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Improving Critical Thinking Aspects with Podcast Media

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Abstract	*Podcasts are used as a medium to improve critical thinking skills. Students often feel bored and tired when having to read text as a source of information. The purpose of this study is to analyze how podcasts improve critical thinking. This study used a qualitative research method with a library research approach. The impact on improving students' digital literacy skills shows that podcasts can improve verbal skills, enrich knowledge, enhance critical thinking skills, and broaden horizons.*

Keywords	***Enhancement, Critical Thinking, Podcast***

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Existing learning media require development to be more accessible, usable, and understandable for students. Numerous audio media are being created to provide flexible learning tools. Discussion of more books is becoming easier through an application called a podcast. Podcasts have become a widely used application today to obtain the information they need. Through podcasts, people can easily listen to things they want to know. Podcasts have been tested in a study that showed that more students are downloading materials for study. Podcasts allow students to gain an overview of the material being discussed more easily and quickly, thus preparing them for discussions. Podcasts can also be a means of getting closer to the campus environment, where students can hear inspirational stories, thus increasing their motivation in their studies and developing their skills.[1]

Students can easily download it via an internet connection. This media is widely available through various online websites in both free and paid podcast content. This media contains various topics or discussions in various forms, such as conversations, debates or discussions, talk shows, monologues, speeches, lectures, and so on. This is one of the most prominent media used to support students' language learning skills, especially pronunciation.

2. **METHODS**

This research employs a qualitative research method with a library research approach. Library research is a research method that collects data and information from literature sources such as books, other research findings relevant to the topic, articles, notes, and other sources that support the topic. This study aims to analyze the improvement of critical thinking skills through podcasts. Data were obtained from sources such as books, articles, and other research relevant to the research title.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Critical Thinking

According to Scriven & Paul, critical thinking is an intellectual process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information obtained through observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, with the goal of leading to beliefs and actions. Nhat argues that critical thinking is a higher-order thinking skill in which individuals demonstrate their ability to evaluate a phenomenon from different perspectives in different contexts to make effective, scientifically sound, and thoughtful decisions. Paul & Elder define critical thinking as the art of analyzing and evaluating thoughts with the goal of improving those thoughts. Critical thinking skills enable a person to have clear goals in problem-solving, question information, and draw conclusions and perspectives, ensuring that solutions are clear, precise, accurate, relevant, logical, reasonable, and fair.

The Concept of Podcast Media

Etymologically, the word "media" comes from the Latin medius, meaning "middle," "intermediary," or "carrier." In education, media is understood as all forms and channels used to convey messages from a source to a recipient in learning activities. 5. Terminologically, media is anything that can be used to convey messages, which can stimulate students' attention, interest, thoughts, and feelings in learning activities to achieve learning goals. Each medium is a tool used to achieve learning goals. It contains information that may be obtained from the internet, books, films, television, and so on, which can be communicated to other people or learners.[6]

The concept of learning media has two mutually supporting aspects: software and hardware. For example, if a teacher creates material in PowerPoint and then projects it using an LCD projector, the material is called software, while

the LCD projector itself is the tool/hardware used to project the learning material onto the screen.

Podcasts are a type of audio or video media that are relatively small in size and can be stored on Google Drive, flash drives, or internal or external memory on smartphones or laptops. These media are portable, practical, and easy to use, allowing students to easily use them to support critical thinking skills. Podcast files are uploaded online in audio or video format, then downloaded and adapted into student learning materials. This technology integration is practical and supported by software, making it a positive option for teachers to implement. Podcasts are the answer to classroom challenges when teachers and students limit authentic material in pronunciation.[7]

Improving Critical Thinking with Podcasts

Utilizing podcast platforms is one way to improve students' critical thinking skills. With a wide variety of podcast content available, students can choose podcasts that align with their interests and needs. The benefits of using podcasts to improve students' critical thinking include:

1. Improved understanding of topics. Listening to podcasts can help students improve their understanding of a variety of topics, from science and history to social issues. Informative and educational podcasts offer listeners the opportunity to gain new insights, in-depth knowledge, and different perspectives not always found in reading materials.

2. Stimulation and Imagination. Listening to podcasts can stimulate students' imaginations and encourage creative thinking. Podcasts often use detailed descriptions and engaging stories, which encourage students to imagine the situations, characters, and environments presented.

3. Increased motivation and interest in learning. Podcasts presented in an engaging and informative manner can increase students' motivation to learn. Listening to information through podcasts can make learning more engaging and

enjoyable through a new method.

According to Bandura, one of the benefits of listening to podcasts as a learning medium is the positive attitude changes that occur in listeners. Listening to podcasts can have a positive impact on improving students' critical thinking skills. The positive impacts gained through using podcasts in improving students' digital literacy skills are as follows.

1. Improve verbal skills. Regularly listening to podcasts can help improve a person's listening skills. Podcasts often feature conversations containing a variety of vocabulary and good language. By getting used to listening to different variations of language and pronunciation, listening skills improve. Explore a person. Podcasts can often cover a variety of topics, from history and science to culture and current news. By listening to podcasts on topics that interest someone, they can expand their vocabulary by learning new words, phrases, and expressions used in real-life contexts.

2. Enriching student knowledge. There are podcasts specifically designed to support learning in specific subjects, such as math, English, or history. Students can use these podcasts as a supplementary resource to deepen their understanding of the concepts being studied. This can enrich their learning and provide new perspectives. This way, students can enrich their knowledge in a fun and engaging way.

3. Improving students' critical thinking skills and insight. Podcasts often discuss controversial and complex issues. This can help students practice their critical thinking skills. Students can consider the various viewpoints presented in the podcasts and develop their skills.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the views of Scriven & Paul, Nhat, and Paul & Elder, it can be concluded that critical thinking is a higher-order thinking skill that involves an active and skilled intellectual process in analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing

information from various sources and perspectives. Critical thinking focuses not only on understanding information but also on improving the quality of thinking to produce rational, objective, and responsible decisions and actions. With critical thinking skills, a person is able to set clear goals in problem-solving, question the validity of information, draw logical conclusions, and make appropriate, accurate, relevant, and fair decisions appropriate to the context at hand.

Learning media is an important tool in the learning process, serving as a medium for conveying messages to effectively achieve learning objectives. Learning media, both in the form of software and hardware, complement each other in supporting engaging, meaningful, and student-oriented learning. One learning medium relevant to current technological developments is podcasts, which are practical, flexible, and easily accessible to students through various digital devices.

The use of podcasts in learning has been shown to positively contribute to improving students' critical thinking skills. Through diverse, informative, and contextual content, podcasts can enhance students' understanding of a topic, stimulate imagination and creativity, and foster motivation and interest in learning. Furthermore, podcasts also play a role in improving verbal skills, enriching knowledge, and broadening students' horizons by presenting diverse perspectives on current and complex issues.

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