
TEACHER TALKS: FOSTERING STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING

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Abstract

Critical thinking skill is needed by the students to face the globalization era and to adapt to the technological development today. Critical thinking skill can be developed and trained through a stimulus. One of the stimuli can be applied through the teacher talks in the teaching and learning process. In stimulating students' critical thinking, the teacher can use some types of teacher talks. Those types can be modified as needed. This paper is aimed to give some suggestions to the teacher in applying teacher talks for fostering the students' critical thinking in teaching and learning process.

Keywords: *Critical Thinking, teacher talks*

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of science and technology in the era of globalization today required the students to have the critical thinking skill. The globalization brings the easy access for the students to get the information and update their information in many sources such as the internet. The filter is needed when the students get the information from the internet because it is sometimes does not fit with the reality. Sometimes, the information that they get or read just the opinion or assumption of someone side that the writer generalize. To face it, the students require having the skill to analyze, evaluate, create and to think logically. In other words, the students' critical thinking is needed here. So, what is critical thinking?

Critical thinking is an activity related to the use of the mind in attention, categorizing, selecting and judging or deciding anything. Critical thinking enable a person in giving guidance in thinking and work, and assist in determining links with other things more accurately. The students who are a critical thinker do ask appropriate question, addresses argument, collect the relevant information to support their thought and belief (Schafersman, 1991). Critical thinking refers to the students' cognitive development.

ErlyWahyuni (2016) said that critical thinking skills are not skill that can evolve by itself along with the development of human physical. These skills must be trained through a stimulus that requires a person to think critically. In the classroom activities, the stimulus can be given by the teacher through verbal and nonverbal. One of the verbal stimulus that can be used by the teacher is teacher talks.

Teacher talks involves in the classroom interaction. Teacher talks mean variety of languages that used by the teacher in the process of teaching. Teacher talks at least two function in learning English, first as the main source of the language input for the students and second as the stimuli for the students to use the target language. There are many types of teacher talks in the classroom that used by the teacher such as questions, invitations, directions, inform, prompt, encouragement, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgement, and comment.

Related to the there are many types of teacher talks that used by the teacher in the classroom activities, some of them can be used to foster students' critical thinking. For the example, the question that is given by the teacher can be optimized to invite the students to think critically. The questions can be arranged as good as possible to invite the students to analyze, giving interpretation and also evaluate them. That is thinking critically.

A number of research findings stated that critical thinking of the students can be increase through some activities in the classroom. It can be increased through practice the critical discourse

analysis activities (Moh. Reza Hashemi 2012) or by doing the writing practice (SaymaArju 2010). Based on the research findings above, the writer interest to write how to optimizing the teacher talks to foster the students' critical thinking. To the best of writer knowledge there is no explanation about this topic before. That is why the writer chooses this topic to discuss in this article.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

a. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking refers to the cognitive skill. Bassham (2011:1) stated that critical thinking is the general term given to a wide range of cognitive skill and intellectual dispositions needed to effectively identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments and truth claims; to discover and overcome personal preconception and biases; to formulate and present convincing reasons in support of conclusion; and to make a reasonable, intelligent decision about what to believe and what to do. It means that critical thinking is a skill that is needed to identified, analyzed, and evaluated arguments and claims and also to support the conclusion and making decision.

It also support by Cottrell (2005:1), he stated that critical thinking was a cognitive activity, associated with using mind. Learning to think in critically, analytical, and evaluative ways means using mental processes such as attention, categorization, selection, and judgment. It can be said that in critical thinking, the critical thinker will identifying, analyzing and evaluation something.

Critical thinking is needed by the students when they are in the learning process. The students who are critical thinker, when they are learning something, will assess the validity of something whether it is right or wrong, good or bad. It is a way of deciding whether a claim is true, false; sometimes true or partly true. A critical thinker is will ask appropriate questions, address arguments, collect the relevant information to support their thought and belief, and they know how to reject the incorrect, illogical or irrelevant information. It supported by Schafersman (1991:3), he defines critical thinking means correct thinking in the pursuit of relevant and reliable knowledge about the world. He also adds that critical thinking is reasonable, reflective, responsible, and skillful thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do.

b. Teacher Talks

Teacher talk is variety of language that used by the teacher in the process of teaching. The teacher when they are teaching, trying to communicate with the learners and often simplify their explanation with some variety of language in order to make it easy understanding for the students. The teacher speaks a simple language and also giving some styles when teaching and giving explanation in the teaching process. It refers to teacher talks. Sullivan and Keeney (2008:1) stated that teacher talk bring the voice of teachers to the debate around safety and discipline in classroom. It means that to make the good conducive learning, the teacher can use a variety the languages.

There are two categories of teacher talk according to Brown (1994:163). The first is teacher talks that giving indirect influence. The sentence or language that the teacher can use such as something that deals with the feelings, praises or encourage, giving a joke, uses of ideas from the students, asking the questions, and giving the response verbatim. The second category is teacher talk that can give direct influence to the students in classroom interaction. They are such as gives the information, correct without rejection, gives direction, criticizes students behavior and criticizes students response.

Mehan (1979:37) describe some types of teacher talk. They are questions, invitations, directions, informs, prompt, encouragements, criticizing, ignoring, acknowledgment, and comment. Those types used by the teacher to make some variety language in the learning process. They used by teacher in the teaching and learning process in order for some reasons.

3. DISCUSSION

Related to there are some types of teacher talks that used by teacher in the classroom, some of them can be used by the teacher for some reason also. In this article, I would like to propose the types of teacher talks that are used to foster students critical thinking in the learning process. The types of teacher talks that we discuss here is related to types that proposed by Mehan (1979:37). Those types will modify as good as possible in order to create and increase students' critical thinking of the students. It is related to students' skill in description, analysis and evaluation of

something. Beside those skill, the teacher also can used those types of teacher talks to foster the students critical thinking that focused on deciding something related to the what the students believe, it is good or bad, right or not, and also to giving an recommendation about something.

a. Questions

The first types that can choose to foster students; critical thinking is questions. It used by teacher for some reason such as request an information. It is commonest and straightforward way to make students talk in the class. The questions that teacher used in the classroom can be divided into two types; referential question and display question. Referential question are questions with not fixed answer such as “*what is your idea of living in the big city?*” and display questions are questions with no fixed answer such as “*on which page can you find the theme on this passage?*”.

To foster students’ critical thinking, the teacher can ask the students’ with the question that need to analyze. The question that is started with “*why*” is good choice for the teacher. The answers of this types question needthe opinion or argument from the students. So the students need to analyze it and correlate their question with their found in their daily life.

The other question that is started with the question ‘*how*’ also can be used by the teacher in order to foster students’ critical thinking. in the teaching and learning process, the teacher can give some illustration or dilemmas to the students. Based on it, the teacher can ask the students “*why it happen*” and also give them question “*how it should be*”. That types of question also need to analyze by the students. They also can put their opinion based on their perspective in that situation. Of course it will foster their critical thinking because it include the activities of giving argument, giving assumption, and also analyzing something based on different perspective.

b. Invitation

Invitation means that the teacher in the classroom uses the presiding language or uses imperative and interrogative sentences to ask the students to do some activities. For example in the discussion or presentation section. The teacher will invite the students to present about something in the classroom. The teacher said that “Let’s come to the first presenter in this discussion.” Or the teacher can said “ We invite DickyAnggara as the first presenter today”.

Invitation is one of the types of teacher talks that can be used to foster students’ critical thinking in the classroom. It can be statement that the students need to give their opinion. For example, in the discussion section, after the presenter explain about something in the font of class, the teacher can invite the other student to giving opinion about the performance or about the presentation. The teacher can invite the students such as “*Ridho, would you like to give us your comment about the presentation before?*” or “*Ridho, would you tell us your opinion about the topic based on your perspective*”. That is need the students critical thinking because the students need to giving their argument in that situation.

c. Inform

The other type of teacher talk is inform. Informing is a direct way to help the students realize their mistake. The students mistake can be realized such giving them definition, an example, an explanation or by signaling the problem. Example here “ *the correct word is.....*” or “ *the example of this is.....*’ . Informing is usually used by the teacher in the teaching and learning process. Informing in the classroom used by the teacher in order to make the students more comprehend the topic also.

Informing can be used by the teacher to foster students’ critical thinking. The activities such like giving some definition to the students can be modified. For example, the teacher can ask the students to give definition about the topic based on their background knowledge before the teacher giving the correct definition. The definition that given by the students will be collected by the teacher after that can correlate it each other. Basically this is almost same with the invitation. In this activity the teacher invites the students to giving their opinion and in the end the teacher giving the correction of it. This activity also can be modified in giving examples or signaling the problem.

d. Prompt

Prompt is an attempt to get the students produce the correct answer by the use of a clue to indicate the location and/ or nature of error, or requesting the students to make clarification of what he just said or repetition. The example is “*are you sure this is the good answer?*” or “*what is your*

reason to choose that answer, is it possible?. That statement used by the teacher in order to give the students a clue to find their error about something.

Relate this type of teacher talks, the teacher also can use it to see the students skill in evaluate something. For example, the teacher asks student A to giving opinion about something. Then the teacher invites the other students to giving evaluation to the student A opinion before. It is right or not. After that the teacher ask the student A again “ based on your friend opinion, what do you think?? Your answer before is right or not?.In that activity, the teacher fosters the students to evaluate. It is included in students’ critical thinking.

e. Criticizing.

Criticizing is to comment on students’ incorrect response. The example is “*Ranggi, it was bad. Do not do it anymore!*”.The teacher can criticize about the situation that is not suitable that have be done by the students in the classroom. It is sometime happen in the teaching and learning process.

Teacher’s critic also can be used to foster students’ critical thinking. For example the teacher criticizes one of the students in the classroom, after that the teacher can ask the other students what is wrong and what is not suitable and what it should be. The other students will give their opinion on that situation. They also give their argument on that. the other students also can give a solution or solution problem on that. All those activities is need students’ critical thinking.

4. CONCLUSION

Teacher in the classroom used the language to interact with their students. The variety of language that the teacher used is namely teacher talks. The variety of language that the teacher used is in order to give direction, explain activities, and also to check the students understanding. Beside that teacher talks also as the source of input of language knowledge, instruct language knowledge and organize the classroom activities in teaching and learning process. Those types such as question invitation, inform, prompt and criticizing can be used by the teacher to foster students’ critical thinking skill. Those types can be modified by the teacher based on the situation and what they intention; to foster student giving argument, making decision or solving problem, analyzing different perspective, or evaluating something. Those activities reflect students critical thinking skill that is need by the students not only in learning process but also in their daily life.

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