STUDENTS' STAGES IN OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS IN THEIR USE OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN THEIR PRESENTATION

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Abstract

In digital learning era, many lecturers promote students' critical thinking skills by using some strategies. One of the technique used is presentation, where the lecturer challenge the student to present the material by presenting in front of their friend, due to Covid-19, all of the presentation uploaded to their youtube channel so that everyone could see their willingness in presenting the material. The students had their barriers in their use of critical thinking skills in their presentation. Therefore, the study aimed to explain how their stages used in overcoming their barriers in their use of critical thinking skills in their presentation. This study was qualitative case study. The instruments used list of open-ended questionnaire and structured-interview questions. In the findings we revealed three main stages that can be used to overcome the barriers. Those are: 1) Developing students' strength through training themselves to get used to doing presentations, dealing with the situation, nervousness, welcoming the problems, organizing the preparation, summarizing some important points and phrases to make the audience understand what the speakers' said, those all as the proper stages that made students build their strength to use critical thinking skills in their presentation, 2) organizing students' responsibility, the students learn to receive joy from the process, rather than concentrate on the result. 3) analyzing and evaluating students' thinking related to the fear of criticism, students must learn to differentiate between criticism directed at them and criticism of a particular learning process.

Keywords: critical thinking skills, presentation, students' stages, students' barriers

Introduction

During COVID-19 , Many lecturers try to promote students' critical thinking skills by using some strategies. This study raises a phenomenon about students at the third undergraduate of the English department at IAIN Pekalongan who used presentation uploaded on their *Youtube* channel as a technique to join and discuss in their virtual classroom. The case becomes interesting when the students had their stages in overcoming their barriers in their use of their critical thinking skills in their presentation. Based on the observation results. The barriers faced by the student were various, such as:

The first, a factor from spoken English. The students were required to use English during presentations, some of them feeling: inferior, anxious, discouraged in communicating in English. They just read the slides without explaining the material because they lived in remote areas, were less familiar with the English spoken, lacked confidence, and lacked vocab. These factors ultimately make their presentations careless, and they cannot use their critical thinking skills. The second is the lack of preparation material, methods, and simple strategies, making them less optimal to conduct their presentation, which they should present well. It becomes unprepared presentations, and they cannot use their critical thinking skills The third is a barrier of fear to answer during the question-and-answer session. The students were often afraid to receive criticism and failed to solve a problem. Some students feel this was a barrier to using their critical thinking skills because they cannot answer the questions, satisfying them. Sometimes when they have tried to explain the answer, the audience provides feedback to confirm the answer. It makes them fear receiving criticism.

After the students upload their presentation into their youtube. The lecturer will have video conference through zoom meeting to discuss the task with the students. Zoom meeting is video platform to share any information, one of the benefit is to deliver the material easier by using internet connection.

Therefore this case motivates us to explain the stages used by the students in overcoming the barriers in their use of critical thinking skills in their presentation.

Critical thinking skills

Avery (1994) stated that critical thinking skill is one of the main components of thinking skills. The word "critic" comes from the Greek "Kritikos" which means "able to evaluate." The definition of critical thinking skills has changed over the years. There are many definitions of critical thinking skills from various fields, started by cognitive psychologists. Moon (2008) asserted "critical thinking and its relationship to the educational process had become a central issue" (p.7). Critical thinking is a fundamental goal of learning. The main benefit of critical thinking is that it encourages active learning by teaching students to think rather than think. Erito et al., (2021) revealed that the students positively perceived their use of critical thinking skills in the online classroom's presentation. The findings showed that the students will prepare the schema, skills, and practice to use their critical thinking skills in their presentation. Crenshaw et al. (2011) stated, "critical thinking skills as the ability to analyze facts, generate and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, evaluate arguments and solve problems" (p.23).

There are studies about teacher's perception of barriers to teaching critical thinking. (Gashan, 2015; Hamzah et al., 2018; Larsson et al., 2018; Tuzlukova et al., 2017). The result revealed that several barriers faced by the teachers, as follows. The barriers generally are the students' lack of knowledge not to follow the teaching-learning process. It becomes an obstacle to deliver critical thinking for the students.

Presentation

Presentation is defined as an activity in which someone shows, describes, or explains something to a group of people. Widyastuti and Mahaputri (2015) argue "presentation refers to communicating the messages by sound and the coordinated action of mind, body, language, and voice to people" (p. 371). The term presentation in this study refers to the technique used by the students to deliver the material.

Furthermore, there is a study regarding assessing students' presentations. Miles (2015) analyzes the learners' perspective on assessing and evaluating the oral presentation. His research revealed that English proficiency levels affected how students assessed their presentations, not just in terms of grades but also on what they specifically noticed and commented on after viewing a video of their presentations.

Several studies are conducted regarding the problems faced by the student in the presentation (Jannah & Fitriati, 2016; Kho et al., 2015; Razawi et al., 2019). These studies conducted are about the problems of the students' anxiety in oral presentations among ESL students. Several anxiety factors in oral presentations were perceived; language ability, personality traits, preparation, and audience interest. Overall, the findings of this study showed that all these four factors did affect the students' oral presentations. Several implications of the findings were discussed: setting a friendly and stimulating class environment to encourage a positive attitude among the audience members and emphasizing fluency more than accuracy while using English.

Many researchers had been conducted same topic of critical thinking skills. This study more focusing on how the students overcoming their barriers in their used of critical thinking skills in their presentation.

Research Method

Qualitative case study was employed because the details are provided in this study to explain students' stages in overcoming their barriers in their use of their critical thinking skills in their presentation. According to Creswell (2012), he stated "the case (s) are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using various data collection procedures over a sustained period" (p. 204). As the theory mentioned, we believed that a case study was suitable for this research because, in this study, we explored in-depth a process of the implementation of critical thinking skills in students' presentations. It consisted of thirty nine students of the third semester of IAIN (Institute Agama Islam Negeri) Pekalongan using the purposive sampling technique. Methods of collection data in this research were observation and interview and questionnaire. The instruments were field notes observation, list of interview questions and list of open-ended questionnaires . In this case, open-ended questionnaires enable the students to give free - form answers on the lists of questions. It was used to gather students' responses about their stages in overcoming their barriers in their use of their critical thinking skills in their presentation. Due to Covid-19, all data taken in online ways.

Finding(s) and Discussion

The findings and discussion presented the data from the analysis of the questionnaire response and interview responses. It attempts to explain their stages used in overcoming their barriers in their use of their critical thinking skills in their presentation.

Students' Stages in Overcoming the Barriers in Their Use of Critical Thinking Skills in Their presentation: Developing Their Strength, Organizing Their responsibility, Analyzing and Evaluating Their Thinking

To gather the data about students' stages in overcoming the barriers in using critical thinking skills in their presentation. We employed an open-ended questionnaire, here are the exemplary responses:

a. *Before the presentation, we have to practice first. Then we also have to master the material and the audience so that we don't get overwhelmed by audience questions during our presentation. Besides, read more books related to what we convey, then don't forget to interpret and analyze it beforehand so that no regrets occur. (Student #12, questionnaire, 131020).*

b. *Before making a presentation, always practice arguing or cultivating unsolved or unresolved thoughts, then during the presentation, try to analyze the material carefully. (Student #28, questionnaire, 131020).*

c. *If we are in groups as presenters, then discuss with group friends, or if it is difficult, maybe we can return it to the audience instead of giving answers that we are not sure are true. (Student #36, questionnaire, 131020).*

In a, the student assumed that to practice critical thinking skills the student has to try to practice to analyze information to make their critical thinking skills can be developed. In b, the student assumed one of the stages used by analyzing the material and practicing to overcome the barriers. In c, the student argued

to discuss the problems with the group to solve the problem.

We interviewed them by asking how they overcame the barriers in using critical thinking skills in their presentation to clarify my data. Here are their exemplary responses:

a. *My barriers are lack of material so that it is conveyed rudely without a solid foundation and lack of sources of information. The ways to overcome these are to look for sources of information first and summarize the actual sources. (Student #18, interview, 201020).*

b. *I lack motivation or have not found the goals that I want to achieve. I am still afraid of other people's rejection, lack of consistency with what I said, not thinking proactively, and how to overcome them. We must believe and believe in our critical thinking skills and be more active in analyzing problems/information. (Student #29, interview, 201020).*

In a, the student stated that for concrete material to overcome a barrier in lack of material. In b, the student stated that to overcome the barrier in lack of motivation, one of the stages used by developing their strength; believe in themselves and did the best presentation. From the answers in the questionnaire and interview section, we highlighted how the students overcame the barriers. Here are the points that I revealed, they were:

1. **Developing students' strength**
Many students were lack preparation material and were not confident enough to speak in front of many people. They overcome the barriers by developing their strength to get used to doing presentations, dealing with the situation, nervousness, welcoming the problems, organizing the preparation, summarizing some important points. To make the audience understand what the speakers' said, those all as the proper stages made students build their strength to use critical thinking skills in their presentation.

2. **Organizing students' responsibility**
Regarding the barriers about lack of methods and strategies, the students have to contribute their responsibility in the process of group work on the decision making, prepare the material well by searching good sources and the students learn to have to receive joy from the process, rather than concentrate on the result. They have to make mistakes and not be ideal in anything, stop being embarrassed, and start working to organize their stages to face the problems. This strategy can be one solution to prepare the method for their critical thinking skills in their presentation.

3. **Analyzing and evaluating students' thinking related to the fear of criticism.**
Students have to learn to differentiate between criticism directed at them and criticism of a particular learning process. With this strategy, we believe they could receive criticism and overcome the barrier related to the fear of receiving the complaint.

Hence, we could reveal that they use this method to overcome the barriers they face, and it is very suitable in dealing with the stages they look for overcoming the barriers. This finding provides new insight into the previous research conducted by Hamzah et al. (2018), which found barriers in teaching critical thinking skills. This research is one solution to overcome one barrier in teaching critical thinking skills to their students. They

can use this finding to solve student-related problems because, from their research, they say that one of their most significant barriers is overcoming students' problems. They couldn't use their critical thinking skills. Therefore, this finding is an answer to their problems, which I hope. This research can also answer questions related to how students overcome barriers when using their critical thinking skill.

Conclusion(s)

Students' stages in overcoming their barriers in their use of critical thinking skills, they need to be well prepared to work and deal with unpredictability in the learning process. Therefore, we revealed three main stages that can be used to overcome the barriers. Those are: 1) Developing students' strength, they overcome the barriers by developing their strength through training themselves to get used to doing presentations, dealing with the situation, nervousness, welcoming the problems, organizing the preparation, summarizing some important points and phrases to make the audience understand what the speakers' said, those all as the proper stages that made students build their strength to use critical thinking skills in their presentation, 2) organizing students' responsibility, the students learn to receive joy from the process, rather than concentrate on the result. They have to allow themselves to make mistakes, not be ideal in anything, stop being embarrassed and start working to organize their stages to face the problems. 3) analyzing and evaluating students' thinking related to the fear of criticism, students must learn to differentiate between criticism directed at them and criticism of a particular learning process. Hence, critical thinking skills benefit in helping them do the presentation. Students are motivated and encouraged to practice dealing with analyzing and criticizing information. While conducting a presentation, they are demanded to

communicate with the audience in delivering the material. They also will get feedback and have good communication with the lecturer and friends.

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