

**ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN READING NEWS
ARTICLE AT PGRI DELTA SIDOARJO UNIVERSITY**

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Abstract

This study aims to explore how English Department students at PGRI Delta Sidoarjo University utilize critical thinking skills to comprehend and draw conclusions from news articles. It also investigates the strategies students employ to enhance their critical thinking abilities when interpreting information presented in news texts. Using a qualitative descriptive. Data are collected through questionnaires and interview with final semester students. The findings indicate that although students are generally aware of the importance of critical thinking, their ability to apply it remains at a low level. Many students are able to identify main ideas and distinguish between facts and opinions yet they often struggle with deeper levels of analysis such as recognizing bias or evaluating the reliability of sources. To strengthen their critical thinking, students rarely report using various strategies including verifying information discussing news with peers, and reflecting on the content before forming conclusions. These findings highlight the need for pedagogical approaches that more effectively foster students' analytical reading skills particularly within the context of media literacy

Key words: Critical Thinking Skills, Reading, News article

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana mahasiswa jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas PGRI Delta Sidoarjo menggunakan keterampilan berpikir kritis untuk memahami dan menarik kesimpulan dari artikel berita. Penelitian ini juga mengkaji strategi-strategi yang digunakan mahasiswa untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berpikir kritis mereka dalam menafsirkan informasi yang disajikan dalam teks berita. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan wawancara dengan mahasiswa semester akhir. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun mahasiswa umumnya menyadari pentingnya berpikir kritis, kemampuan mereka dalam menerapkannya masih berada pada tingkat rendah. Mahasiswa mampu mengidentifikasi gagasan utama dan membedakan antara fakta dan opini, namun mereka sering mengalami kesulitan dalam melakukan analisis yang lebih mendalam, seperti mengenali bias atau mengevaluasi kredibilitas sumber. Untuk memperkuat berpikir kritis mereka, mahasiswa melaporkan jarang berbagai strategi, termasuk memverifikasi informasi, berdiskusi dengan teman sebaya, dan merefleksikan isi berita sebelum menarik kesimpulan. Temuan ini menekankan perlunya pendekatan pedagogis yang lebih efektif dalam mengembangkan keterampilan membaca analitis mahasiswa, terutama dalam konteks literasi media.

Kata kunci: Keterampilan Berpikir Kritis, Membaca, Artikel Berita

A. INTRODUCTION

Critical thinking skills refer to the ability to analyze facts before making judgments or decisions. It involves the process of asking, analyzing, interpreting, evaluating, and making judgments about what is read, heard, said, or written. According to Castano (2023), critical thinking skills include the ability to describe, comprehend, interact, interpret, analyze, deduce, and self-monitor. In the context of critical thinking skills, it is one

of the important skills that university student must have in digital era because it is needed in reading and analyzing news that is often presented in various forms, so they need to understand in critical thinking about news or information. Using critical thinking effectively in life helps one constructs a world view that is increasingly correct,

Jason (2022). Critical thinking is not only about how to respond by interpreting, evaluating, and analyzing facts and

information, but also involve thinking using the 5W+1H approach.

University students must think what is happening or what is being discussed, who gets involved in a problem or situation, when is used to understand problem or situation that occurs, where a problem or situation occurs, why a problem or situation occurs, how the students understand the problem.

How is used to understand how a problem or situation can be addressed or resolved. Providing relevant and correct answers to a question can describe a person's reading comprehension skills because to answer a question, a person needs semantic skills to understand the meaning of the question word and syntactic skills to comprehend the entire question. (Azmi & Linda 2024 in Sanders & Erickson, (2018).

In this study, critical thinking skills demonstrate a strong positive correlation with the ability to think critically, which involves analyzing facts, evidence, observations, and available arguments to form judgments through the application of rational, skeptical, and objective reasoning. Therefore, critical thinking skills are essential for university students, particularly in the context of reading news and engaging with current events. students who are lack of critical thinking are

provoked by the content of media. According to Solari (2014) in Wadihah and Fauzi (2021), "reading comprehension refers to a person's understanding of the information they read."

Reading is a thinking process that enables the reader to apply what they already know, also known as prior knowledge. Ahmad (2019), argued that reading habits are an essential and important aspect of creating a literate society. It shapes the personality of an individual and helps them develop proper thinking methods and generate new ideas. There are various forms of reading materials, such as available texts, including short tales, novels, biographies, encyclopedias, blogs, websites, articles, and newspapers. One of these is newspapers. Based on the knowledge and forms of news the author of this study examines a specific form of reading namely news reading and discovers that the phenomenon of students being less critical when reading news remains largely unexplored. Moreover, reading news need critical thinking skills involve several aspects such a content analysis source evaluation and reflection on personal prejudice, students who have critical thinking skills tend to be more careful in receiving information and are able to use various strategies to identify the truth of

news article. According to Machete & Turpin (2020), While most students can conduct a Google search for information, many struggle to identify the author or credibility of online sources. Students nowadays additionally lack a desire to read, particularly news article. However, it is crucial to other students to learn and think critically about news article. These days, viewing news is more engaging than reading articles. However, not all students have the ability to think critically when reading or watching some news many students are tend to accept news passively without analyzing the news more deeply this often happens to student who are involved in criminal acts because the news received by students are less valid but contains elements of criticism especially political issues.

According to Naz (2022), students are spending more time on digital media, playing with phones, and sending nonstop messages all for the sake of entertainment and enjoyment but not for reading news article Not only that, students are also sometimes easily provoked so that they become students are demonstration related to political issues. Students' lack of interest in reading news articles is influenced by several factors, including the rise of video-based news programs, which

reduce their motivation to engage with written texts.

According to Karim (2024), To battle fake news students must have strong critical thinking skills and digital information and news media have a huge influence on how people think. The causes that make critical thinking is less interest to learn and less knowledge are accepting the news at glance, habit of assuming which sometimes hinders students in developing their thought patterns, influencing by feelings. They sometimes do not think rationally and depend on the real live of accessing technology without verifying their understanding of something. Based on the background above the researcher choose this title "analysis on final semester english department students' critical thinking skills in reading news article at PGRI delta sidoarjo university".

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter provides the research technique, which acts as the foundation for the systematic implementation of the research. This chapter describes the research design, subject source of data and data, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis used to meet the research objectives.

A. Research Design

According to Mukhtar (2013: 10), the qualitative descriptive research method is a method used by researchers to discover knowledge or theories in research at a specific time. In another study said that, the main objective of qualitative research is to clarify social phenomena or symptoms by placing more emphasis on a complete picture of the phenomenon being studied rather than breaking it down into interrelated variable Rahardjo (2010). This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach which aims to analyze students critical thinking skill reading in about news. According to Kriyantono (2020), descriptive qualitative research is that emphasize the dept of data rather than the breadth of data. This approach was chosen because it allows to understand and describe phenomena in dept based on the analysis.

B. Subject

In conducting research, it is critical to recruit persons who will engage in the study. The researcher employes purposeful questioning to choose research participants. In purposive questioning, the researcher is purposely subjective in choosing those respondents and how they may effect the research as a manner of checking validity Harding (2013). The

subject of this study is of final semester student's English department at university PGRI delta Sidoarjo. These 14 students are selected because they are presumed to have sufficient linguistic proficiency and academic experience to engage in critical reading.

C. Source of Data and Data

Data sources for qualitative research can include documentation, interviews, observations, video records, and physical objects Creswell (2012). Data of this research is gathered from the participant and sources. The primary data are collected through student responses to a questionnaire, while supporting data are obtained from classroom-based semi-structured interviews and field notes. Selected articles used as reading material for interview and questionnaire. These will be drawn from reputable online news platforms to ensure credibility and relevance

D. Instrument

1. Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a tool or method for collecting data in a study. According to Sukardi (2023), a questionnaire is a collection of questions or statements that respondents must answer. A research questionnaire can be defined as a data collection tool consisting of a series of questions or items that are used to collect

information from respondents and thus learn about their knowledge, opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior and informed by a positivist philosophy of the natural sciences that consider methods mainly as a set of rules for the production of knowledge questionnaires are frequently used instrumentally as a standardized and standardizing tool to ask a set of questions to participants. Outside of such a positivist philosophy, questionnaires can be seen as an encounter between the researcher and the researched, where knowledge is not simply gathered but negotiated through a distinct form of communication that is the questionnaire.

The data from survey questionnaires will consist of 14 students from final semester English department. Containing questions how students think critically about reading news article and to identify the factors that influence English students critical thinking skills. A questionnaire can be used for getting information on students of their critical thinking while reading news article. The questions should inquire on the cognitive processes involved in how students think critically about reading news article what is the factors that influence English students critical thinking skills.

Tabel 1. Score questionnaire

No	Questions	Score
1.	Always	5
2.	Often	4
3.	sometimes	3
4	Rarely	2
5.	Never	1

Amount of the respondent's answer x 100 : The numbers of student

According to Sugiyono (2016), the Likert scale is used to assess an individual or group's attitudes, views, and perceptions of social phenomena. Using the Likert scale, the variable to be measured is divided into variable indicators. With a Likert scale, the variable to be measured is divided into variable indicators. The indicators are then utilized as a starting point for developing instrument items, which can take the form of statement or question. The responses to each item of the instrument using the Likert scale range from very positive to very negative

2. Interview

According to Pujileksono (2015), qualitative data collection method involving direct, verbal interactions between the researcher and individual participants. This approach entails meeting

interviews where the researcher poses questions, and the participant provides responses. The primary objective is to obtain detailed and comprehensive information directly from the source, facilitating a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

In this study the researcher uses the interview method semi structured interview. This approach is selected to avoid questions that may elicit simple "yes" or "no" responses, thereby encouraging participants to provide more comprehensive and relevant answers.

E. Data collection Procedure

First, the researcher distributes the questionnaire physically or through online platforms for instrument preparation. the data collection uses questionnaire developed to assess students critical thinking skills in reading news article. The questionnaire is given out to participant directly (offline) through online platforms. The given participants specific instructions about how they should fill out the questionnaire, explain the purpose of the study, as well as preserve the confidentiality of the data they participate.

Second, interview procedure this study utilizes semi structured interviews to gather data. This method is chosen to prevent yes or no responses and to encourage participants to provide detailed

and relevant answers. An interview guide with prepare questions ensures consistency across all interviews. The participants are eighth semester students English department. The main goal of the interviews is to explore and collect data on students' perspectives regarding critical thinking in reading news articles. Each student reads chosen news article that contains specific claims or opinions. After reading, they note their immediate reactions and evaluations of the article's content. This process aims to observe their initial ability to identify key information and assess the credibility of the news source.

These questions are designed to assess the students' critical thinking skills, including their understanding, analytical abilities and capacity to draw conclusions. The interviews also explore the challenges students face when applying critical thinking skills to reading news article and the strategies they use to comprehend and interpret news content. After the interviews the researcher analyzes the responses to identify patterns in the participants' critical thinking abilities, focusing on their ability for formulating critical questions, the obstacles encountered during article analysis, and their awareness of potential biases or specific viewpoints within the articles.

F. Data Analysis

According to Kaelan (2012:129), data analysis techniques refer to the systematic process of organizing and examining data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This process involves categorizing data, interpreting it, selecting relevant aspects, and drawing conclusions to facilitate comprehension for both the researcher and others. In qualitative research, data analysis occurs in three stages before the comment of field research, during the research process, and after its completion. Prior to entering the research site, the researcher must prepare preliminary or secondary data to establish the research focus. During the study, data analysis is conducted on each interviewee, and conclusions are drawn based on the collected information. If the data is found to be insufficiently valid, the researcher may refine the questioning process until credible data is obtained.

This research gathers data through a questionnaire utilizing a five points likert scale to evaluate students' critical thinking skills when interpreting news articles. The scale ranges from Always (5) to Never (1), with each response assigned a corresponding numerical value. A descriptive analysis follows calculating the frequency and percentage of each response

option. Total scores for each questionnaire item are then computed by summing the individual scores from all participants. These totals are compared against the maximum possible scores to ascertain the general tendencies in students' critical thinking abilities.

In addition to the questionnaire, the study employs semi structured interviews to delve deeper into how English major students apply critical thinking when reading news articles. These interviews aim to uncover the challenges students face in this context and the strategies they adopt to enhance their critical thinking skills. The qualitative data obtained are analyzed by identifying recurring themes within the interview transcripts. This process involves coding responses, grouping similar themes, and interpreting the underlying meanings, providing richer insights into students' attitudes and perceptions that may not be evident from the questionnaire. By integrating findings from both the questionnaire and the interviews, the research offers a comprehensive understanding of how English department students engage in critical thinking while reading news articles

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After the background of the study, the supporting theories, and the research methods employed, this chapter presented the findings and discussion of the research. The results were explained based on the data gathered from interviews and questionnaires. The discussion in this chapter was derived from the analysis of data collected through these instruments, which provided the necessary information for the research.

a. Finding

The finding data are taken from questionnaire and interview as follows:

1. Identify the main arguments

The students who can identify the main arguments is only 36%. It can be conducted that students are still lacking in critical thinking. To strengthen the qualitative data, the results of in-depth interviews (5 students) are they usually understand the main topic from the title and first paragraph, but sometimes they feel unsure when the language is difficult.

2. News article is fake than news on Tv

The student who can think that news article is fake only 50%. It can be conducted that half of students was medium in critical thinking when

present information news article. To strengthen the qualitative data, the results of in-dept interview (5 students) are They evaluate fake news by check the credibility of the article and the presence of evidence, and whether the information can be verified with other sources.

3. Asking the unclear information presented the news article

The students who ask information unclear is 50% it can be conducted that the half of the students still read and ask information especially information unclear. To strengthen the qualitative data the results of

in-depth interview are (7 students) were

They Sometimes evaluate the information and they can check that information in another channel

4. Challenging to evaluate the credibility of a news source

Based on the questionnaire results, 50% of the students reported that they often found it difficult to evaluate the credibility of a news source. This finding indicates that half of the students is reliable. To strengthen the qualitative data, the results of in-dept interviews are they rarely check the credibility of the news article and the information

5. Struggling to differentiate between factual information and opinions in a news article

The results of the questionnaire revealed that 28% of the students reported *sometimes* when asked about their difficulty in distinguishing between factual statements and personal opinions in news articles. To strengthen the qualitative data the result of in-depth interviews 4 students are some challenges include like identifying subtle bias, separating fact from opinions, and avoiding personal emotional reactions. At times, they find it challenging to distinguish between factual content and the author's personal opinions within a news article. For instance, when an article includes emotional or persuasive wording, they become uncertain whether it is presenting actual facts or attempting to shape the reader's perspective. they tend to look for supporting data or direct quotations to help clarify the content, but not all articles offer such clear evidence. As a result, when the language is subtly framed, identifying the difference becomes more difficult

6. The accuracy of news article as the lackage of knowledge or confidence

The results of the questionnaire revealed that 28% of the students reported

sometimes their uncertainty about the accuracy of news articles was due to a lack of knowledge or confidence. To strengthen the qualitative data the result of in-depth interviews (4 students) are they sometimes read the article without thinking again.

7. Diverse viewpoints to challenge understanding of a news article

The results showed that 43% reported *sometimes* students asked about seeking different perspectives to deepen their understanding of a news article. To strengthen the qualitative data the result of in-depth interviews are (6 students) they only the read the article without finding diverse viewpoint”

8. Learning from news articles to real situations or academic discussions

The students sometimes learn from news articles to real situations or academic discussions is 36% . To strengthen the qualitative data the result of in-depth interviews are (5 students) it depends on the topic. For example, if the article discuss about Kpop they just read, they are not really learn from those article

9. Discussing the topic the news topic with friend

The students who never discuss the news topic with their friends are 43%.

To strengthen the qualitative data the result of in-depth interviews (6 Students) are they never really discuss the news they read with their friends

10. understand the meaning of a news article

The students sometimes understand the meaning of a news article is 50%. To strengthen the qualitative data the results of in-depth interviews (6 Students) are they check the evidence specificale and relevantly. And consider whether the evidence directly supports the claim or just loosely related

b. Discussion

From the findings above the researcher wants to discuss them based on five indicators of critical thinking skill

1. Identifying the main information in the news. The findings indicate that students typically grasp the main idea of a news article from the title although their understanding became less certain when the language used in the article is complex or unfamiliarThis, response suggests that th e respondent's comprehension reliant on su

rface level with limited engagement in deee
r analysis.Their language ability to identify

central information appears to be hindered by difficulties which impact their overall c
ritical reading. It is in line with the opinion of Siti Aisyah, Ratna S. S. A., and Imas E. W. (2019) stated critical thinking skills are essential in learning chemistry, as some of the subject matter is contextual, while the level of critical thinking in Indonesia remains relatively low. In another theory according to Anwar et al., (2020) stated students' critical thinking and creative thinking skills are still not optimal. This is reinforced by the results of previous research related to the measurement of students' critical thinking skills which stated that it was still relatively low.

On the other hand, Lestari (2024), the culture of laziness in thinking among students is increasing as they are avoiding in-depth investigation of the content they read. Many students like to get quick and easy knowledge that does not demand critical thinking. It has the potential to lead to a restricted vision and a lack of readiness to face difficult challenges in the future.

2. Evaluating the reliability of news sources

The findings show that the students sometimes evaluate and verify the credibility of information presented in news articles. They assess the content by analyzing the reliability of the source, identifying supporting evidence, and cross-checking it with credible external references and compare to other information. Several factors might have contributed to this difficulty, such as a lack of sufficient skills or knowledge to critically assess sources, the overwhelming presence of online news lacking transparent authorship or publication credentials, the use of persuasive or sensational language that could mislead readers into believing the information is trustworthy, limited access to alternative sources for verification.

This result suggests that the respondents' critical thinking skills particularly in assessing the credibility of information is still developing. In the context of reading news articles in English, it reflects that students have not yet fully there is clear need that digital and media literacy skills.

Therefore, there was a clear need for targeted instructional support that focused on improving students' ability to evaluate news credibility. Such instruction might include identifying bias, verifying facts through reliable sources, and

understanding the characteristics of trustworthy journalism. This respondent demonstrates a more developed level of critical reading. Their method reflects an understanding of the significance of evaluating sources and information.

According to Paul R. Elder in Elmansy (2022), the critical thinking framework is divided into three stages: observing the situation to develop logical knowledge, asking questions, to analyze and evaluate evidence, and identifying answers to questions that can be structured into a solution. In addition, another study Wentworth, Plummer, & Swan (2021), critical thinking entails asking questions describing an issue, reviewing evidence, analyzing assumptions and biases, avoiding emotional reasoning, avoiding oversimplification, considering multiple interpretations, and tolerating ambiguity.

3. Detecting bias or hidden opinions in the news

The findings show that the students sometimes find difficulty to determine whether the author maintains objectivity or is subtly embedding personal opinions within the article. The students inform that unless the bias is clearly apparent, they tend to accept the information without question. This response demonstrates a

limited understanding of media bias and suggests a habit of engaging with news content superficially, without thoroughly analyzing the wording or underlying purpose of the text.

It is supported by the theory of Pew (2022), in accordance with the findings a considerable percentage of people find it difficult to concentrate on long articles or books due to the proliferation of digital content and they sometimes limited understanding the bias. Many respondents stated that they favoret shorter, more digestible pieces of information, which may limit their capacity to interact with complex materials. According to Purnawan (2024), the ease of access to information via the internet leads students to use instant sources without doing verification or critical evaluation. According to the theory of, Mossberger, K. Tolbert, C. J., and Stansbury, (2003) in Pew (2021), There factor that limits students understanding the bias the gap limits ability to access online news, educational content, and academic papers, which are becoming more available exclusively in digital formats difficult to think logical conclusions based on the content of the news

4. Drawing logical conclusions based on the content of the news

The findings show that the students are able to make logical conclusions from the news articles they read. This outcome suggests that they have attained a moderate degree of critical thinking especially in analyzing information and constructing conclusions based on factual content. They are sometimes likely capable of identifying key arguments, recognizing informational patterns and linking ideas to form coherent interpretations. This is a positive indicator, as it shows that they engage actively with the news applying analytical reasoning rather than consuming information passive. This result indicated that some students occasionally relate the content they read in the news to practical experiences or classroom discussions though this practice is not yet consistent. Their irregular use of news knowledge in real or academic contexts reflect an emerging level of critical application suggesting that while they understand the value of news-based learning it is not yet fully integrated into their daily thinking. Therefore, the data show that students will benefit from further support to develop the habit of applying news content more regularly and meaningfully in both academic and everyday settings

It is in accordance with Xiaoqing (2024), cognitive reading strategies refer to a

series of mental processes and techniques used by readers to understand and retain written information. Moreover, theory by Shamboul (2022), Students with good critical thinking skills know how to think clearly and systematicall and can identifying key arguments, and recognizing informational patterns and linking ideas to form coherent interpretations. According to Noji (2023), however in now days of and fake news we can't essential accept that observing and perusing the news implies learning actualities approximately the world.

5. Providing critical arguments or responses to the news

The findings show that the students are usually identify key points by looking for the main ideas the headline, introduction, and conclusion. This approach reflects a method reading habit and suggests that the respondent has develop a practical strategy for understanding key information with a news article. It shows that the students have understood even though not completely.

According to, Paige & Ziglari (2024), when readers interact critically with texts by analyzing arguments and evaluating evidence they increase they are overall understanding the information. Moreover, According to Pumpachart, T., &

Tiangtrong, P (2024) metacognitive strategies has emerged as a novel approach to enhance critical reading skills. This method encourages active exploration and problem-solving, promoting self-awareness and regulation of cognitive processes among students. The combination of these approaches aims to create a comprehensive instructional strategy that addresses the complexities of critical reading beside that according to Le (2023), the ability to critically analyse and analyse information is of most importance in today's information rich society where distinguishing between true and misleading information is vital. According to Le (2023), the ability to critically analyse and analyse information is of most importance in today's information rich society where distinguishing between true and misleading information is vital. Therefore, students should understand more providing critical arguments or responses to the news. According to the theory of Goodsett (2020), that critical thinking is an intellectual process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, or evaluating various pieces of information obtained from observation, experience, and reflection, where the outcomes of this process serve as the basis for action.

C. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

D. REFERENCES

- Based on the analysis of both questionnaire data and interview responses, it proves that students belong to generally a moderate to low level of critical thinking in their engagement with news articles. The findings reveal that many students have not yet fully developed the ability to read analytically or to evaluate information in a structured and reflective manner. This is particularly visible in their inconsistent application of skills such as identifying bias, verifying sources, or drawing logical conclusions from the text.
- Furthermore, the questionnaire results, which are predominantly categorized under sometimes reinforced this observation. The interview findings also highlight similar tendencies, with many students admitting that they rarely ask the accuracy, purpose, or structure of the news content they consume. These patterns indicate that while there are signs of emerging critical thinking, most students still require further guidance and instruction to consistently apply these skills during news reading activity.
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