaningfulness.

Additionally, the students tend to be more active because they can participate either in classroom discussions or group discussions. The third feature is developmental tension. The developmental tension feature in this research emerges because the teacher inserts any controversy into the learning activity. The fourth feature is the fascination with the contingency conclusion. The teacher could express the spirit of openness to accept students' multiple perspectives by appreciating their answers although not all of their answers were correct and then giving them feedback at the conclusion of the right answer.

Secondly, there are several aspects of CT skills explored in the students' answers to the questions related to the article. These aspects are sensitivity, egocentrism, wishful thinking, relative thinking, and other impediments. The students successfully present the aspects of their answers. Further, most of the students could present those aspects of CT skills.

In conclusion, the findings show that reading moral issues texts in the reading class could foster the students' CT skills and get positive responses from the students. The CT skill could be implemented in the teaching reading process by providing the students the CT practices in classroom activities. The conclusion section is between 500-1000 words. Write succinctly and clearly the result of the research.

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