

## TEACHER'S COMMUNICATIVE TEACHING TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING

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### ABSTRACT

Generally, students are intended to be better in four skills matter as well as their critical thinking along learning process in the classroom. Indonesia elementary school curriculum tends to give no option to build deeper prospect of English subject for about 2x35 minutes a week. The study conducted qualitative research method. The data were obtained from two meetings classroom video recording and observation to expose other findings. The sample data were taken from the fourth grade of elementary school students. Next, interviewing the teacher to dig information from the teacher about particular activities and to get teacher's feedback from the video that has been recorded before. Finally, distributing a questionnaire to the students to gain information from another perspective. The findings showed the teacher is not the only one factor which develops and enhance students' critical thinking, but the students also contribute to encouraging each other to do the task. They helped other students to speak up and state their mind when the teacher tried to open discussion with the class. Besides, the teacher gave higher and lower order thinking skill to develop, express, and create students' mindset to think and to be active along in the classroom.

**Keywords:** *communication, classroom interaction, critical thinking*

### Sari

Para siswa dipersiapkan untuk menjadi sosok yang lebih baik dalam meningkatkan kemampuan dan keterampilan mereka secara umum dalam pembelajaran di sekolah. Kurikulum sekolah dasar di Indonesia tidak memberikan banyak opsi untuk membangun prospek yang lebih baik dalam mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris, yaitu sekitar 2x35 menit seminggu. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif. Data diperoleh dari dua pertemuan rekaman video di kelas dan observasi untuk memaparkan temuan-temuan lainnya. Sampel data diambil dari siswa kelas empat sekolah dasar. Selanjutnya, seorang guru diwawancarai untuk menggali informasi yang lebih dalam. Lalu, menyebarkan kuesioner kepada siswa untuk mendapatkan informasi dari perspektif lain. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa guru bukanlah satu-satunya faktor yang mengembangkan dan meningkatkan pemikiran kritis siswa, tetapi para siswa juga berkontribusi untuk mendorong satu sama lain untuk melakukan tugas tersebut. Mereka membantu siswa lain untuk berbicara dan menyatakan pikiran mereka ketika guru

mencoba membuka diskusi dengan kelas. Selain itu, guru memberikan keterampilan berpikir tingkat tinggi dan rendah untuk mengembangkan, mengekspresikan, dan menstimulus pemikiran para siswa untuk berpikir dan aktif secara bersama-sama di kelas.

**Kata kunci:** *komunikasi, interaksi kelas, berpikir kritis*

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### **Introduction**

Learner is one of component in the classroom beside teacher, media, facilities, etc. learners are divided into three parts according to the age; young learners, adolescent, and adult. In this present study, young learners would be the object of the research. Learners have a need for individual attention and approval from the teacher. That is why skill from the teacher to teach young learner is needed to accommodate young learners' unique characteristic especially for 10 to 12 years old learners, as follow they respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual works, they often learn indirectly rather than directly. They take information from all sides, learning from everything around them, their understanding comes not only from explanation, but also from what they see, hear, and sometimes from what they touch and interact with, they find abstract concepts such as grammar rules are difficult to grasp, they generally display an enthusiasm for learning and a curiosity about the world around them, they have a need for individual attention and approval from the teacher, they are keen to talk about themselves and respond well to learning that uses themselves and their own lives as main topics in the classroom, and they have a limited attention span; unless activities are extremely engaging they can get easily bored. (Harmer, 2007). Moreover, Scott & Ytreberg, (1991) added that young learners have a tendency to have a very short attention and concentration span.

Speaking skill is one of the most important skills in implementing language (Nunan, 1998). In Indonesia curriculum, even government does not put English as a compulsory subject in Elementary School level, but schools have to encourage learners to enhance their speaking skill in the classroom. Learners are asked to speak English more to

develop their critical thinking as well. Moreover, Ellis, (1985) also mentioned that students need the opportunity to participate in the interactions in order to develop the capacity for what has been called “Communicative” speech in second or foreign language classroom. In other word, interaction is very important in second language development. Thus, good communicative teaching must be reached by the teacher to develop learners’ critical thinking.

Teacher is not merely speak or communicate spoken language to the learners about English materials. Teacher also should give motivational power through spoken or written to learners in order to make them feel comfortable, enjoy, and relax to learn English subject each week. In addition, the parameter of enhancing students’ critical thinking in the classroom is using Bloom’s taxonomy keywords. It presents how fat the students respond to the materials or topics from the teacher by giving questions related to the LOTS and HOTS in Bloom’s taxonomy.

Clark, (2004) described that higher-order thinking is thinking that takes place in the highest levels of cognitive processing. Bloom’s Taxonomy is the most widely accepted hierarchical arrangement of this sort in education and it can be viewed as a continuum of thinking skills starting with lower knowledge-level thinking and moving eventually to evaluation-level of thinking. In the other hand, higher order thinking skill improves students’ prior knowledge and gain students’ proficiency in English subject and its lesson.

Lower order thinking skill, according to Clark (2004) is more like a brief definition or trigger tool to appeal students’ basic understanding toward particular lesson in the classroom. There are six categories of Bloom’s taxonomy; (1) knowledge/remembering is prior knowledge of a subject (LOTS) (keywords: define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, and reproduce). (2) Comprehension/understanding is being able to explain and understand the knowledge (LOTS) (keywords: classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, and paraphrase). (3) Application/applying is being able to apply understandings or knowledge (HOTS) (keywords: choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate,

schedule, sketch, solve, use, and write). (4) Analysis/analyzing is interpreting knowledge in relation to context (HOTS) (keywords: appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, and test). (5) Synthesis/evaluating is applying knowledge in a new setting (HOTS) (keywords: appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, and evaluate). (6) Evaluation/creating is evaluating and creating knowledge (HOTS) (keywords: assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, and write) (Hammond, 2007).

In brief, the present study is important because it supports significantly to the development of theory, professional, and social exposure. Theoretically, the present study increases the literature on communicative teaching method which support teacher to gain the best result in motivating young learners to achieve their speaking skill. Secondly, in professional way, this present research also covers some activities and ways of communicative teaching in the classroom to rise up young learners' critical thinking. Furthermore, through this research also, teacher can perceive some methods and strategies to become professional teacher to communicate among the young learners to increase their relationship in English subject as well. Last but not least, in terms of social exposure, the present study enlighten both teacher and young learners' awareness of the importance of communication in the classroom.

Reflecting from the theories as elaborated above, young learners tend to be more sensitive to the teacher's instruction as well. They sometimes must encourage themselves from their own motivation to speak and practice English subject all the time with or without teacher's support. Moreover, teacher also should give appropriate motivational communication with the young learners to nurture their English speaking skill. It is expected that both teacher and young learners have something in common to build some descent activities and to make synergy among them in order to set up great communicative values of nurturing young learners' critical thinking.

Furthermore, Allwright & Bailey, (1991) described classroom interaction is distinct from research that can concentrate on the inputs to the classroom (the syllabus, the teaching materials, etc.) or on the outputs from the classroom (students' test scores), for

instance. The concept of research in classroom interaction is focused on classroom language learning in many different ways, such as how the interaction among teacher-students build and develop in the classroom. The most important key to create an interactive language classroom is the initiation of interaction from the teacher. This stimulus is important in the initial stage of a classroom lesson as well as throughout the lesson. Classroom interaction may indeed be communicative, but it can easily fall into oblique chitchat and behavior without any guidance and supervise from the teacher. Yulia, (2013) mentioned that constructing LOTS and HOTS keywords in the classroom to communicate with the students. The result stated that choosing appropriate keywords to make contact and interact with the students is very essential to enrich students' critical thinking.

Moreover, to determine the successful communication between teacher and students in the classroom, Bloom's taxonomy is the parameter guidance in the teacher-students communication. Clark, (2004) added that Bloom's Taxonomy is the most widely accepted hierarchical arrangement of this sort in education and it can be viewed as a continuum of thinking skills starting with lower knowledge-level thinking and moving eventually to evaluation-level of thinking. In the other hand, higher order thinking skill improves students' prior knowledge and gain students' proficiency in English subject and its lesson. Meanwhile, lower order thinking skill more like a brief definition or trigger tool to appeal students' basic understanding toward particular lesson in the classroom.

Therefore, to accommodate those purposes, this study construct two questions to stimulate the research findings as follow, (1) what are the factors influence learners' critical thinking through teacher's communicative teaching? And (2) how is the teacher's communication skills to encourage students' critical thinking?

## **Methods**

This chapter discusses some aspects of research methodology. It consists of research methodology and data collecting strategy, which consist of videotaping a classroom interaction, observing a classroom interaction (field-note taking), interviewing the

teacher, and making questionnaire to the students regarding their opinion about their teacher.

This study is descriptive and qualitative in nature. These, by definition, involve description and analysis. The emphasis is exploring the types of strategy (the quality) of the data, that is, teacher's communicative teaching and ascertaining its relation to the learners' critical thinking.

Moreover, the procedure of data processing and analysis cover some steps, those are transcribing, categorizing, and analyzing the data. There were three data collection techniques employed for this study. First, the researcher conducted recording conversation to gain teacher and student's interaction naturally. Second, the researcher conducted interview to the teacher. The last, the researcher also makes questionnaire for the students to reach opinion about their teacher.

The researcher used video-taping as a technique for capturing natural interaction used in classroom in detail. The researcher considers this technique as a valuable source of accurate information on teacher-student interaction. The reason of using this technique is in line with Burns, (1999) who says that recording can be valuable in furnishing researchers with objective first-hand data for analyzing data of teacher and student's behavior in the classroom. In addition, some advantages gaining natural interaction techniques, there are actual wording used in real interaction, the range of formulas and strategies used, the length of response or the number of turn it takes to fulfill the function, the length of emotion that in turn qualitatively affects the tone, content, and form of linguistic performance, the number of repetitions and elaboration which occur, and the actual rate of occurrence of a speech act.

Wray, (1998) states that there are important ethical considerations when it comes to recording people, whether we ask their permission or not. In this case, the researcher recorded the interaction and conversation of fourth grade young learners in a private elementary school with permission because of some reasons; first, the recording was not done in that classroom. Second, in order to gain a good quality of recording, the

recorder should be placed appropriately, for example on teacher's desk or behind the class to cover whole class interaction. Therefore, permission from the institution is required. In addition, to get valid transcription result, the researcher listened to the recordings over and over again, so it must be well recorded.

The researcher used the observation technique in order to support the data elicited by recording that was, to identify non-verbal behavior and to make data analysis more objective. Alwasilah, (2002) states that by observing, a researcher can find implicit understanding (non-verbal behavior) and theory-in use (how the theories applied).

Beside collecting data through recording and observing the classroom interaction, then, the researcher used interview to support both. Alwasilah, (2002) also mentions that by interviewing the respondent, a researcher can get in-depth information because of some reasons, such as the researcher can explain and paraphrase the questions which cannot be understood by respondents, the researcher can give follow up questions, respondents tend to answer the question when they are asked, and respondents can tell something in the past and the future.

This study conducted the interview in order to get two purposes. First, the teacher's impression on what they have heard and seen from the tape and video, whether they will clarify, object, and complete the data. In this case, the researcher played the video or tape after the teacher has finished performing the instruction or the lesson to avoid forgetting the process itself. Second, the teacher's opinion and perception on reasons lie behind the interaction between teacher and students.

According to Kidder & Judd, (1986), there are two categories of interviews. The first is open-ended or free-response which allow the respondents to answer in a relatively unconstrained way. The second is close-ended questions, which present two or more alternatives that the respondents select the choice closest to their own position. In this case, the study applied the category that is in line with the purpose of interview. The teacher was interviewed by using free-response questions after playing the tape to get

the information about their opinion and perspective on learners' achievement and English skill from teacher's communicative teaching in the classroom.

The researcher used the questionnaire technique in order to cross check with the teacher's information from the interview technique. It has a purpose to get information from the students about their opinion to the teacher's interaction in the classroom. It consists of 15 close-questions. The study uses *bahasa* in order to avoid misunderstanding since the respondents are fourth grade students.

The criterion of naturalistic inquiry is trustworthiness. This is to test out the trustworthiness of the data. Alwasilah, (2002) adds that trustworthiness is the truth, which is resulted from the description, conclusion, interpretation and other kinds of reports.

The study was situated in a private elementary school of a fourth grade students. The population of the class was fairly diverse; composed of 25 young learners in regular education classroom having varied culture, linguistic, and special needs background. Then, to collect some more information about teaching experience, problems in conducting English in the classroom, and how to deliver material to the students and let them be critical students through her communicative teaching, moreover, this study also involves an English teacher who teaches in fourth grade level. This information below is the highlight information about the teacher.

In this research, the researcher used some steps to analyze the data, which are assembling the data, coding the data, building interpretation and reporting the outcomes. One way of handling data collected through recording is to transcribe it. This was done as pre-analysis. The researcher used this transcription since it was the main written source to be analyzed. Moreover, Burns, (1999) became data analysis processing guidance to gain information related to the enhancing students' critical thinking, as follow keeping the transcription as simple as possible, labeling the speakers using letters, numbering the lines or clauses, inserting contextual information to explain essential aspects.

Stage 1: Collecting the data collected; the transcription and observation result were collected. The initial questions that began the research provided a starting point.

Stage 2: Coding the data; the researcher applied coding by following some steps:

- 1) Distributing the result of recording and observation by labeling the speaker; teacher (T), students (Ss), and giving the different number of different students (S1, S2, S3, and so on)
- 2) Categorizing the function of utterances by considering the meaning boundary and separate them into moves
- 3) Classifying the teacher's communicative teaching who encourage or influence learners' speaking skill and achievement in the classroom.
- 4) Stage 3: Reporting the interpretations. The findings and outcomes were reported systematically using the examples from the data.

## **Results and Discussion**

This chapter presents results and discussions. This study covers two major objectives that had been pointed out on the previous chapter. This research paper is aimed at:

1. Investigating the factors of students' critical thinking through teacher's communicative teaching.
2. Examining the teacher's role to encourage students' critical thinking.

## **Results**

### *Teacher's Communicative Teaching*

Researcher has transcribed and identified teacher's communicative teaching in the classroom. In this section, there were obtained some teacher-students interaction patterns which described teacher and students' communication in order to engage students' critical thinking ability in the classroom that displayed in four transcription below:

**Transcription 1:**

T: Everybody sit down!

OK, let's sing! I will begin the song.

Some students are singing the chant at the beginning, but some students are not singing at that time.

Then, teacher asks them to repeat and sing the song all together.

T: OK. I am going to repeat again! Everybody should sing. I cannot hear your sound. Let's start!

Then, all students are singing together.

(Adapted from Yule, 1996)

**Transcription 2:**

T : Please give me some examples of good habits!

S1: Eat vegetables every day.

T : Yeah, good. Eat vegetables every day. What else?

S2 : Do homework.

T : Ok, great. Do homework. Anything else?

S3 : Clean my room.

T : Ok, very nice.

Then, the teacher writes all the good habits on the whiteboard.

(Adapted from Yule, 1996)

**Transcription 3:**

T: OK, let's continue, PRnya nanti bunda cek. Now, open your workbook page 20 activity 17.

In activity 17, you can see the table. In the table, there are several good habits and bad habits.

What is good habits?

Ss: Kebiasaan baik.

T : Good. Kebiasaan baik. Can you make sentence of good habits?

Some students are raising their hands to share their sentence of good habit. The teacher points out several students.

(Adapted from Yule, 1996)

**Transcription 4:**

After all have finished, teacher along with the students answer the exercise together. Then teacher continues the lesson.

T: Let's continue to the activity nineteen. Do you still remember sequence words?

Ss: First, second, ...

T : And then, what else? Could you explore more?

Ss: Next, after that ...

T : very good. Sequence word itu selalu diawali dengan kata first dan diakhiri dengan kata finally.

(Adapted from Yule, 1996)

*Teacher-students interaction*

Basically, there should be a good communication between teacher and students in the classroom. In this modern era and technology, teachers are not the only one source of information. Nowadays, students have to work individually and in group to do some exercises, make experiments, and search for additional information from webpage in the internet. The evidence below showed that the teacher and students interaction in the classroom by presenting a sing a song session as a part of building a good rapport and communication among teacher and students.

**Transcription 5:**

T: Do we have any homework?

Ss: Yes.

T: Who didn't do homework?

Ss: tidak ada bunda. No

T: Everybody sit down!

OK, let's sing! I will begin the song.

Some students are singing the chant at the beginning, but some students are not singing at that time.

Then, teacher asks them to repeat and sing the song all together.

T: OK. I am going to repeat again! Everybody should sing. I cannot hear your sound. Let's start!

Then, all students are singing together.

(Adapted from Yule, 1996)

**Discussion**

*Factors influence learners' critical thinking through teacher's communicative teaching.*

The research findings above have showed various patterns of teacher-students interaction in the classroom. The teacher have made several strategies to enhance students' critical thinking ability by repeating and remembering the students about particular and important events or information so that the students do not miss the information. Moreover, the students are coming from different background knowledge, culture, language proficiency and skills. Therefore, the teacher should say and repeat the information again as showed in the transcription 1.

T: Everybody sit down!

OK, let's sing! I will begin the song.

Some students are singing the chant at the beginning, but some students are not singing at that time. **Then, teacher asks them to repeat and sing the song all together.**

T: OK. I am going to repeat again! Everybody should sing. I cannot hear your sound. Let's start!

The transcription 2 until 4 showed that the teacher engaged students' awareness and cognitive skill by making communication through LOTS and HOTS. In this part, the teacher combined the conversation by making questions based on the basic of LOTS and HOTS keywords concept. It is important to make the students follow and understand the instruction that has given by the teacher. In the transcription 2 for instance, the teacher repeated the part of good habits in order to recall and to remind other students to pay attention more on their friends' idea. Therefore, the teacher repeated students' idea to catch the others' understanding not only by listening, but also by writing it on the whiteboard. This is in line with Nunan (1998) in his research that it is important to teacher to set some communication strategies to the learners in order to

make the teaching learning process more comfortable and smooth among them that showed in the evidence below.

T : Yeah, good. Eat vegetables every day. **What else?**  
S2 : Do homework.  
T : Ok, great. Do homework. **Anything else?**  
S3 : Clean my room.

In this sense, teacher tended to engage students with some particular habits or imperatives related to the activities at home. The teacher kept asking the students to stimulate them to give ideas and opinion about home activities.

Beside repeating and combining between spoken and written language teaching, teacher also implemented some questions which coded as higher order thinking skill (HOTS) and lower order thinking skill (LOTS) to support and enhance students' critical thinking. Some evidences below presented teacher's questions to comprehend critical thinking to the students.

In activity 17, you can see the table. In the table, there are several good habits and bad habits.  
**What is good habits? (Analyzing (HOTS))**  
Ss: Kebiasaan baik.  
T : Good. Kebiasaan baik. **Can you make sentence of good habits? (Creating (HOTS))**

And occur also in transcription 4

T: Let's continue to the activity 19. **Do you still remember sequence words? (Remembering (LOTS))**  
Ss: First, second, ...  
T : And then, **what else? Could you explore more? (Creating (HOTS))**  
Ss: Next, after that ...

The patterns above described that the teacher intension was to make the students engage with the topic that has given earlier in the beginning of the class. The teacher wanted the students comprehend the material step by step one after another. The teacher has chosen the questions carefully because the teacher did not want to lose the students' determination in understanding and comprehending the topic given. Furthermore, the students are young learners that they respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual works and their understanding comes not only from explanation, but also from what they see, hear, and sometimes from what they touch and interact with (Harmer, 2007). It is important for the teacher not only to stay in the line of the topic, but also to give some fun activities or challenges to make the students focus and concentrate on the material, because students have short attention and concentration

(Scott & Ytreberg, 1991). Therefore, the teacher's strategy to create challenging questions of LOTS and HOTS to stimulate and make the students keep thinking to answer and figure the teacher's questions. Yulia, (2013) has mentioned that LOTS and HOTS in Bloom's taxonomy has played its role to motivate and enhance the students to keep on their curiosity and eager to ask more and demand more information from their teacher in the classroom. Choosing suitable topics, questions, and statements related to the LOTS and HOTS keywords to stimulate the students to be more active in the classroom.

*Teacher's role to encourage students' critical thinking.*

This research finding, the researcher wanted to describe teacher's role to encourage student's critical thinking. Since teacher's way of teaching contributes to the learning process in the classroom, many conferences and training put emphasis on how teachers put themselves to teach and give exposure to their students as well as their teaching approach, method, and strategy to applied in the classroom. The researcher has gained some information to support research statement by collecting information from questionnaire and interviewing the teacher.

Around fifteen questionnaire items have been distributed and resulted. The researcher takes some motivational aspects from the questionnaire items which indicate how teacher's effect on students' critical thinking and achievement in the classroom. The results specify that from 25 respondents, 17 respondents or about 68% have chosen that teacher sometimes gives direct compliment in learning process. Then, about 12 respondents or 48%, have selected that teacher sometimes gives them motivation in words, gestures, or even written form. The impact are most of the respondents responded very well. About 14 respondents or 56% and 17 respondents or 68% show that respondents always feel enthusiasm when do homework, tasks, peer-group discussion, and quizzes. Then, they always encourage themselves to communicate and speak with English to their teacher in the classroom.

Moreover, the interview information also support respondents' questionnaire result that the teacher uses English language in the classroom and she sometimes gives

compliment to the students who has made correct answers or even tried to answer the questions. Then, the teacher also picks interesting and meaningful strategies to avoid boredom to the students. So, the teacher can gain students' attention easily by starting with singing along and inserting some games in the middle of the lesson. Moreover, the students can express their feeling and use the energy from teacher's interesting teaching strategies and motivation to them.

### **Conclusion & recommendation**

In conclusion, the teacher's power of communication contributes to the interaction with the students in the classroom. The students become more active with the teacher's questions which have been designed to enhance student's critical thinking. LOTS and HOTS cognitive levels have been implemented very well. Even though, some students confused with some parts of materials, but that situation made the students interacted with other students and the teacher as well. The discussion developed when the teacher asked the students about interesting related to the topic. Some students responded to the questions and made a simple statement in front of their friends. The teacher's activeness in making communication with the students enhances students' critical thinking in the classroom. In addition, the students' motivation is raised because the teacher allowed them to speak freely and shared their ideas without any hesitation. It is better to do another research in different point of view, such as developing students' critical thinking by using technology or ICT based. It will support to the modern teaching in primary and secondary school because students who have a critical thinking ability can be able to determine and measure the information come from social media, classmates, mass media, and etc. Additionally, technology can be also a teaching aid to develop students' critical thinking easily.

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