

Teaching English with an Internet-Based of Google Docs to Improve Student's Critical Thinking

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Abstract: The 2013 curriculum emphasizes modern pedagogic dimension in learning with the aim at improving the ability of high-level thinking. ICT is one of the tools that the teacher should acquire to support the improvement of the quality of learning including language learning. The knowledge of critical thinking is important to face the globalization era. The skill must be trained through a stimulus that requires a person to think critically, accordingly the researcher would like to investigate the learning activities designed by the teacher and to describe the activities in teaching English that expose critical thinking knowledge using online applications at junior high schools in Malang. This study which is descriptive qualitative study was endorsed the data sources from the language teacher and students. The instruments used are observation and questionnaire. The result of the analysis indicates that the learning activities consist of three main parts: pre teaching focuses on the orientation and register students to use email or user account to access to Google Apps whilst teaching focuses on student's engagement of remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating and post teaching includes sharing and commenting students with opportunities to receive immediate feedback on their research. Meanwhile, the learning activities to develop student's critical thinking split into two main parts with reference to the integrated teaching of English and those of language components.

Key words: Teaching English, critical thinking, Indonesia, Google Apps, investigate, quality

INTRODUCTION

The globalization era which is characterized by the rapid development of science and technology, providing easy access for people in carrying out their daily activities either in communicating, updating information and in doing other research. Behind all the positive impacts, there are more complex issues including global warming, moral degradation and corruption of politics. This shows that the challenges facing future generations are even greater. One of the skills required to face the challenges of the future is a high-level thinking skills which includes the skills to analyze, evaluate and create and to think logically resulting considerations and decisions. These steps are adapted from revision of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domains.

The 2013 curriculum emphasizes modern pedagogic dimension in learning with the aim at improving the ability of high-level thinking (Ministry of Education and Cultures RI, 2013). Critical thinking skills need to be given to students considering that the implementation of language learning, especially, reading for high school students still directed at the intellectual level that is cognitive. In terms of literacy, the average students are only able to find information but very weak in interpreting, reflecting and

evaluating the content of reading. In other words, language learning method ignores other cognitive development, for example to improve the critical thinking. On the basis of the studies of language learning above, teachers need innovation in learning by utilizing ICT as a medium (Poore, 2013). The above facts underline and motivate researcher to know the activities designed to develop critical thinking skill and to describe the teaching and learning using internet-based nature of Google Docs to enhance these skill.

Literature review: Critical thinking is the ability to analyze facts, trigger and organize ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw conclusions, evaluate arguments and solve problems (Chance, 1986). These skills are not a skill that can evolve by itself in line with the physical development of human. It must be trained through the provision of stimulus that requires a person to think critically. School as an institution of education providers has a responsibility to help students develop other skills beside academic competence that is essential to their lives such as critical thinking skills (Kameo, 2007).

In accordance with the characteristics of the language as a communication tool, language learning is not only studying the language associated with the

grammar procedures of reading or writing only but it must reflect affective competence to speak politely to think scientifically and language skills communicatively both orally and written, either active or passive embedded in the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Towards the 21st century, UNESCO through “The International Commission on Education for the 21 Century” recommends lifelong education carried out by the four pillars of the learning process, namely: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together (Aezacan, 2012). In order to achieve the four pillars of education in today’s information of globalization era, teachers as teaching agent needs to master and apply ICT in teaching and learning process in school in accordance with the 2013 curriculum will be IT-based (Ministry of Education and Cultures RI, 2013).

Researches on the use of internet for language learning activities have been conducted about developing an EFL teaching and learning website, sharing the various English resources; cultivating teacher and learner autonomy (Zhang, 2013). In addition, language learning with ICT becomes an authentic source material, literacy, interaction, vitality and empowerment (Saha and Talukdar, 2008).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research design: This research is a descriptive qualitative one which investigates the nature of phenomena that are the activities designed to develop critical thinking skill and to describe the teaching and

learning using internet-based nature of Google Docs to enhance the critical thinking (Merriam, 2009). Figure 1 the location was in senior high school in Malang. The data was compiled from the English teacher and some students selected randomly. The instruments used were observation and questionnaire. After the data were collected they were then analyzed. The technique of data analysis in this research was started with data reduction, data presentation and conclusion: drawing or verifying (Miles *et al.*, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the study indicates that developing critical thinking skill in language teaching with internet-based nature of Google Docs in this case can be conducted by implementing 6 integrated activities such as: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating. The integrated activities can be illustrated in the Fig. 1.

The learning activities designed by the teacher to develop critical thinking consist of three main parts: pre teaching focused on the orientation and register students to use e-Mail or user account to access to Google Apps whilst teaching focused on student’s engagement of remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating and post teaching includes sharing and commenting students with opportunities to receive immediate feedback on their research.

Based on the observation, the teaching English to improve student’s critical thinking in language classes is split into two main parts with reference to the integrated teaching activities of English and those

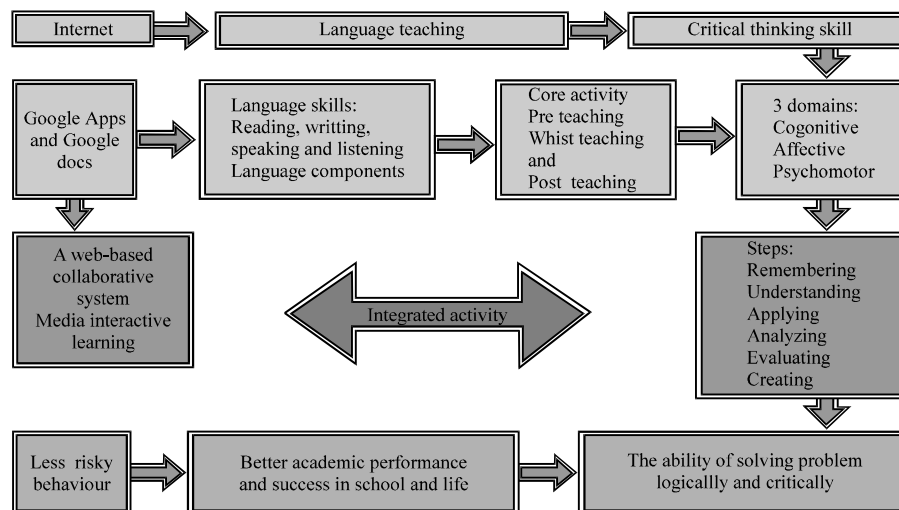


Fig. 1: Integrated activities of teaching English with integrated-based Google Docs

of language components: grammar-structure and vocabulary. The following is the activities of teaching and learning English to improve the student's critical thinking using Google Docs.

Pre teaching: The students get orientation and create an email and an account of Google Apps. The first activity is to download a text on line and instruct them to identify and understand verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs etc. from the text, for example, the words such as empties, flows, contains has (present tense) were settled, learned, (past tense) is studying, completing (present continuous tense), wide, low, fertile (adjective) completely, usually (adverb), long and short vowels (/i/ and /i:/) in the words like South, North (/i/and/i:/) sea and East, diphthongs/ou/ in the words low, flow, boat, grow and so on. The students have to be able to recall verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc. The second is brainstorming with examining the text (surveying the title, illustrations) and making questions like "What do you think this title will be about"? or "Tell me three things you will be learning in this lesson about this topic"?

Whilst teaching: The activity is to apply new vocabulary by creating their own descriptions and comparing certain subjects. The students in groups are provided with the descriptive text with those words missing. They can listen to the recording three times: the first time is purely devoted to listening and trying to research out what the missing words are; the second time deals with filling the gaps and the third time consists of checking to confirm whether the answers are correct or not. The students collaborate in pairs then discuss and share the answers on line and practise pronouncing the words with the teacher through further listening to the audio exposure of the words. The purpose of the activities is to sharpen student's listening and speaking ability in learning pronunciation of different verbs forms and others.

The students are provided with the text of a set of comprehension questions. The students read the text and the teacher gives them some time to do the silent reading, focusing their attention on questions geared toward the surface understanding of the text. Student in pairs then create their own description and question and answers of the subject. After doing the exercises, students should have not only a general understanding of the text but also; the ability to be able to describe and compare certain subjects. The students then swap the result of their research with other student's and share together on line.

By examining the text, language learners learn not only about the grammar and vocabulary but also the writing mechanics and organization. They can see how correct punctuation is applied, how ideas, events and

facts are organized into good paragraphs and finally how the paragraphs are combined into captivating stories. The next activity related to writing skill is by asking students to write down sentences or paragraphs based on their own experience and understanding about a certain topic then create it in a story. During these activities the students expand their knowledge and discuss and share the opinions with group members. The students present their result using web tool and together with the teacher check the language components by using Google Docs comment function or discussion function.

Post teaching includes sharing and commenting students with opportunities to receive immediate feedback on their research. The students together with the teacher evaluate the discussion by identifying their weaknesses and afterward practice solving the problem.

Student's response to the learning activities using Google Docs: The items of the student's questionnaire to the learning activities:

- The internet access is available in the school
- The teacher uses internet in teaching English
- The teacher prepares suitable activities using internet-based of Google Docs for teaching and learning English
- Students are able to peer edit and collaborate using Google Docs
- Using internet-based of Google Docs can review and live updating
- Learning activity in groups using internet-based nature of Google Docs practice solving problem
- Using internet requires students creative and critical thinking
- Students enjoyed the lessons when Google Docs is used

The result of student's questionnaire stated that the teachers had been familiar with Google App and they knew about it. The teacher sometimes uses Google Docs for teaching writing and reading and very rare for listening and speaking. The teacher prepares suitable activities in group's discussion using Google Docs to make students active and creative in class even though the access of internet in the school is not running well and it sometimes disturbs the learning process. Otherwise, according to the students that Google docs not only help them identify their mistakes and weaknesses but also solve their problem directly. Anyway, 80% of the students feel enjoyed the activity with internet-based nature of Google docs and they feel satisfied. Meanwhile, 2% says average it means the

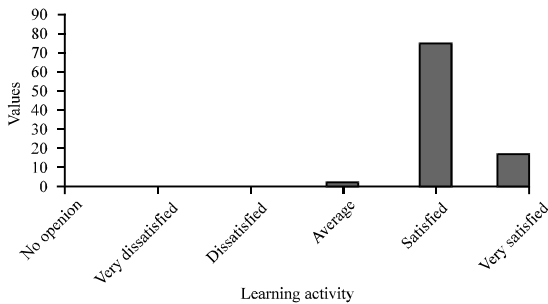


Fig. 2: Google Docs in learning activity

student's response is fair and 18% of them are very satisfied. The level of student's satisfaction of using Google docs in the learning activity can be seen in Fig. 2.

According to partnership for 21st century (2014), skills that beside academic achievement, student's also need another skill to face the globalization era that is critical thinking skill. Critical thinking is very important in the 21st century as an era of information and technology. Someone should respond to changes quickly and effectively thus, requiring flexible intellectual skills, the ability to analyze information and integrate various sources of knowledge to solve problems (Elder, 2007).

The previous research about critical thinking in language learning has already been done with result that three domains seems to have already appeared in K-13 that is the national curriculum of 2013 for elementary and secondary education in Indonesian context (Junining, 2016). However, its implementation needs to be evaluated regularly. Due to the importance of implementing critical thinking for learning, teachers should pay attention to these skills for student's who have good thinking skills, the better the ability to formulate strategies and tactics in order to achieve success in life and in global competition in the future. However, with critical thinking students are invited to participate actively and effectively to build their own knowledge (Ramsay *et al.*, 2009).

Critical thinking skill cannot evolve by itself along with the development of human physical but it must be trained through a stimulus that requires a person to think critically. School as an institution of education providers has a responsibility to help students develop critical thinking skills therefore, teacher was required to be creative to design and build the student's critical thinking competence. Based on the curriculum 2013 the competencies student's should have are attitude, skill and knowledge (cognitive, affective and psychomotor).

Therefore, it is a must for a teacher to provide the students with such domain by creating many activities in the teaching and learning process.

In the globalization era, internet is very essential tool to create an interactive media. However, that nowadays using internet is appropriate to create activities that can expose the skill (Ramsay *et al.*, 2009). Without any creativity and any activities created, the class will be boring and not interested anymore. The activities propose in learning English through internet based Google Docs is one of the examples that can build and develop student's critical reading, critical thinking and also problem solving.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the finding, it can be concluded that; the learning activities designed by the teacher have a characteristic that is solving problems. The learning activities to improve student's critical thinking designed by the teacher with three phases that are pre activity with orientation, giving motivation and asking student to register an account of Google Apps whilst activity integrates English skills with steps of remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating and post activity is giving feedback and evaluating the result of learning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Furthermore, learning English with internet based nature Google Docs not only enable the student's to create sets of cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies but also by combining that ability the student's competence will be able to maximize, so that, adult who have critical thinking skill attain good ability to analyze and to think logically, so as to produce proper consideration and decision to face the challenges of the future.

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