

The Implementation of Collaborative and Participatory Learning (CPL) to Enhance Students' Critical Literacy Skills: A Case Study of Issues on Linguistics Class at Universitas Brawijaya

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Abstract. This study aims to explore how Collaborative and Participatory Learning (CPL) can be used to improve students' critical literacy skills. This qualitative research study was conducted in Issues on Linguistics class at Faculty of Culture Studies, Universitas Brawijaya. The respondents were 42 students who were taking the Issues on Linguistics courses. The authors assisted students to be involved in shared knowledge construction with classroom members and engaged meaningfully in CPL. Students' interest and enthusiasm to finish assignments has enhanced collaborative and participatory class, as well as the development of critical and analytical thinking skills. Furthermore, this technique has encouraged students to improve their social skills. Through this study, it is expected that other teacher educators can learn from the authors and enact CPL in their classroom contexts.

Keywords: Collaborative Participatory Learning, Critical Literacy Skills, Issues on Linguistics

1 Introduction

Literacy is one of life essential skills which determine human resource quality [1]. Along with its development, the idea of literacy is extended into critical literacy whose idea rooted from Freire [2] great work on critical literacy pedagogy, which emphasizes that literate individuals (reading the word) would be fully aware of the social and political environment in which they live (reading the world). In this age of globalization, critical literacy as a component of higher order thinking skills has become one of the most significant components in the development of human resources, particularly for students in higher education who are preparing Indonesia's golden generation. Literacy must be perceived as capital in the development and construction of scientific discourse in order for the dynamics of ideas and thoughts to occur. Nowadays, critical literacy is interpreted as a thinking skill in reading words and the world and looking for relationships between the two to solve life problems [3]. Based on its use, literacy is an integrated form of listening, speaking, writing, reading and critical thinking skills [4]. In line with Lee [5] defines critical literacy as "learning to read and write as part of the process of becoming aware of one's experiences that are historically constructed in specific power relationships.

Critical literacy practice in EFL contexts addresses the need for EFL pedagogy that takes into account the complex social and political components of foreign language learning. One of the critical pedagogy which can be used to enhance critical literacy is encouraging students to work in a group by doing collaborative participatory learning.

Recently, the Indonesian higher education employs Outcome Based Education (OBE) in which learning process and activities during school must generate long-lasting result even after they graduate [6]. The concept of OBE requires courses offered in higher education expose their students to higher order thinking skills. In implementing OBE, Universitas Brawijaya, has made various efforts to develop a more conducive educational atmosphere for students and lecturers. One of them is by implementing collaborative and participatory classes which is in line with the OBE concepts and critical literacy education. The focus of this class is to give autonomy to students to be responsible for their learning process. The collaborative and participatory class emphasizes collaborative learning activities in acquiring new knowledge and skills, student activity in solving problems, being responsible for obtaining and managing the information collected, and evaluating what they do [7][8].

Critical literacy is a key cognitive skill that a tertiary education aims to instill in pupils. It entails questioning and examining ideas, as well as synthesizing, analyzing, interpreting, evaluating, and responding to the materials that students read or listen to. Critical literacy in the context of reading scientific research in Issues on Linguistics course oriented toward reading with a text by grasping the views on offer, following and engaging with the writer's argument, and being willing to consider their viewpoints and ideas. Making use of critical review activity as one of the efforts in enhancing students' critical literacy on the subjects they are learning is still under researched. Therefore, this study attempts to discuss the implementation of collaborative and participatory learning in three Issues on Linguistics classes. The paper explores (1) how critical review activity as the selected task can enhance collaborative and participatory learning, (2) the students' perception regarding the practice of CPL in the class, and (3) some challenges that student faced during the implementation of CPL.

2 Literature Review

Collaborative learning (CL) can be defined as a set of teaching and learning strategies promoting student collaboration in small groups (two to five students) in order to optimise their own and each other's learning [9]. To achieve this purpose, teachers have tried to organise different types of collaborative activities in their classroom teaching. While the participatory learning design gives the learners the opportunity of searching for, processing, finding themselves the knowledge in order to develop their basic skill. Participatory learning in functional literacy education programs is designed to help the learners acquire reading, writing, speaking, listening, and counting abilities by synergizing local potencies and resources in the learner environment, to improve learning motivation and learning competence.

A study conducted by Rokhaniyah [10] found that implementing Collaborative Learning enhances the students' critical thinking and ability to write analytical exposition. Furthermore, Collaborative Learning can improve the classroom climate by increasing students' attention to the teaching and learning process, helping them feel more alive, increasing their responsibility to work in groups to solve problems in writing, and raising their self-confidence to express their ideas. Collaborative Learning tends to have a greater favorable impact on students, as seen by increased academic achievement. It is able to increase both students' critical thinking and

students' learning achievement, and also encourage students' participation in learning. However, Le et al. [11] found that several obstacles affecting the effectiveness of collaborative learning (CL). It has often been investigated through the perceptions of only one actor, either teachers or students. They found four main obstacles to the effectiveness of CL, namely students' lack of collaborative skills, free-riding, competence status, and friendship.

Freire [2] mention that in functional literacy education, the influence of a participatory learning paradigm potentially enhances learners' motivation. Participatory learning models help increase learning outcomes in addition to encouraging students to study. In line with Li et al. [12] show that students have better participate in the classroom. After actively participating in the classroom, students apply their knowledge better to practice.

3 Research Method

This research is a qualitative case study since the data obtained were mainly explained descriptively. The data from this research were gathered from observation, questionnaire and in-depth interview. In addition, case study is employed in this research because this research attempts to find deep understanding about the nature of collaborative and participatory learning in enhancing students' critical literacy in *Issues on Linguistics* classes. There were three *Issues on Linguistics* classes involved in this research. The total number of participants who participated in this research was 42 students.

The questionnaire was developed by the authors to find out students' perspective on the implementation of CPL in the class and the extent to which the critical review enhance their collaborative and participatory learning. In addition, the authors also interviewed the students to obtain full and detailed data that would be beneficial and useful in examining the students' challenges during the implementation of CPL in the class. The authors interviewed one representative of each group. Semi-structured interviews were used in this research specifically because this approach, along with a flexible set of interview questions, allowed us to dig deeper into a one-on-one basis by asking questions about their experiences they get when they were implementing CPL in *Issues on linguistics* class. The interviews were conducted in English mixed with participants' native language, Indonesian, so that they could freely express themselves without any linguistic obstacles.

4 Finding and Discussion

In this section, there are three points to discuss which answer the research questions. The first is about the extent to which critical review enhances students' collaborative and participatory learning. The second is about the students' responses on the implementation of CPL in their classes. The third part discusses the students' challenges during the implementation of CPL.

4.1. Can Critical review activity as the selected task enhance students' collaborative and participatory learning?

Critical review is chosen as the selected task to help students to be critical toward reading materials they have during IOL classes. The idea of CPL applied in this activity emphasizes the collaborative learning aspect where students and lecturers work together to share knowledge in writing a critical review. In this activity, students in groups write a critical review of a scientific article on various linguistic issues by applying scientific rules or methods according to their research interests. The division of this group was based on students' linguistic interests (phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, discourse, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, semantics, and foreign language acquisition). This group conducted project-based learning focusing on producing a critical review of a scientific article published in a journal. Students in groups reviewed journal articles critically according to the IMRAD element. Prior to the group work, the lecturers provide examples (exemplars) of scientific reviews and discuss them with students, especially regarding parts of scientific reviews and the language used. During the critical review writing, the lecturers together with class assistants provide feedback on their critical reviews based on the assessment rubric that has been socialized.

After the students wrote their critical reviews, they conducted peer reviews with other groups. The lecturer randomly determined which group to review the other group's critical reviews. In carrying out this process, students were given directions on how to conduct a peer review. Each group held some discussions to provide a review of the critical reviews of other groups. Each group was given the opportunity to present the results of their critical review. This presentation was followed by a discussion where other groups can ask questions, provide constructive feedback on their presentations, as well as share experiences and knowledge about the topic being presented. Next, each group refined their critical review based on input from lecturers, students (peer review) and discussion results when they presented their critical review.

The final results of the critical reviews submitted by the students were assessed by the lecturers based on the assessment rubric that was introduced and discussed with students in earlier stage. The lecturers did not only score the critical review, but we also provided verbal feedback on the results of their writing. This feedback was expected to be used to improve the quality of their critical reviews, especially in preparing their thesis proposals in the next semester.

Based on the lecturers' observation during the implementation of CPL through critical review task, the students show their interest in completing the task. The students actively participated in their group discussions starting from selecting the article to review, looking for strengths and weaknesses of the selected article, distributing jobs in writing the critical review, until preparing slides for their presentation. These activities were conducted via online meetings during the class (in breakout rooms) or in their group discussion (zoom video recording). In addition, based on the questionnaire, 92.9% of the students mention that critical review as a group project helped them improve their teamwork skill. They also stated that they had frequent discussions with their teammates in completing the task (78.6%). Moreover, when the students were asked to assess their teammates' participation during the project, approximately 95% of them showed positive responses indicating that all the members in their groups participate actively in completing the project. These results show that writing a critical review in groups can be used as an alternative CPL classroom activity which can enhance students' collaborative and participatory learning.

4.2. How do students respond to the implementation of CPL?

This study also explores students' perception regarding the implementation of CPL in Issues in Linguistics class. Table 1 clearly depicts how the students rate their perception regarding this instructional practice.

Table 1. Students' responses on the implementation of CPL in relation to critical literacy skills

Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	S A (%)
1. This CPL program through making critical review improves my critical literacy skills.	0	2.4	19	78.6
2. Scientific texts I am reading improves my criticality on linguistics phenomenon happening around us	0	11.9	47.6	40.5
3. Scientific texts I am reading provided me insights on various linguistics phenomena	0	0	40.5	59.5
4. Scientific texts I read enable me to identify and use certain language features that are particular to certain textual genres	0	4.8	47.6	47.6
5. The texts I learned in this course through critical review enable me to move beyond initial stereotypes they have about the target culture;	0	0	40.5	59.5
6. This CPL program through the use of critical review helps me a lot in expressing critical idea well	0	0	47.6	52.4
7. This CPL program through the use of critical review helps me to be critical toward the text I am reading	0	7.1	50	42.9

From Table 1, it can be seen that CPL through critical review activity is able to improve various aspects of students' critical literacy. The first aspect that was improved through this activity was that the activity of writing. The data show that critical reviews was able to increase students' critical literacy (78.6 percent). CPL activity, one of which discussed the analysis of articles in the field of linguistics, was able to increase students' realization of the linguistic phenomena around them. Not only that, academic texts in the field of linguistics also provide opportunities for students to broaden their knowledge of linguistics and research in the field of linguistics. Another benefit that students get from reading academic texts with linguistic nuances is that they were able to eliminate the stereotypes they had been holding on to a culture so that when reading the text, the elements of these stereotypes then faded so that they would be more critical of the reading material they read. Moreover, CPL activity through critical review writing activity is able to help students to express their critical ideas.

From the results of the questionnaire distributed to students regarding the assignment of critical review and the application of this collaborative and participatory classroom method, students showed a positive attitude towards this type of assignment and learning. Students find it easier to understand the contents of journal articles with the discussions they do in groups. Students also provide some suggestions for improvement for the implementation of this program in the future.

4.3. What are the challenges faced during the implementation of CPL?

Constraints faced by students in implementing this program can be identified through in-depth interviews which the authors conducted after obtaining the results of the questionnaire. Interviews were conducted randomly and the following are some transcripts of interviews with students during this CPL activity in relation to their critical literacy. Interviews were conducted to find out how far the obstacles experienced by these students in class.

There are some problems occurred when conducting the activities in this collaborative project. Some groups had difficulty determining the articles they want to analyze, especially to see if the chosen topic is a trending topic in the field of linguistics. They also had difficulty in selecting articles that are worthy of analysis as can be seen in the following extract.

S1: I got difficulty analyzing which articles I should take as there are some articles though they are published online some are not worth reading. I am happy and feel so much helpful that the lecturer gave me ways in finding out an appropriate scientific articles in the field of linguistics to be analyzed.

To deal with issue, students consulted with lecturers and class assistants regarding several alternative articles they wanted to choose. Lecturers also helped students to access articles that they could not access. Furthermore, the lecturers explained about science mapping through VosViewer in class. This platform also helps the students to define the research gaps or areas of research that the previous researchers have not touched yet. Another challenge faced by the students is their limited understanding of what critical review is. The assignment of writing critical reviews is new for the students since they never had this kind of assignment in their previous classes. Therefore, their understanding of how to analyze a scientific text, in this case a journal article, still needs to be improved. Students tend to interpret this review as providing criticism, especially in terms of the shortcomings of the article. This tendency can be seen in the following extract.

S2: I'm still confused between reviewing and giving criticism, so sometimes what I write is more about the weakness of the article when it shouldn't. Reviewing also involves comparing the research with previous ones that we can get from the synthesizing process

The problem that student (S2) experienced was quite common among students. This was overcome by a process of discussion in class and consultation with lecturers or assistants. The students found it beneficial to have discussions with the lecturers and class assistance to overcome their difficulties. Despite all the difficulties, students find critical review writing a useful activity for their study as well as for their future. The following extract is one of the students' comments on the benefit of writing a critical review as a group project in IOL class.

S3: We are greatly helped by this activity and we are sure that in the future we will get used to being more critical in responding to and reading a scientific paper in the field of linguistics. The activity of making this critical review opened our eyes. We bring the text not to be read but also to be connected with our lives in real life.

Students need to be retrained to understand giving criticism and reviewing a scientific article which is usually to better know the depth of knowledge, not just looking for the weaknesses of scientific works. By continuing to practice, students will be more sensitive about linguistic issues that come from the readings they read and they will be skilled at making a critical review.

5 Conclusion

This collaborative and participatory class has increased students' interest and motivation in doing assignments (task engagement), as well as developing critical and analytical thinking skills. In addition, this method has given students the opportunity to build their social skills. In order to improve the activities on this collaborative project, we suggest on improving the module such as adding information on how to find information about research trends in the field of linguistics through several applications. Completion of this module also takes into account the addition of alternative tasks such as writing journal articles. Furthermore, another improvement is also needed on the guidelines for writing critical reviews to be clear and easy for students to understand.

The authors have provided their thoughts on implementing CPL in an IOL class. Future study should provide teacher educators with hands-on training in assessing students' work during CPL implementation. It is necessary because learning assessment supplements learning activities. This instructional method is not regarded as the most effective pedagogical approach to facilitating students' learning engagement, nor does it give adequate evidence of its efficacy. However, instructors may gain to some extent from the authors' situated class and idea-making because teachers all over the world are currently dealing with complications in their instruction. This research finding is worth considering from a pedagogical standpoint. Critical literacy philosoph that both students and teachers get from the activity of critical review is required to grasp how language works in order to be a more skilled user of language in terms of comprehending, writing, and being sensitive toward linguistics phenomena.

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