

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND SUGGESTION

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A summary and conclusion of the study are presented in this chapter. Some suggestions are given afterwards.

5.1 Summary and Conclusion

This study was aimed at describing to what extent the Widya Mandala University S1 students could read Indonesian political news critically. The study was inspired by the fact that political news in Indonesia tended to contain biases due to many factors, such as the complexity of the news institution, the news writer's objectivity, immaturity and limited ability. Researches done by Sudibyo (2001) have shown Indonesian political news was far from neutral. Based on this consideration, university students, as a significant political power that could bring political changes, needed critical reading skill to avoid them from manipulation and provocation.

Critical reading skill, as proposed by Devine (1981:103-110), includes the ability in recognizing the writer's purposes, the ability in noting special point of view, the ability in being aware of the writer's choice of language, the ability in evaluating the writer's argument and the ability in evaluating inferences. In order to describe to what extent the students could read political news critically, this study also made attempt to describe to what extent the students could perform in each critical reading ability as previously mentioned.

Based on the objectives of the study as stated above, a descriptive study was then employed in this study. The population of this study was the Widya Mandala University S1 students of semester seven. This study involved the students of all faculties / departments, except the department of physics since there was no sample available during the conducting of the study. The samples were selected using convenient sampling. The data used in this study were the students' test scores. They were obtained from 448 samples. A test consisting of three pieces of political news and 21 questions was used as the research instrument. The test asked the students to perform their critical reading skill including their abilities in recognizing the writer's purposes, noting special point of view, being aware of the writer's choice of language, evaluating the writer's argument and evaluating inferences. The mean calculation was used to analyze the students' test scores. The employment of mean calculation was to explain to what extent the students could read Indonesian political news critically and to what extent the students could perform in the five critical reading abilities.

This study finds that the students' skill in reading Indonesian political news critically was poor. The students were quite skillful in recognizing the writer's purposes. However, they could not note special point of view. They were not able to identify the irrelevant information and the writer's opinion. They also showed poor ability in being aware of the writer's choice of language since they could not identify the words or phrases that were deliberately used by the writer to reveal certain emotion. The students' ability in evaluating the writer's argument was poor. They found it difficult to judge the writer's argument correctly. It might

be because they did not have knowledge on what a good or bad argument is. The students were also poor in evaluating inferences. Most of them were already satisfied with the writer's inferences, which were not strongly supported with adequate explanation and evidences. Indeed, some students were able to express their own inferences, however, many of those inferences contained prejudices, were weak and emotionally made. In overall, the students showed inability in making qualified inferences. Only a small numbers of students can critically state constructive opinion, question the adequacy and the strength of the evidences and challenge the writer's inferences.

This condition might be due to the fact that the students had not been taught how to read critically explicitly before. They might never think that there is always a chance the news to be biased and thus, they seldom or never consciously practice reading critically. This condition might also due to the students' learning style. The students might be used to spoon-feeding teaching-learning process, in which they only accepted what was told and given to them and had less opportunity to criticize, to respond and to take initiatives.

5.2 Suggestions

This study has proved that the students' skill in reading political news critically was poor. Even though they performed a moderate ability in recognizing the writer's purposes, they showed poor performances in noting special point o view, being aware of the writer's choice of language, evaluating the writer's

argument and evaluating inferences. These findings trigger the following suggestions.

5.2.1 Suggestions for Educational Practitioners

The students' inability to read critically causes a deep concern especially to all educational practitioners. As educational practitioners, we are responsible for the quality of our students. The findings of this study show that our students were not immune to biases found in political news. Since university students are a potential political power and the future of nation, this situation, of course, endangers Indonesia. Based on this consideration, teaching the students how to read critically is a must. Thus, the curriculum makers need to realize the importance of teaching critical reading to the students. The students must be taught critical reading skill as early as possible. Practically, the teaching of critical reading must be included all levels of education and should be inserted especially in language syllabuses. The language teachers especially hold a strategic position in determining the quality of the students' critical reading skill. They are the persons who know their students' weaknesses best. Thus, teachers must know the best techniques to teach the students how to read critically according to the students' characteristics. The material difficulty and the kind of exercises must be adjusted to the students' level. Teachers must develop the students' awareness that everything they read is very possible to contain biases. Teachers should also avoid spoon-feeding teaching learning process but they must create teaching-learning

atmosphere that can encourage the students to give their opinion, to think alternatives and to take initiatives instead.

In order to make the students be able to read critically, the students must be taught each critical reading skill that may constitute their overall critical reading ability. Some suggestions are put forward to train the students to read critically. To enable the students to recognize of the writer's purposes, the students must be asked to identify the writer's stated and unstated purposes whenever they do reading. Various reading text from different kinds of writers can be chosen. It is also important here to present the students with the texts from the writer who strongly and vulgarly expresses his purposes to the very skillful writer who uses delicate language and good technique to cover his intention.

To train the students to note special point of view, the students must first be made aware that the writer may understand reality from his own special way. The students should have many practices in identifying irrelevant information and the writer's opinion from various reading texts. A good reading material for this exercise can be taken from newspaper.

To teach the students to be aware of the writer's choice of language, the steps in the previous discussion might be applied. First, the students must be made aware of the emotive meaning of words. They must understand that a writer often particularly chooses certain words to give special effect and impression on the readers. Reading text, such as from newspaper, can be given to the students to have them practice locating the words and phrases that carry special emotion and get the writer's tone based on the words and phrases he particularly chooses.

To teach the writer to evaluate argument, the students must be given adequate explanation on how a good argument should be. They should also be given many practices by asking them to state whether an argument is good or bad and to explain their judgment.

In order to train the students to evaluate inferences, the students must be given knowledge on what a good inference is and how to make a good inference. For practices, the students could be asked to actively respond to argumentative text and to state their own inference after reading.

5.2.2 Suggestions for Newsmakers

Last but not least is that the findings of this study should be a kind of reminder to those who are involved in making news. They must understand that what they write and present as political news might bring complicated consequences. Considering the condition of our students who are not immune to the biases, the newsmakers must improve the quality of their news. They must return to their main function to present objective reports and information to the people and need to realize that they, somehow, also determine the faith of this nation. Self-control is very important here to prevent themselves from including any irrelevant information or their opinion in their news to influence readers. News writers should make their news using simple language through the choice of neutral words. In writing the news, the news writers should get balanced information from the sources of respected sides, should do field investigation and

be able to be responsible of its truthfulness and must also be free from sidedness and prejudices.

5.2.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Due to limitedness concerning the situation and condition during the research, this study had some weaknesses. When a further and deeper study is done to investigate the same topic, the following suggestions can be considered in order to get more accurate and detailed results and explanations.

The tight academic schedule during the study was being conducted was the main reason this study employed convenient sampling in choosing its sample. This style of sampling, however, to some extent cannot reveal results that can be generalized to the whole population. When planning a further research, it is worth doing to prepare a careful random sampling to determine the subjects of the study so that the results, then, can be generalized to the whole population.

This study used a test consisting of three parts to obtain the necessary data to understand the students' ability to read Indonesian political news critically. The students might be too tired when they did the last part of the test. In the next research, it is suggested to get the data several times. The study can use several tests and several test types, such as multiple choice test type.

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