

TRAINING 21ST CENTURY STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES LEARNING

Irma Dwina¹

e-mail: irmadwina7@gmail.com

¹Postgraduate Departement in Social Studies Education, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat

Abstract

This article aims to describe how to train students' critical thinking skills in the 21st century through social studies learning. The 21st century is defined as a century in which so many aspects of life have changed, including the world of education. Learning methods in the 21st century focus on students or student centers. Equipping students to be able to compete in the 21st century is not enough just with knowledge, so there needs to be a balance, namely with skills. In the 21st century, thinking skills are needed to adapt to today's global life. It is important for students to help solve problems. The teacher has space to design learning in such a way that a meaningful learning process occurs. IPS material is designed to provide awareness to students as responsible citizens. The existence of social science is very relevant in preparing students who can face challenges in the 21st century. The paradigm shift in the 21st century requires social studies education to innovate. Innovations are made in social studies learning so that it can adapt to face various challenges in the 21st century. Teachers can design learning processes by applying relevant methods and models by involving students' thought processes so as to be able to train students' skills.

Keywords: Thinking Skills; 21st Century; and Social Studies Learning.

Preliminary

The 21st century is a century in which many aspects of life have changed. The existence of the 21st century was found in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. The era of the industrial revolution 4.0 is interpreted as a stage where knowledge development has no boundaries between the physical, digital and biological fields. This era has changed the way of human life. These changes can be seen in how they interact and work. Therefore, we must be prepared with strategies and innovations that cannot be avoided (Schwab, 2016; Shahroom & Hussin, 2018).

Advances in science and technology require humans to continue to innovate in order to be able to deal with various changes that occur in life. According to Mutiani & Faisal (2019), the 21st century requires people who are active, responsive to change, and able to think critically, to face challenges in the global era. Improving the quality of human resources so that they can survive and adapt to the global era can be developed through social science education.

Human resources that can compete need to be equipped with knowledge and skills. Skills are defined as essential components needed in various fields of life. Preparing human resources who have skills, one of the ways that can be taken is through education. Education is a process of teaching students what they do not know to know and what they cannot do, they can do (Abbas, 2013). Education is interpreted as a conscious and planned effort to change a person's attitude and behavior through training and learning in academic units.

Equipping students to be able to compete in the 21st century is not enough just with knowledge, so there needs to be a balance, namely with skills. Trilling & Fadel argue that 21st century skills include: (1) life and career skills, (2) learning and innovation skills, (3) information media and technology skills (Widjaya & Sudjimat, 2016 in Mardhiyah et al., 2021). Through this, education is one of the ways to produce qualified, skilled, and competitive human resources.

The learning process in the 21st century focuses on students (student center). This is intended to pass on thinking skills to students. Thinking skills include critical and creative thinking, innovation and problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and information literacy (Mardhiyah et al., 2021). Social Studies (IPS) is translated as integrating social sciences and humanities disciplines. The aim of social science itself is to shape students to become good citizens. Social Studies in the 1994 curriculum has a function to develop the ability to reason about social phenomena (Depdikbud, 1993; Effendi, 2012). In this case, social studies teaching plays an essential role in preparing students who are responsible, creative, active, and skilled.

Methods

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach with the Literature Study method. Data collection techniques by collecting references through Google Scholar in the form of articles, journals, and books related to training thinking skills in the 21st century through social studies learning. The data analysis technique used in this study is content analysis, with the stages of data display, data reduction, data verification, and conclusion.

Discussion

a) Train students' critical thinking skills in the 21st century

In the 21st century, thinking skills are needed to adapt to today's global life. Thinking is understood as an identity that distinguishes humans from other creatures. Thinking is behavior that uses symbolic ideas and processes (Fauzi, 2004 in Chusni et al., 2020). Thinking skills, both analytical and critical, involve reasoning activities (Irwanto et al., 2017). Critical thinking skills include analyzing, reasoning, solving problems, thinking creatively, making judgments, and making decisions (Hussin et al., 2018).

Practicing thinking skills can be obtained by connecting information (Chusni et al., 2020). Practicing students' critical thinking skills requires knowledge and experience. Knowledge and experience can be gained through education, leading to the learning process. Using Bloom's taxonomy, Collins (2014) trains students' thinking skills. Bloom,

in 1956 introduced a conceptual framework for thinking skills called Bloom's taxonomy (Utari et al., 2011). Taxonomy is classifying objects based on specific characteristics (Gunawan & Palupi, 2016).

Bloom promotes higher-order thinking or critical thinking in education. Critical thinking can train students' ability to analyze and evaluate rather than just teaching students to remember facts or rote. There are three domains of learning processes in Bloom's taxonomy: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Ekren, 2017). In cognition, Bloom emphasizes intellectual aspects such as knowledge and thinking skills. The affective domain includes behavior, such as emotions, values, motivation, interests, and attitudes. The psychomotor domain emphasizes physical abilities. In the cognitive realm, Bloom sorts thinking skills according to the expected goals. There are six stages of thinking in the cognitive domain in Bloom's taxonomy as follows: (1) knowledge, (2) understanding, (3) application,

Bloom's taxonomy indirectly provides space for teachers to develop students' thinking skills in a structured manner. In the learning process, the teacher should guide and direct students to understand concepts simply by involving critical thinking processes so that students can form their knowledge structures.

Collins (2014) recommends several stages that teachers in the learning process can carry out to train students' critical thinking skills as follows:

1. Specifically, teach complicated languages
Teachers should not only teach language and concepts to students. Students must know what they are doing and why it is needed. Learners can be trained to recognize the skills they have through the use of complex language from a question. When students see words, including defining, identifying, remembering, recognizing, checking, and collecting, they will remember facts. This indirectly brings students to form thinking processes.
2. Plan question and answer times and class discussions to practice critical thinking skills
Plans are of the utmost importance; teachers can ensure the proportions are correct by planning lessons and discussions carefully. In addition, teachers should encourage students to reflect on learning. Thus students are expected to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their thinking processes.
3. Teaches the concept of the subject matter clearly and in detail.
Learners must understand the essential characteristics that determine the thinking skills of what they practice. In each subject, students must be aware of the concepts they must learn. Teachers can help students by introducing the main concepts clearly and precisely. So that students understand the concept. For example, is the concept abstract, concrete, verbal, or nonverbal. In other situations, for example, students with poor mathematics performance have difficulty with nonverbal concepts. Doing the questions repeatedly without being accompanied by verbal explanations will not help students much to understand mathematical concepts much. So the teacher must take the time to help students make connections regarding some material and pictures, such as

symbols and language. Thus, students will begin to understand mathematical conventions.

4. Provide scaffolding

At the beginning of learning, the teacher should give students support gradually and then hand over the responsibility to students to work alone (Slavin, 1995 in Collins, 2014). The learning process without motivation may not be able to develop students' thinking skills. Therefore, before starting learning activities, teachers should provide adequate motivation/support to students to develop their skills (Kanchan and Eggen, 1998; Collins, 2014).

5. Consciously encourage students to think critically

To develop students' conceptual and in-depth understanding, several strategies can be applied, namely as follows:

- a) Teaches skills through real-world contexts.
- b) Modify the learning framework in which students can utilize their acquired skills.
- c) Focus on critical thinking skills
- d) Please encourage students to think about the strategies they use.

b) Train students' critical thinking skills in the 21st century through social studies learning

Critical thinking skills in the 21st century help students solve problems (Basri et al., 2019). Critical thinking is interpreted as a metacognition process consisting of several sub-skills (such as analysis, evaluation, and inference), which, if used correctly, can improve the ability to solve problems. Therefore, facing the challenges of learning in the 21st century, everyone should practice thinking skills, such as critical thinking skills, literacy skills, and skills in mastering information and communication technology (Frydenberg & Andon; Wijaya & Sudjimat, 2016 in Mardhiyah et al., 2021).

Critical thinking skills consist of: a) reasoning efficiently, b) asking straightforward questions, c) breaking down and assessing alternative perspectives, and d) critically reflecting on choices and procedures (Rahman, 2019). In education, to train thinking skills can go through the learning process. Social Studies learning in the Indonesian education system is taught at primary and secondary levels (Mariati et al., 2021). Social Studies learning is developed systematically to equip students' potential to form structured and organized concepts based on social sciences and humanities (Effendi, 2014 in Mariati et al., 2021). These social sciences include History, Geography, Sociology, and Economics.

Social studies education equips students with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. This is to shape students into human beings who have an identity, can live in society, and have a sense of responsibility and rights as citizens (Abbas, 2013). In line with this, social studies education is also based on values so that students can rationally understand and solve social problems and are sensitive to cultural similarities and differences with a

commitment to social responsibility (Abbas, 2019 in Aslamiah et al., 2021). Thus, social studies learning is essential in preparing students to face the challenges and changes that occur in the 21st century, both in social and cultural aspects.

Social Studies materials are prepared to provide awareness to students as responsible citizens (Mutiani, 2017; Mariati et al., 2021). Through Social Studies education, one can learn how to socialize, adapt to change, communicate, collaborate, and be able to think critically and analytically (Aslamiah et al., 2021). This shows that the existence of social science is very relevant for preparing students who can face the challenges of the 21st century. The paradigm shift in the 21st century requires social studies education to innovate. Innovations are made in Social Studies learning so that it can adapt to face various challenges in the 21st century (Widodo et al., 2020)

Learning models that involve critical thinking processes are one of the learning models in the 21st century. This learning model is considered adequate for increasing the efficiency of compiling students' knowledge (Zivkovil, 2016 in Widodo et al., 2020). In its application, learning models considered relevant to train students' thinking skills in Social Studies are the Problem Based Learning model and Project Based Learning.

- 1) *Problem Based Learning* interpreted as problem-based learning, where this model requires students to solve problems or find solutions to given problems. Through the PBL Model, teachers can train students to develop competence in solving problems at school and in their lives. According to Eden (2000) in Mayasari et al. (2016), the problem-based learning model can equip students with 21st century skills.
- 2) *Project Based Learning* is interpreted as project-based learning where students are required to investigate a problem. Through this learning model, students can use skills and abilities in conveying ideas and ideas, time management and organization, inquiry skills, reflection and self-assessment skills, leading, and participating in a group (Fisher, 2010 in Mayasari et al., 2016)

Problem-Based Learning and Project Based Learning models are part of the constructivist approach, which has been reported to be able to train the skills of 21st century students (Mayasari et al., 2016). In this case, to train students' thinking skills through social studies learning, teachers are also required to have the ability to innovate in the learning process. Learning innovation is needed to support a learning process that involves students participating actively (Widodo et al., 2020). Applying learning methods and models that require students to be active in the learning process can improve students' thinking skills. The application of learning methods and models should also be adapted to the needs of students, the conditions of the school environment, and society so that the learning process can achieve the desired goals (Sapriya, 2019).

Conclusion

The 21st century is a century in which so many aspects of life have changed. The 21st century is synonymous with globalization, where there are no spatial boundaries between countries. The 21st century requires humans to be ready to compete and be able to face various changes that occur in the order of life. Human resources that can compete need to be equipped with knowledge and skills. This is the central spear to survive all the possibilities that will occur. Prepare quality human resources; one of the ways that can be done is through education. Education leads to the learning process. Equipping students to be able to compete in the 21st century is not enough just with knowledge, so there needs to be a balance, namely with skills.

Education provides space to create quality human resources (HR), one form of realization through the learning process. 21st century learning focuses on the student center, demanding students to be active in learning. Social Studies teaching is essential in preparing responsible, active, creative, and skilled students. Through this, Social Studies indirectly supports the creation of quality human resources and can compete in the national and global order. Teachers can design learning processes by applying appropriate methods and models involving students' thinking processes to train students' skills.

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