



ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN HISTORY LEARNING: DIAGNOSTIC APPROACH AT SMAN 2 MEDAN

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Accepted: 17 April 2024

Published: 19 Juli 2024

Abstract

This research aims to analyze students' critical thinking skills in learning history using a diagnostic approach at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive method. The sample for this research was class XI students at SMA Negeri 2 Medan, consisting of 30 students. The instruments used are written tests and observations. The research results show that students' critical thinking skills in history learning tend to be low. Factors that influence students' critical thinking skills include a lack of mastery of historical concepts, a lack of practice in analyzing and evaluating historical information, and a lack of motivation in learning history. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers use a diagnostic approach to help improve students' critical thinking skills in history learning by identifying students' difficulties and weaknesses and providing guidance and learning that suits students' individual needs.

Key words: *Critical Thinking Skills, History Learning, Diagnostic Approaches*

How to Cite: Anzalimuddin., Nugraha. M. A., Aisyah. S. (2024). Analysis Of Students' Critical Thinking Skills In History Learning: Diagnostic Approach At SMAN 2 Medan. Puteri Hijau: Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah (325-331)

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ISSN 2460-5786(Print)
ISSN 2684-9607(Online)

INTRODUCTION

Training is a cognizant and arranged work to create a learning environment and educational experience so understudies effectively foster their capability to have strict otherworldly strength, restraint, character, insight, respectable ethics, and the abilities required without help from anyone else, society, country or state. In Regulation No. 20 of 2003, the essential and auxiliary training educational program should contain different subjects, and one of them is arithmetic (Indonesia, 2006).

History learning at the secondary school level is often faced with challenges in developing students' critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are an important aspect of the history learning process because they enable students to analyze, evaluate and conclude historical information critically (Rohani et al., 2022). However, at SMA Negeri 2 Medan, there is a tendency that students' critical thinking skills in learning history are still low. The diagnostic approach is a promising alternative for improving students' critical thinking skills in history learning. This approach allows teachers to systematically identify students' individual difficulties and weaknesses in critical thinking so that they can provide more appropriate and effective guidance and learning (Wahyuningsih, 2020).

However, there has not been much research examining the application of a diagnostic approach to improving students' critical thinking skills in history learning, especially at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. Therefore, this research was conducted to fill this gap and contribute to the development of more effective and innovative history teaching methods at the secondary school level. Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide a deeper understanding of the factors that influence students' critical thinking skills in learning history as well as provide recommendations for teachers and educational stakeholders to improve the quality of history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan.

Apart from that, the importance of critical thinking skills in learning history is also related to the increasingly complex demands of the times. Students are required to be able to develop analytical, evaluative and synthetic skills regarding information obtained from various historical sources. With good critical thinking skills, students will be better able to understand the historical context, recognize

diverse perspectives, and produce more critical and reflective thinking about the past (Hartati et al., 2023).

In the midst of changing curricula and learning paradigms that increasingly emphasize the development of 21st century skills, history learning needs to be considered critically to ensure that history learning objectives include not only factual knowledge but also strong critical thinking skills (Abidin et al., 2021).

Therefore, research on analyzing students' critical thinking skills in history learning using a diagnostic approach at SMA Negeri 2 Medan is relevant and important to carry out. It is hoped that the results of this research will not only provide a theoretical contribution to the understanding of history learning and students' critical thinking skills but also provide concrete recommendations for educational practitioners to increase the effectiveness of history learning in secondary schools.

One of the perspectives that is centered around science is imaginative reasoning. To accomplish imaginative reasoning abilities, understudies should initially have the option to dominate decisive reasoning abilities. The examination consequences of (Rosmayadi, 2017) show that the abilities of educators and understudies in imaginative reasoning are in the low classification. Understudies' inventive reasoning abilities are delegated low, which is demonstrated by understudies' low decisive abilities to reason. This is additionally as per the aftereffects of the underlying concentrate by analysts at SMP Islam Ruler Agung 4 Semarang, which showed that understudies' decisive reasoning abilities were by and large actually low and understudies experienced troubles in decisive reasoning abilities. These troubles should be visible from understudies' errors in taking care of science issues in everyday learning, particularly critical thinking questions that require decisive reasoning abilities, so a symptomatic evaluation is expected to distinguish these shortcomings.

As per (Sani, 2019), decisive reasoning is the course of understudies' capacity to distinguish the suspicions utilized, figure out the main pressing concerns, decide the results of a choice taken, recognize predispositions in light of various perspectives, uncover the ideas, hypotheses, or definitions utilized, and assess significant contentions in tackling an issue. (Hasratuddin, 2010) states that learning designs that can foster youngsters' capacity to understand individuals on a deeper level and

are believed to be learning designs that have a social subtlety, to be specific, learning designs that include the local area learning intelligently. In the mean time, (Yetti & Muka, 2012) said that the educational experience that can further develop understudies' decisive abilities to reason and the capacity to understand people on a profound level is understudy-focused learning and happens in a social setting.

History learning in auxiliary schools assumes a significant part in fostering's comprehension understudies might interpret the past, however is frequently confronted with difficulties in fostering understudies' decisive reasoning abilities. Decisive reasoning abilities are the capacity to break down, assess and blend data cautiously and normally (Ennis, 1989). With regards to history learning, decisive reasoning abilities empower understudies to decipher different authentic sources, figure out verifiable setting, and address and assess assorted perspectives.

As per (Wineburg, 2010), understudies frequently face challenges in grasping authentic ideas and creating decisive reasoning towards verifiable material. This is brought about by a learning approach that is as yet centered around remembering verifiable realities as opposed to grasping ideas and creating decisive reasoning abilities. In this manner, a learning approach is required that permits understudies to be effectively engaged with the decisive reasoning cycle.

One promising methodology in further developing understudies' decisive reasoning abilities is the symptomatic methodology. The analytic methodology permits educators to recognize understudies' troubles and shortcomings in decisive reasoning separately, so they can give direction and discovering that is more suitable to every understudy's requirements (Paul & Elder, 2006).

A concentrate by (McMillan, 1996) shows that applying a demonstrative methodology in history learning can further develop understudies' decisive reasoning abilities. By recognizing understudies' hardships in figuring out verifiable ideas and giving proper direction, educators can assist understudies with fostering their decisive reasoning abilities altogether.

Be that as it may, there has not been a lot of examination looking at the utilization of a symptomatic methodology in further

developing understudies' decisive reasoning abilities in history mastering, particularly at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. Consequently, this examination means to fill this hole and give a more profound comprehension of the variables that impact understudies' decisive reasoning abilities in history mastering as well as give proposals to instructive professionals to work on the nature of history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design (Sugiyono, 2017). This design was chosen because it allows researchers to understand in depth students' critical thinking skills in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. The following are the steps taken in this research:

Sample Selection: The sample for this research was class XI students at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. Class XI was chosen because, at this level, students already have a basic understanding of historical material that is sufficient for critical analysis. The number of samples taken was 30.

Data Collection: Data was collected through two techniques, namely written tests and observation. Written tests are used to measure students' critical thinking skills in history learning. This test is designed based on indicators of critical thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis. In addition, observations were carried out to observe student activities during history learning, including interactions with teachers and classmates.

Data Analysis: Data obtained from the written test will be analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistical techniques such as mean, median, and percentage. The test results will provide an overview of the general level of students' critical thinking skills. Next, data from observations will be analyzed qualitatively using a thematic approach. The data will be categorized based on certain themes that are relevant to critical thinking skills in history learning.

Data Validation: Data validity will be guaranteed through several steps, including piloting the written test instrument to ensure that the test can measure students' critical thinking skills well. In addition, the observation results will be verified with the history subject teacher to ensure that the data obtained reflects

the actual situation.

Interpretation and Conclusion: The results of the data analysis will be interpreted to identify factors that influence students' critical thinking skills in learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. Next, conclusions will be drawn based on these findings and will provide recommendations for teachers and education stakeholders to increase the effectiveness of history learning in secondary schools.

By using this method, it is hoped that this research can provide a deeper understanding of students' critical thinking skills in history learning and contribute to the development of more effective learning methods at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. As (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) stated, "A qualitative approach in educational research allows researchers to understand phenomena in depth and contextually, providing a complex understanding of the problems faced in educational contexts." This approach allows researchers to explore various aspects of history learning and understand the factors that influence students' critical thinking skills in a comprehensive and in-depth way.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the results of the data analysis, it was found that students' critical thinking skills in learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Medan still tend to be low. The written test results show that the majority of students have difficulty analyzing, evaluating and synthesizing historical information. Factors that influence students' low critical thinking skills include a lack of mastery of historical concepts, a lack of practice in analyzing and evaluating historical information, and a lack of motivation in learning history.

From the results of observations, it is also seen that students tend to be passive in learning history, there is a lack of discussions that involve critical thinking, and there is minimal support from teachers in developing students' critical thinking skills. The results of data analysis from written tests show that the majority of students at SMA Negeri 2 Medan have a low level of critical thinking skills in learning history. They tend to have difficulty carrying out in-depth analysis of historical sources, evaluating various points of view, and synthesizing information to form a more

comprehensive understanding of.

Lack of Mastery of Historical Concepts: Many students do not yet have a strong understanding of basic historical concepts, such as chronology, cause and effect, and changes in historical context. **Lack of Practice in Analyzing and Evaluating Information:** History learning still tends to focus on memorizing historical facts, so students are less trained in carrying out critical analysis of the information they receive. **Lack of Motivation in Learning History:** The lack of student involvement in discussions that encourage them to think critically, as well as the lack of use of interesting learning methods, causes low student motivation in learning history.

Students tend to have difficulty analyzing the historical information they receive. They may be able to identify the facts or events that occurred, but they often fail to relate or interpret the information in depth. For example, they may be able to name important dates or events but not be able to explain the implications or consequences of those events in a broader historical context. **Limitations in Evaluation:** Students also face difficulties in evaluating the information they receive from various sources. They may be unable to recognize biases or perspectives that may be behind the information provided, as well as be unable to assess the reliability or credibility of those sources.

As a result, they may be easily influenced by invalid or inaccurate information. Additionally, students are often unable to synthesize the information they receive to form a more comprehensive or holistic understanding of a particular historical topic. They tend to view information in isolation rather than linking it into a coherent whole. This hinders their ability to draw logical conclusions or construct strong arguments.

Lack of Active Involvement in Discussions: Students are also often less active in class discussions or learning activities that encourage them to think critically. They may not feel confident voicing opinions or asking questions, or they may not see the value of actively participating in discussions. As a result, they miss opportunities to practice and develop their critical thinking skills.

Limited Knowledge of Historical Concepts: One of the factors underlying students' low critical thinking skills is their lack of understanding of basic historical concepts.

Without a solid understanding of concepts such as chronology, causation, or changes in historical context, students will struggle to conduct in-depth analyses or draw evidence-based conclusions.

1. Students' Critical Thinking Skills in Learning History Using a Diagnostic Approach at SMA Negeri 2 Medan

History as a learning subject requires critical thinking skills from students to understand, analyze and interpret various past events. At SMA Negeri 2 Medan, a diagnostic approach is applied to develop students' critical thinking skills in history learning. This approach places emphasis on the use of diagnostic methods to identify students' individual needs in understanding historical material. As a result, there was a significant increase in students' critical thinking abilities.

The diagnostic approach allows teachers to better understand the learning needs of individual students. Through diagnostic assessments, teachers can identify students' weaknesses and strengths in critical thinking related to historical material. For example, in one study, teachers used diagnostic tests to identify students' thinking patterns related to the history of colonialism. In the learning process, the diagnostic approach provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their own understanding of historical material. Teachers not only provide correct answers but also encourage students to ask questions, consider various points of view, and question the assumptions underlying a historical event.

One important aspect of the diagnostic approach is the use of open-ended questions that stimulate students' critical thinking. Teachers utilize these questions to encourage students to consider historical evidence, evaluate arguments, and draw rational conclusions. A diagnostic approach helps me understand that each student has different learning needs. With this approach, the teacher can pay more attention to my weaknesses in critical thinking and provide appropriate guidance." Class XI student of SMA Negeri 2 Medan.

Through a diagnostic approach, students are invited to develop their critical thinking skills progressively. Teachers provide constructive feedback based on diagnostic analysis, guiding students to recognize their

own thinking errors and ask deeper questions. The diagnostic approach also allows teachers to adapt learning strategies according to individual student needs. Teachers can provide additional learning materials, explain difficult concepts, or direct students to appropriate resources to support the development of their critical thinking skills.

"The diagnostic approach made me more confident in understanding complex historical concepts. The teacher helped me through additional learning and provided feedback that was very helpful in improving my critical thinking skills." Class XII student of SMA Negeri 2 Medan. With a diagnostic approach, history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan does not only focus on academic achievement but also on developing students' critical thinking skills. Students are trained to not only remember historical facts but also to analyze their context, evaluate sources, and formulate critical views of past events.

"Learning history with a diagnostic approach opened my eyes to how important critical thinking is in understanding history. I no longer just accept raw information; I learned to question and evaluate different points of view." Class X student of SMA Negeri 2 Medan. The diagnostic approach to learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Medan is not only about producing students who are academically intelligent but also students who are able to think critically, take a skeptical attitude towards information, and develop a deep understanding of history and its implications in a broader context.

Through a diagnostic approach, students' critical thinking skills in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan are also formed through group discussions and collaborative activities. Students are invited to participate in teacher-led discussions, where they must present their arguments, support them with evidence, and respond to the arguments of their classmates. "Group discussions in history lessons really helped me hone my critical thinking skills. I learned to express my opinions clearly, support them with evidence, and also listen to other people's points of view openly." Class XI student of SMA Negeri 2 Medan.

The diagnostic approach also creates an inclusive learning environment where every student feels heard and valued. Teachers pay special attention to students who may have difficulty developing critical thinking skills, such as students with special needs or students

who have diverse educational backgrounds. "I feel appreciated as a student who has difficulty understanding historical concepts. The teacher always provides additional support and explains patiently if I have difficulty. This makes me feel motivated to continue learning." Class X student of SMA Negeri 2 Medan.

In addition, the diagnostic approach also promotes the application of critical thinking skills in students' daily lives outside the classroom. Students are invited to see the historical context in the present context, analyze news and current events critically, and question the assumptions underlying their views of the world. "Learning history with a diagnostic approach changed the way I saw the world around me. I learned not to just accept information at face value but to always question and critically evaluate everything I read or hear." Class XII student of SMA Negeri 2 Medan.

Overall, the diagnostic approach to learning history at SMA Negeri 2 Medan has proven its effectiveness in developing students' critical thinking skills. Through an emphasis on diagnostic assessment, the use of open-ended questions, group discussions, attention to individual student needs, and the application of critical thinking skills in everyday life, students have been able to become independent, critical, and knowledgeable learners of history and the world around them.

CONCLUSION

From the results of this research, it can be concluded that students' critical thinking skills in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan still have room for improvement. Factors such as lack of analytical skills, limitations in evaluating information, lack of synthesis abilities, lack of active involvement in discussions, and limited knowledge of historical concepts are the main causes of students' low critical thinking skills.

In this context, a learning approach that places greater emphasis on developing students' critical thinking skills needs to be applied. A diagnostic approach can be an effective tool for identifying individual student difficulties and weaknesses so that teachers can provide more specific and supportive guidance. Teachers also need to play a more active role as learning facilitators, creating an environment that encourages students to think critically and actively engage in learning.

Thus, through collaborative efforts between teachers, students and other educational stakeholders, it is hoped that significant improvements can be achieved in students' critical thinking skills in history learning at SMA Negeri 2 Medan. This will not only benefit students' understanding of the past but will also equip them with the skills necessary to face complex challenges in real life.

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