Variations in Types and Themes of Text in Critical Reading Learning of Higher Education

Asep Purwo Yudi Utomo[1], Andayani[2], Atikah Anindyarini[3]

{aseppyu@student.uns.ac.id[1], aseppyu@mail.unnes.ac.id[1], andayani@staff.uns.ac.id[2], atikahanindyarini@gmail.com[3]}

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia[1,2,3]

Abstract. The selection of reading texts used in critical reading learning is one of the important factors in achieving learning to read critically. This is one of the guidelines carried out by researchers in identifying the right text to be used as a support for the learning process. By using a qualitative approach and in-depth interview techniques and documentation, the data are obtained. There are two main findings in this study, namely the dominant type of text used in teaching critical reading and the dominant text theme used in critical reading text. Based on the results of the analysis, the examples of selected texts that can be presented as part of strengthening critical reading are (1) news text, (2) editorial text, (3) advertorial text, (4) opinion text, and (5) hoax text. The second finding of the results of the analysis is the selected themes as part of strengthening critical reading, namely (1) technology, (2) environment, (3) education, (3) social, and (5) health. Based on these findings it is showed that students have a tendency to like or be interested in things that are being updated on social media.

Keywords: critical reading, higher education, students, text theme, text type.

1 Introduction

Critical reading is one of the language skills that must be developed in learning. This is important because students must have critical thinking skills that can be developed through reading. We can also improve critical reading skills, as was done by Varaporn and Sitthitikul [1] with multi-modal tasks, or carry out self-development by reading critically [2]. The main principle is that critical reading has an important role in improving knowledge that can be developed in various aspects, particularly in learning.

In critical reading learning, there are many things that need to be prepared, one of which is a learning model that is appropriate with the right approach. In the series of learning models that are applied and developed, there are five components that are mandatory as part of the critical reading learning model, namely: syntax, social systems, reaction principles, support systems, as well as instructional and accompanying impacts. These components will be a means of developing critical reading skills, as was done by Ahmad [3]. The development of critical reading learning cannot be separated from its supporting components, one of which is reading text.

Learning text is one of the important elements in critical reading learning, so it must be available and well prepared. The prepared text must meet the requirements to be used in critical reading learning. The text used is not only read but can have an impact on writing skills and strengthening other abilities [4] [5] [6]. Apart from that, we also need to promote critical reading so that it becomes a culture [7] and make reading as a habit [8] [9].

There are several studies on critical reading that can be used as a comparison. Abdullah [10] who reveals the good influence in the application of critical reading. Dogan and Tosun [11] conducted a study of critical reading by examining its convenience and challenges. Utomo et al. [12] revealed critical reading skills related to 21st century skills. These studies provide different dimensions, but not many focus on texts used in teaching critical reading. This text gives a different dimension because each text has its own message.

The critical literacy approach provides a different dimension that reading is not just gaining knowledge but also analysis, evaluation and reflection which are interrelated with context, writer and reader. Critical literacy encourages readers to implement high-level cognitive processes, build a critical attitude towards texts, and connect with socio-political issues that exist in the environment or society [13] and texts in the form of literature [14]. This is confirmed by Wisudo [15] who states that readers must reflect on texts to understand power, inequality, inequality, and injustice and [16] who focus on the critical attitude of readers by questioning the text they read.

Based on these studies, several interesting things emerged that could be studied, one of which was regarding the variety and types of text that can be used in teaching critical reading. The importance of selecting texts that can be applied in critical reading learning with a critical literacy approach is one of the keys in learning achievement. In this article, the author presents the types of text that are suitable for critical reading learning and the themes that are appropriate in the learning.

2 Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach to describe the data found. The main purpose of this study is to get findings in the form of variations in the types and themes of texts that can be applied in teaching critical reading. In addition, this qualitative study also uses a fundamental approach that seeks phenomena to understand a more specific context [17]. Qualitative methods are also used to discover or realize more complete phenomena [18][19]. This study was conducted by means of a literature review on critical reading skills, text types, and theme variations. The collected studies are in the form of information from various sources, particularly from analysis, observation, and interviews about types of texts and variations on critical reading themes. In addition, this study considers information from other media which helps researchers gain better insights about this study.

This research uses interviews for data collection [20], which aims to confirm the data that had been collected from various information that were obtained from interviews. The interview focuses on predetermined questions with the possibility of additional or follow-up questions to dig up more in-depth information. The final findings about research objectives are the most important thing, so that researchers get flexibility in the interview process.

There were seven universities that were targeted for this study with 10 students for each university as the representatives. These universities are Universitas Negeri Semarang, Universitas Sultas Agung, Universitas Jendral Soedirman, Universitas Pekalongan, Universitas Muhammadiyah Pekalongan, Universitas Muria Kudus, and Universitas Tidar.

3 Discussion

Based on the results of analysis, observations, and interviews that were conducted with students and lecturers of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, two main findings were found in this article. The first is the type of text that is appropriate or can be used in learning critical reading because it has characteristics that meet the requirements. The second is the theme of the text which tends to be suitable for use as a critical reading text. Both of these are illustrated in the following description.

3.1 Types of Appropriate Text in Critical Reading Learning

Critical reading learning requires text that can be used in the implementation of learning. The text can be used at the beginning part of learning, the main part of learning, or evaluation part of learning. Based on the results of analysis, observations, and interviews, there are types of text that can be used in teaching critical reading. The use of text can be applied in various fields of science. The assumption is that critical reading learning can help academic development (Ozensoy 2021) [14] because critical reading skills can be measured with proper evaluation (Shamida et al. 2021) [15].

1. News text
News text is a text that contains information in good language into one unit of information. This text is often found in online media, newspapers, and magazines. Along with the development of information technology, news texts are increasingly easy to find everywhere. News texts usually convey actual information that attracts the attention of many people. News text is one of the texts that is consumed by everyone because of the need for information for each individual with varying information needs.

News text is one of the reading texts that is suitable for use in critical reading learning because the information presented in the news is actual information. In the news contains facts about events, events, or things that are newsworthy. News texts displayed by one media and other media can also be related to each other, confirmed, or compared so that the information obtained by the reader is complete. Another element that makes news texts usable as reading texts in critical reading is the existence of news sections that can be selected. With so many news rubrics

to choose from, it will make readers more selective in reading the information needed so that a person's habit of reading certain information will be seen.

2. Editorial text

Editorial text is an article written by the editor of a newspaper. Usually, an editorial text discusses various issues that are currently being hotly discussed in society. Editorial text is an article in a newspaper which is an editorial opinion or view of an event that is actual or is being hotly discussed at the time the newspaper is published. The opinion written by the editor is considered as the official view of a publisher or media on an actual issue.

Editorial texts can be used as critical reading texts because writing opinions or opinions in editorial texts must be equipped with facts, evidence, and logical arguments. Editorial text will usually appear regularly in newspapers or magazines. The actual issues or problems can be in the form of political, social, or economic problems related to politics. The types of editorial text opinions vary, such as: criticism, judgment, predictions, hopes, and suggestions. In addition, as an amplifier the editorial text has several characteristics, including: (1) the topic of editorial text writing is always hot (is being developed and widely discussed by the public), (2) is actual and factual, (3) the editorial text is systematic and logical, (4) editorial text is an argumentative opinion, (5) editorial text is interesting to read, because it is written using short, concise, and clear sentences.

3. Advertorial text

Advertorials are a form of advertising presented in a journalistic style. Advertorial comes from two words in English Advertising and Editorial. Advertising is the persuasive presentation of material to the public through the mass media with the aim of promoting goods or services. Editorial is a statement of opinion which is the official stance of the editor.

Advertorial text can be used as critical reading text because advertorial text is a form of advertising that is presented using a more subtle journalistic writing style. The advertorial text uses a pattern of six news elements, namely 5W+1H. As in writing straight news and depth news or features. With these elements, the text has arguments that are suitable for use as a critical reading text.

4. Hoax text

Hoax is information that is fabricated or engineered to cover up real information. In other words, hoax is defined as an attempt to distort facts using information that seems convincing but cannot be verified.

Hoax texts have spread widely to various forms of media and make readers believe them. This makes hoax texts interesting to serve as critical reading material because readers are expected to be able to distinguish between true and false information. Hoax text can be used as a measure of the reader's criticality of the information presented and the reader's literacy level.

3.2 Appropriate Text Themes in Learning Critical Reading

In addition to the type of text, critical reading learning also requires text variations on the theme of reading texts that can be used in the implementation of learning. The theme of the text can be used as a variation of material at the beginning part of learning, the main part of learning, or

evaluation part of learning. Based on the results of analysis, observations, and interviews, there are text themes that can be used in teaching critical reading. Texts can also be used as a medium for critical reading to increase self-efficacy (Alan and Amac 2021) [16].

1. Technology Theme
The choice of technology theme is based on several reasons, including: (1) students have a high interest in technological developments, (2) the rapid technological progress can be followed by reading about technological topics, (3) the specific topics to current technology not become a stranger, (4) the learning process in college uses technology that continues to grow, and (5) students are required to follow technological developments.

2. Environment Theme
Environment theme text is one of the interesting texts used as critical reading teaching material. Based on the results of an analysis of environmental themes, several interesting environmental themes were made. Based on the results of interviews and FGDs with students who focused on environmental topics, it was found that some of the most interesting specific topics were used as reading materials or texts, including (1) waste, (2) water, (3) fauna, (4) flora, (5) natural disasters, (6) natural disasters, (7) green energy, (8) green building, (9) paperlees, (10) environmentally friendly transportation.

3. Education Theme
Education for students is one key that cannot be separated. Understanding, concept, development of education is one of the main things of this theme which is one of the things that continues to be followed. The things related to education are the most interesting topics because they relate directly to what students experience.

4. Social Theme
Social theme are broad enough to be studied because they can be related to any field. This social theme is more related to social conditions in society which vary widely, particlarly to concern about the social conditions of the underprivileged. In addition, students are also interested in social phenomena that are happening and make it an interesting topic or theme to read and criticize.

5. Health Theme
After the Covid-19 pandemic, people directly and indirectly have a level of awareness of health, as well as students. This becomes the point of interest in the health theme contained in the reading text. The reading topics contained in the text are also developing, not only on Covid 19, but on other topics that are currently developing.

4 Conclusion

The conclusions that can be drawn based on the results of this study are based on conceptual findings and field findings through analysis, observation and interviews. Based on the results of the study, two main things were found in this study, namely the type and theme of the text which has a tendency to be used in learning to read critically. Types of text that can be used in learning critical reading include: news text, editorial text, advertorial text, opinion text, and hoax text. In

addition to this type of text, it can still be applied as a type of critical reading text if it fulfills the main requirements such as having the data, being argumentative, and interesting as critical reading. Text themes that can be used in critical reading learning include: technology theme, environment theme, education theme, social theme, and health theme. These themes are the dominant themes chosen by students and lecturers. However, other types of themes are also very likely to be used with interesting, contextual, and actual conditions so that they have the opportunity to be criticized.

The main recommendations that the authors can express based on the findings in the article include the following. First, lecturers and students can choose the type and theme of reading texts in order to improve the quality of critical reading learning and critical reading skills. Second, the quality of reading also needs to be validated so that the text read can be used as a reference in the implementation of learning. Third, the quality of the selected text will maximize the critical literacy approach applied.

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