

Teacher's Strategy Using Environmental Media as a Learning Source in Improving Critical Thinking of Elementary School Students

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Abstract. This research departs from the declining tendency of critical thinking in elementary school students. Starting from the problem of limited media and children's learning resources, teachers use various materials in the surrounding environment as media and sources for the continuity of teaching and learning activities. The purpose of this study is to uncover the teacher's strategy of using environmental media in improving critical thinking of elementary school students. The approach used in the research is quantitative with survey methods related to the use of the surrounding environment as a source of learning and critical thinking skills. Research data obtained online using google form media. In this study, the number of respondents who became the sample in this study were 219 elementary school teachers spread across the West Bandung Regency area. The instrument used in this research is a questionnaire regarding the area of using environmental media as a learning resource and critical thinking area. The results showed that the application of critical thinking to students has often been done by teachers through environmental media as a learning resource with an average score of 41.9%. In addition, the research indicates that there are some teachers who have never developed critical thinking towards their students with a percentage of 1.69%. This makes it necessary to carry out alternative activities as an improvement effort through the teacher's strategy of using environmental media as a learning resource in improving critical thinking of elementary school students.

Keywords: Teacher Strategy, Environmental Media, Learning Resources, Critical Thinking, Elementary School.

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INTRODUCTION ~ In the life of the 21st century which is the era of information and technology, critical thinking skills are very necessary. To deal with future global changes and demands, education needs to shape students to master 21st century skills consisting of critical thinking and problem solving, creative and innovative skills, communication and collaboration (Astutik, 2021). In learning activities, critical thinking skills are needed for students. The speed and effectiveness of students in responding to changes is a must, so that flexible intellectual skills are needed, the ability to analyze information, and integrate various sources of knowledge in problems solving. In order

to produce graduates who can face global competition, learning 21st century skills is a must for students. 21st century skills which consist of creative thinking skills, critical thinking and problem solving, communicating, and collaborating or known as 4C must be possessed by students at Indonesia as a feature of 21st century learning (Zakaria, 2021). The importance of learning skills in the 21st century as a demand for human resource development can be done by updating the quality of learning and also the concept of learning. With the principle that student-centered learning is collaborative, contextual, critical thinking and integrated with the community

(Mardhiyah, 2021). Students with high critical thinking skills will be able to review the information provided based on the knowledge they already have so that they can choose the information they receive (Prasetyo, 2021).

Given that elementary school age children do not yet have maturity in thinking, children have limitations in sorting and choosing something positive or negative and which has a good or bad impact. The formal operational phase (11-12 years and over) is the phase where the child can think about something that will or might happen (hypothesis) and something is abstract. In this phase, children can think critically and think high-level (Bujuri, 2018). According to Piaget (Waseso, 2018) a person's behavior is always based on cognition, which is an act to recognize or think about the conditions in which a behavior occurs. Indirectly, the child's personality is formed through a learning process that involves complex thinking processes and is a mental event that can later encourage attitudes and behavior. Without physical and tangible objects in front of them, children at the concrete operational stage still have great difficulty in completing their logical tasks (Nuryati, 2021).

In fact, there are still many elementary school students who do not have the ability to think critically. This is caused by students' belief in result orientation and not based on process. In line with this, Komalasari (2021) said that in classroom learning, especially social studies, students' critical thinking is still not honed. Memorizing and remembering what is in the book becomes a routine for learning in class. The habit of memorizing subject matter to achieve high grades is

one of the factors for the low critical thinking ability of students. Students do not use their thinking to be able to come up with creative ideas or ideas that are relevant to ongoing learning activities to be able to answer and solve problems. The fact that often happens is that the mastery of the material by students is still relatively low and needs to be developed. The low activity of students during the learning process causes less critical thinking skills (Rahmadina, 2021). According to Fuad, et al. (Putri, 2021) that the critical thinking ability of Indonesian students is low, marked by the inability of students to analyze a problem and the inability of students to conclude a problem well. Reinforced by Prameswari's statement (Komalasari, 2021) that there are still many students who are still not honed in critical thinking because teachers have not instilled learning that can trigger students' critical thinking during learning.

Many factors cause Indonesian students to lose their intellectual power, but the most obvious and significant is that Indonesian students tend to learn using methods that do not foster higher order thinking skills (Agustin, 2021). In order for students' critical thinking skills to develop optimally, it is important for a teacher to understand and improve his abilities in order to make interesting learning and optimize the abilities of his students (Rahmadina, 2021). Students' critical thinking skills are still lacking or low because students are not used to being trained in indicators of ability in critical thinking, there is still a lack of learning that is applied in empowering students' ability to think critically (Magdalena, 2021).

Apart from the use of conventional methods, teachers have not maximally utilized the learning media available in schools, one of them is the use of the natural environment as a source and learning media that has not been done much. Teachers in learning planning have not developed learning materials that are related to the use of the surrounding natural environment (Lamasai, 2017). In the learning process, teachers have not provided many opportunities for students to actively participate in finding learning resources that can be utilized so as to increase learning activities and can enrich students' insights. This is because the teacher thinks that it is easier to convey learning by using methods in the classroom and does not use a lot of time, even though the use of monotonous and unvarying methods can make students feel bored, so that it can affect their activities in the learning process.

The existence of learning media is vital in teaching and learning activities. Currently, learning in the classroom in the traditional way is considered less attractive to students. So that the existence of diverse learning media is expected to be able to help students better understand what is being studied and learning media can also create an increasingly efficient learning in research (Naibaho, 2019). Hidayat (2021) in his article concludes that one of the main functions of learning media is as a teaching aid that also influences the climate, conditions, and learning environment that is organized and created by the teacher. One solution to increase the effectiveness of learning that involves students actively is to apply learning outside the classroom with the concept of playing while learning (Eli,

2020). Because it is related to the senses of hearing and sight, learning media is a means that can help the learning process. In the use of learning media, it can help students achieve learning goals and can help students understand something abstract to become more concrete (Romi, 2021).

Learning media and learning resources are said to be sufficient and adequate for students if the two components can be used by students alternately according to the number of students in an institution (Dewi, 2021). However, the existence of learning media in each school is not evenly distributed. The learning media procurement assistance program has not touched all schools, so that in teaching and learning activities teachers must be good at managing and utilizing existing media in the surrounding environment. Untari (2017) in his research concluded that 1) the media problems found in elementary schools throughout the city of Blitar include the media that supports learning the 2013 curriculum is incomplete, special media storage space is not available so that many media are damaged, lost and not maintained, Media that is not all needed in learning activities are available so that teachers make their own media, the factor of teachers who find it difficult to use media due to limited insight in its use, and 2) the use of media in Blitar city elementary schools, has not been maximized due to limited media in each school. In general, the use of media is carried out by teachers in Blitar City by using mass media or groups in front of the class. Some teachers have used environmental media and used goods in learning (Untari 2017).

Teaching and learning process activities are one indicator of the success of an education. Learning is a complex student action and behavior. As an action, learning is only experienced by the students themselves. The learning process occurs because students get something that is in the surrounding environment. Human and natural environment are two elements that affect each other (Agustin, 2021). In education, there is a lot to do with real sciences and concepts that are often found in the surrounding environment, so that in learning it is necessary to go into the environment to directly observe environmental phenomena and problems that occur. Through the environment as a learning resource, it is expected to provide a different and fun atmosphere and provide new experiences for students. Through the environment, it is hoped that students can learn from what they see, feel and what they find in the environment, so that learning will be more meaningful. Understanding of a concept through learning in the environment will have the nature of being able to last longer (Sembiring, 2021). This is in line with the results of research conducted by Bisik (2021) that there is a significant effect of using environmental media as a learning resource on the learning outcomes of third grade students in science subjects at the Inpres Sikuman 3 Elementary School, Kupang City. The use of learning resources in learning can improve student learning outcomes, because in the learning process the delivery of material to students will be faster and easier to understand (Andesta, 2021).

Through the use of the environment as a learning resource, It is hoped that it will

make it easier for students to digest the learning material and shape students' personalities so that they are not unfamiliar with the surrounding life.

METHOD

In this study used a survey method with a quantitative approach. The survey method in this study emphasizes quantitative explanations of individual behavioral tendencies by examining the individual sample. The behavior analyzed in this study is the teacher's strategy of using environmental media as a learning resource in improving critical thinking skills of elementary school students. The environment in question is the media, whether in the form of objects, circumstances or conditions that exist around the school environment, so that they are easily accessible and used in learning. The environment is a unity of space with all objects, power, circumstances and living things, including humans and their behavior that affect the life and welfare of humans and other living creatures (Tasnim, 2018).

Questionnaire is a data collection technique by giving a set of questions or written statements to respondents to answer them (Sugiyono, 2010). The researcher uses a closed questionnaire method as a research instrument.

In order for the research conducted to produce valid and reliable data, the validity and reliability of the data from the questionnaire instrument must be measured. Instrument validity indicates that the instrument can be used to measure what it is supposed to measure, While a reliable instrument means an instrument which, when used several times to measure the same object, will produce the same data. The instrument

used in measuring the variables of this study, the researcher used a 5-point likert scale.

In this study, the number of respondents who became the sample in this study were 219 elementary school teacher consisting of 113 female teachers and 106 male teachers in the West Bandung Regency area. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire regarding the strategies used by elementary school teachers in using learning resources in the surrounding environment to improve critical thinking skills of elementary school students. The instrument consists

of 2 indicators, namely the area of use of learning resources in the surrounding environment (with statements No. 1-8) and critical thinking areas (with statements No. 9-20). Data collection and processing is carried out using the docs.google.com system. Documents that directly generate data descriptions based on statements answered by respondents.

RESULTS

The results of the research on the strategy of elementary school teachers in using environmental media as a learning resource are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Media Area Learning Resources Environment

No	Statement	Percentase (%)				
		SS	S	J	P	TP
1	Provide a topic or issue that is raised in a lesson so that it can train students to think objectively.	28,9	33,9	24,8	6,4	6
2	Increase students' self-confidence.	27,2	41,9	20,7	9,7	0,5
3	Giving independence in thinking by providing opportunities for students to give opinions or exchange opinions with friends related to certain topics or issues.	28,4	38,1	25,2	4,6	3,7
4	Giving assignments in the form of identifying problems in the environment by utilizing the environment around each student.	26,6	47,7	17,9	6	1,8
5	Building the foundation of knowledge by increasing students' reading interest.	21,2	34,6	31,3	11,1	1,8
6	Invite students to write in constructing a thought.	22	50	17	10,1	0,9
7	Provide an evaluation to prove that the student's opinion is valid or not.	30,7	40,4	22,9	4,6	1,4
8	Pay attention to the condition of students.	47,7	40,8	8,7	2,8	0

Information:

SS: Very often, S: Often, J: Rarely, P: Ever, TP: Never.

Based on the results of the study, it can be seen that the use of environmental media for elementary school students tends to be often done by teachers with the highest average percentage, which is equal to

50%. Meanwhile, the lowest average percentage is 0% in the never-do category. The results of the study on the critical thinking skills of elementary school students are described in Table 2.

Table 2. Critical Thinking Area

No	Statement	Percentase (%)				
		SS	S	J	P	TP
9	Identify problems and formulate criteria to determine possible answers.	12,4	63,3	18,8	5	0,5
10	Look for the structure of an argument expressed by students.	34,4	31,7	25,7	4,1	4,1
11	Ask and answer an explanation or challenge.	31,7	39	24,3	4,6	0,5
12	Pay attention to the suitability of several learning resources.	22,5	44	27,1	5	1,4
13	Direct students to collect strong evidence.	33	39	22	4,1	1,8
14	Involve students in concluding.	26,1	39,9	24,8	8,7	0,5
15	Facilitate students to propose conclusions that are in accordance with the known facts (essential)	26,6	40,8	20,6	9,2	2,8
16	Guiding students in making and considering the value of decisions.	28,9	37,6	22	8,3	3,2
17	Guide students to define terms and consider them.	18,8	50,9	19,7	10,2	0,5
18	Lead students to identify assumptions and build arguments.	22,9	45,4	26,1	4,1	1,4
19	Guiding students in formulating alternative solutions.	25,8	36,4	24,4	13,4	0
20	Allows students to interact with other people.	25,7	42,7	24,3	6,4	0,9

Information:

SS: Very often, S: Often, J: Rarely, P: Ever, TP: Never.

Based on the results of the study, it can be seen that practicing critical thinking skills has often been applied by teachers with the highest average percentage, which is 63.3%. Meanwhile, the lowest average percentage is 0% in the never-do category.

DISCUSSION

The environment is a means for students, where students can have activities, recreation, innovate, including developing thoughts so as to form new behaviors in their activities, in other words the environment can be used as a "laboratory" or a place for students to explore, experiment, and express themselves to get new concepts and information as a form of learning outcomes (Bisik, 2021). Teachers are required to be more creative in preparing media and learning resources needed by children. The existence of innovation by

using various materials that exist in the natural surroundings is needed to support the continuity of teaching and learning activities (Ulum, 2014). The use of the school environment as a learning resource directs children to actual events or circumstances or natural circumstances so that they are more real, more factual and the truth is more accountable (Pakaya, 2021). Maintaining the balance of children in learning activities can be done by utilizing the surrounding environment through observation activities. Because learning does not only occur in the classroom but also outside the classroom, in this case the

environment as a learning resource that is very influential on physical development, social and cultural skills, emotional and intellectual development (Wulandari, 2020). Therefore, teacher strategies are needed in improving critical thinking skills in elementary school students.

According to Erviana (2015) the advantages of utilizing the environment include: 1) saving costs, because it utilizes objects that already exist in the environment, 2) giving students a more real experience, lessons become more concrete, 3) because these objects come from the environment. from the student's environment, then these objects will be in accordance with the characteristics and needs of students, 4) lessons are more applicable, learning materials obtained by students through environmental media will most likely be applied directly, because students will encounter similar objects or events in everyday life. -day, 5) the media provides direct experience to students, 6) with environmental media, students can interact directly with objects, locations or real events naturally, 7) more communicative because objects and events that exist in the student's environment are usually easy to digest, compared to with packaged media.

According to Ruswandi (2008), using the environment as a learning medium will make the teaching and learning process more meaningful, because students are faced with real events and circumstances naturally. Something that is learned by students becomes more real, more factual, and the truth is more accountable (Prasetyawati, 2021).

Thus, the use of environmental media as a learning resource can improve learning achievement, students can learn

independently, help explain difficult things contained in books, provide new experiences, provide a unique atmosphere for students, overcome boredom in learning.

Critical thinking is reasoning and reflective thinking with an emphasis on making decisions about what to believe or do. Critical thinking is a mental process for analyzing or evaluating information. This information can be obtained from observations, experiences, induction deduction processes, or communication (Anggriani, 2018). The most appropriate place to teach critical thinking skills is in schools or educational institutions. Schools play a big role in efforts to develop thinking skills (Agustin, 2021). Critical thinking skills will be developed through interactive learning. Through interactive learning by actively involving students in the learning process, students will get the opportunity to express their opinions, ideas or ideas. That way students will explore their own knowledge and the learning will be more meaningful for students (Anggraeni, 2019). At the time of learning, students use thinking skills to understand knowledge and solve problems they face. While the thinking ability of students is very dependent on the quality and quantity of the learning outcomes they get (Setiaji, 2021). Training students in critical thinking must be the main goal of an educational institution, even though students have knowledge, but are not taught analytical thinking, so they are prone to wrong reasoning. For this reason, the main task for educators is to promote learning to solve problems, not only school problems, but problems of everyday life (Suarjana, 2020).

This is reinforced by the results of Anggriani's research (2018) which concludes that in general, students who apply science learning using the environment have better critical thinking skills. Students' critical thinking ability on the dimension of providing a simple explanation classically is included in the critical category and the dimension of providing further explanation and concluding is included in the fairly critical category. Furthermore, research conducted by Lamasai et al showed that the use of the surrounding environment as a learning resource in science subjects, especially in class III SDN 10 Gadung, namely learning activities were more interesting and not boring for students, so that students' learning motivation would be higher, the learning process will be more meaningful because students are faced with real natural conditions so that the truth is more accurate (Lamasai, 2017).

Table 1 describes the use of environmental media as a learning resource that is relevant to the critical thinking dimension in providing a simple explanation. Based on the results of the study in Table 1, it can be seen that the use of environmental media as a learning resource has often been done by teachers. This is also reinforced by the answer to statement No. 2, 3 and 8 which prove that in the category of social environment teachers often increase students' self-confidence and provide opportunities for students to express their opinions and are very often concerned with the condition of their students. According to Sudjana and Rivai (2002) in general it can be categorized into three kinds of learning environments, namely as follows: 1) The social environment as a source of learning

with regard to human interaction with social life, such as social organization, customs and habits, livelihoods, culture, education, population, government structure, religion and value system. 2) The natural environment relates to something that is natural, such as geographical conditions, climate, air temperature, seasons, rainfall, flora, fauna, natural resources, and so on. 3) The artificial environment is an environment that is intentionally created or built by humans for certain purposes that are beneficial to human life. Likewise with the answer to statement No. 1 and 4 which prove that the natural environment category is really widely used in elementary schools with the largest percentage in each statement, namely the 'often' option. The assessment of the artificial environment category is stated through statement No. 5-7 which discusses building the foundation of knowledge, constructing thoughts and validating opinions/ideas with facts in the environment.

Table 2 describes aspects of critical thinking skills which consist of five aspects, namely providing simple explanations, building basic skills, concluding, providing further explanations, and developing strategies and tactics (Ennis, 2011). Based on the results of the study in Table 2, it can be seen that the application of critical thinking skills in elementary schools has often been applied by teachers. This is also reinforced by the answer to statement No. 9-11 which proves that environmental media is really used as a source of learning in elementary schools with the largest percentage in each statement, namely the choice of 'Often' for Answers Numbers 9 and 11 and 'Very

Often' for answer number 10. Assessment of skills building aspects basis, stated through statement No. 12 and 13 which discuss about paying attention to the suitability among several learning resources. Aspect concludes, stated through statement no. 14, 15, and 16 which discuss the involvement of students in making decisions. Meanwhile, the aspect of providing further explanation is stated through No. 17-18 which discusses directing and guiding students. It aims to improve students' critical thinking. In addition, there is also an attitude aspect that has been developed, namely critical thinking in elementary school learning which has been analyzed through Table 1.

Based on the results of the research as a whole, it can be seen that elementary school teachers in the West Bandung area have often used environmental media as a learning resource in improving students' critical thinking skills. However, there are still some teachers who never use environmental media as a source of learning, and never develop critical thinking to their students. This illustrates that teacher awareness of this is still not evenly distributed throughout the West Bandung Regency area. Therefore, It is deemed necessary to have alternative activities as a solution, through technical guidance or training to elementary school teachers equally on how important the surrounding environment is to be used as a medium and source of learning and how to teach children to think critically. In addition, by carrying out alternative activities, it is also expected to increase awareness of teachers in elementary schools to be able to utilize and use the environment as a medium and source of

learning, application of critical thinking skills in learning activities.

CONCLUSION

Critical thinking is an ability to think rationally and regularly to understand the relationship between ideas obtained and facts. One of the teacher's strategies in improving critical thinking skills, namely by utilizing and using environmental media as a learning resource because the environment as a medium that is closer to children and children interact more with the environment in their daily lives, so they can develop children's thinking skills by connecting ideas that obtained by the facts in the environment. The results of the study indicate that the use and use of environmental learning resources in elementary schools has often been applied by teachers in order to improve critical thinking skills with an average value of 41.9%. In addition, the study also indicated that there were some teachers who had never even used environmental learning resources and improved critical thinking towards their students with an average score of 1.69%. Therefore, alternative activities are needed as an effort to improve the quality of education through the teacher's strategy in using environmental media as a learning resource in improving the critical thinking skills of elementary school students.

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