Encouraging Critical Thinking Ability through Signs in Extensive Reading Class: Edusemiotics

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ABSTRACT

The true challenge in academic setting is how to transform values and guide students' mind growth with no excessive words. Thus, edusemiotics plays vital role and becomes a dominant in teaching and learning communication. Edusemiotics represents a new conceptual framework of theoretical study and the empirical one. This study aims at exploring how English Education Department students of 2017 A class STKIP PGRI Jombang elaborate ideas in interpreting signs on the picture to reflect their critical thinking ability. The data were taken from 10 students based on convenient sampling. This research performed qualitative method with a case study as research approach. Those students were in Extensive Reading class and asked to freely interpret the picture in accordance with their background of knowledge. There are three important findings; *(1) students' chosen picture, (2) students' reading habit and personal experiences regarding with extensive reading, and (3) students' critical thinking measurement and level.* The result shows that 7 of students' critical thinking level are in developing level while the 3 of students are in mastering level. Most of them basically have the reading habit before getting Extensive Reading program and it increases afterwards. The critical thinking ability is shown from how they elaborate ideas in interpreting sequence of signs on the picture and how they understand the values within.

Keywords: critical thinking; extensive reading; social semiotic; multimodality; edusemiotics

INTRODUCTION

Decades have passed since reading became necessary in everyday life. It plays role in giving everyone the opportunity to gain knowledge, access to information, broaden someone's horizons and, of course, develop critical thinking skill. Ferrer and Staley (2016) argued that when a person reads, their linguistic, scientific, and socio-cultural rivalries can directly benefit from this intellectual activity. In some particular cases, we do not just read for information, but frequently read for pleasure. We independently select written materials that suit our preferences whether it is fictional or non-fictional. Besides, Ferdila (2014) explained that we all are immersed in many different ways of reading and is called as an extensive reading which the basic principles are simple, engaging, and fun-oriented. Meanwhile,

extensive reading has been widely discussed in recent decades. As cited in Huang (2015), there are many benefits demonstrated by various studies. Several other studies have also shown how extensive reading affects the development of critical thinking and this idea connects to the recent study conducted by Husna (2019). She emphasized the need for teachers to promote students' growth, especially critical thinking, by providing some relevant activities to support intellectual growth and have a more open mind. According to Paul (1990) in most educational settings, students have to struggle a lot to cope with some traditional techniques of short term teaching, particularly in memorization context. Consequently, it can be a great destruction and block their minds to think deeply. As an idea, educators need to have such an awareness that students are not born with critical thinking and must developed as well. Based on Goldsmith's exploration (2013), Dr. Michael Bishop from Florida State University concluded that there is no certain definition of critical thinking, but he simplified the idea that critical thinking is the implementation of good reasoning for the problem.

In 2004, Kutieleh and Egege claimed that, disappointingly, Asian students are lack of critical thinking attitude since they ignore the principles of analysis and criticism. As part of Thailand 4.0's vision, Jones and Pimdee (2017) asserted critical thinking as the most important pillar of knowledge-based economic goals. Along with this assumption, it corresponds to other study evaluating the logical thinking and analytical skills of 6,235 students in ten provinces of Thailand. It was found that the average final score was only 36.5% and only 2.09% passed the exam (Rujivanarom, 2016).

In this sense, Priadi (2016) asserted the fact that Indonesian students usually ask things before trying to figure it out for themselves. Even they often get confused while completing certain tasks and check the work of friends instead. Along the same line, Indah and Kusuma (2016) revealed the critical thinking ability of UIN Maliki Ibrahim Malang students. They stated that the reasoning level of the students is still at the primary level as it is not supported by sufficient justification. Additionally, due to the researchers' educational experience, the college peers in the classroom sometimes become so apathetic. They often do not make such arguments or criticize anything on the specific subjects for which they sign up for. They are rarely skeptical about anything they hear or even see. It sounds like we ignore the fact of development of mind to improve. Consequently, it will definitely kill the sense of curiosity. Even in case of reading the text of the course book or completing the task by reading the instructions, sometimes students miss the points. In this case, if complex ideas are to be conveyed, providing a sequence of signs will be helpful since we live in a world which is full of meaning to be understood rationally whether it is texts, oral communication or even sign boards in most of places. In his monograph, Siegel and Carey (1989) encouraged readers, especially teachers, to consider the idea that critical thinking is about signs reading. Signs work like reflective thinking, they added.

On the other hand, Priadi (2016) argued that what sometimes appears is more than what it said and involves many aspects to understand the true meaning. However, in his study, he just showed his detailed experiences of implementing semiotics only in the classroom to promote students' critical thinking in the reading and writing class. Furthermore, Kuzu (2016) also conducted a study on the effects of semi-analysis based on writing theory. The finding demonstrates the effectiveness of semiotic analysis in the development of student writing skills.

This can be an entry point for the researchers to introduce how semiotics becomes pedagogical theory as the main purpose that promotes and develops students' cognitive skills in the university as a way of thinking (known as edusemiotics). To think in "semiotic" means to agree that life is a process of semiotic engagement, especially in education. Somehow, we subconsciously use signs in teaching and learning process such as using non-verbal language to ask students to be quite or when they raise hand aiming to answer questions and many others. Therefore, this study raised the following research question about how do English Education Department Students of 2017 A class in STKIP PGRI Jombang elaborate ideas in interpreting sequences of signs on the picture to reflect their critical thinking ability?

This paper does not intend to adhere to a single definition of critical thinking since the idea of critical thinking, as a complex concept, is best explored in terms of multiple dimensions. On the other hand, by considering the institutional background, the researchers provide a student worksheet which contains the illustration of educational issues. However, the implicit messages given in the picture will help future educators understand what is happening and how education should be like. In case to reveal messages from the pictures, students of 2017 A class should adopt a reflective and skeptical attitude to elaborate ideas into arguments cause each sign is important on the picture. Thus, their interpretation reflects the ability to think critically.

METHOD
The Research Design

This research was conducted to explore the interpretation of English Education Department students of 2017 A class in STKIP PGRI Jombang in reading sequences of signs on the picture and to encourage their critical thinking just after the extensive reading program given in the previous semester. This research also involves various understandings related to an extensive reading program, a critical thinking in general points of view and in semiotic perspectives, edusemiotics which concern on multimodality and social semiotics. Throughout the complexity of the research, the researchers proposed using qualitative method and case study as the research approach. According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative is one of the research methods used intentionally to explore and understand the human problem in a social or individual context. Thus, the method was chosen since the phenomena that occur in educational setting are related to the students' ability of critical thinking which is in need to widely explore and analyze.

Subject of The Research

This study involved English Education Department students of 2017 A class in STKIP PGRI Jombang. In addition, from 40 students in 2017 A class, data sources were extracted from 10 students who were willing to participate in this research. Thus, we performed convenient sampling-based to select the research subjects by considering their availability. The subject was chosen due to several considerations such as the previous research recommendations that critical thinking should be developed in the university curriculum. Additionally, students of 2017 A class had completed the Extensive Reading course.

Instrument and Data Collection

The data used in this study were taken from the student's worksheet. Meanwhile, the primary data were taken from the student's interpretation on the worksheet and the secondary data came from a semi-structured interview. The interview included a number of important questions that would help researchers define the field of exploration. This type of interviewing gives both the interviewee and the interviewer the flexibility to pursue a detailed idea or answer (Gill, 2008). However, the data collection consisted of several stages that include; (1) preliminary study, (2) data collection, (3) data management and (4) interpretation of results. To aid in data collection, there are two instruments used in this study; documents (student worksheets) and interviews (semi-structured) in order to avoid distortion of documents and subjectivity of researchers. To evaluate students' interpretation and classify it into criteria, the researchers adopted an assessment rubric of Critical Thinking from Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology at Washington State University (2006).

Data Analysis

A helpful concept in the analysis of qualitative data move towards several stages such as (1) planning and preparation of data analysis, (2) reading all the data, (3) starting to code the data (4) generating detail using the coding process, (5) presenting the data analyzed, and (6) drawing conclusions (Creswell, 2014). In this study, the data collection was taken from students' worksheet as the primary data while the interview became the secondary data. After collecting the data, the researchers read through the data collected from the student's worksheet. Next, the researchers start coding the data by sorting the required data such as personal experiences in extensive reading class, image choices and the measurement of critical thinking level. The further step is to create an explanation that includes detailed data to expand the information. After going through all the steps mentioned, for the final step is data interpretation. These steps have been taken in response to the research problem statement.

FINDING

After performing the data collection procedures, there were several findings that confirmed each other. The findings include: (1) student's chosen picture, (2) reading habits and personal experiences regarding with extensive reading, and (3) students' critical thinking measurement and level. Here is the further explanation:

1. **Students' Chosen Picture**

Table 1 Students' Chosen Picture

Picture and Code	P1	P2	P3
Students' Choice	Student 2 & Student 6	*Student 1, Student 3, Student 5, Student 7 & Student 8*	*Student 4, Student 9 & Student 10*

Table 1 shows the picture preferences selected by students as well as the code for each of them. As it can be clearly identified that Picture 1 was chosen by two people of Student 2 and Student 6. While Picture 2 was chosen by five people

including Student 1, Student 3, Student 5, Student 7 and Student 8. In addition, Picture 3 was chosen by Student 4, Student 9 and Student 10. These all were chosen based on students' personal choice. As it had been asserted by Student 8 that, *"I chose this picture (P2) because in my opinion, this is the most relevant issues and I often found in my surrounding".* It is clearly shown that there is no intervention from other party. In addition, they are free to define the value of pictures based on their background of knowledge as well as their own experiences.

2. **Reading Habit** and **Personal Experiences Regarding with Extensive Reading**

The scoring of critical thinking level also considers the students' reading habit and personal experiences. Before given the extensive reading program, there are 8 out of 10 students who basically love reading activity. Most of them are into novels, short stories and other fictional works. Meanwhile, the rest of 2 students who dislike reading before the extensive reading program started to love reading afterwards.

Table 1 Reading Habit and Personal Experiences Regarding with Extensive Reading

Students	Reading Habit		Personal Experience in Extensive Reading Class		
	Before ER	After ER	Positive (Excited)	Balance (Average)	Negative (Less Excited)
Student 1		√	√		
Student 2	√	√		√	
Student 3	√	√			√
Student 4	√	√		√	
Student 5	√	√	√		
Student 6	√	√		√	
Student 7		√	√		
Student 8	√	√	√		
Student 9	√	√		√	
Student 10	√	√	√		

As it has been mentioned in advance that extensive reading helps students improving the mind growth. Thus, their interpretations of the picture will obviously reflect their way of thinking. Table 2 shows the reading habit and personal experience related to Extensive Reading program of English Education Department students (2017 A class) in STKIP PGRI Jombang. Meanwhile, the next rows show how they shared personal experience in Extensive Reading class. Some of them reacted positively or excited and the rest reacted both positive and negative by providing some acceptable reasons. Yet, there is this one student who tended to react negatively or less excited. Negative here means something that the students dislike from the Extensive Reading class by providing some acceptable reason as well as follows:

"But I was honestly feeling like I just had to do it to fulfill my college assignments. So, I didn't feel like it was an Extensive Reading instead of Intensive Reading because the essence of Extensive Reading is contradictory from what I have learnt. Why did we have to tell it back? isn't it better for attempting such evaluation or tests?"

3. **Students' Critical Thinking Measurement and Level**

Table 3 Students' Critical Thinking Measurement

Student (s)	Chosen Picture	Rating Criteria & Rating Scale							Overall Score	Number of Scale	Level
		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7			
S 1	P2	5	3	5	4	4	2	4	27	64	D
S 2	P1	5	3	4	2	4	5	4	27	64	D
S 3	P2	6	5	6	6	5	4	6	38	90	M
S 4	P3	4	2	1	2	3	2	3	17	40	D
S 5	P2	5	2	2	4	4	2	3	22	52	D
S 6	P1	5	3	3	2	4	2	3	22	52	D
S 7	P2	6	5	4	4	4	3	4	30	71	M
S 8	P2	6	5	5	4	4	5	5	34	81	M
S 9	P3	6	2	6	3	2	3	4	26	62	D
S 10	P3	6	3	3	2	3	4	4	24	57	D

Individual score = $\frac{Overall\ Score \times 100}{42}$

Number of Scale:
Emerging = $0 \leq score \leq 30$
Developing $= 31 \leq score \leq 70$
Mastering $= 71 \leq score \leq 100$

Based on the Table 3, the researchers presented the data obtained regarding with critical thinking of English Education Department students 2017 A class in STKIP PGRI Jombang. The finding shows there are 10 students who were willing to participate in this study. The researcher used the Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric adapted from Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology at Washington State University (2006). From the table shown, it can be seen its calculation to determine the students' critical thinking level. They were free choosing one of the pictures (Table 1) then interpreted it based on their background of knowledge. However, they got different scores regarding to each rating criteria and rating scale. The data shown that the critical thinking level of those 10 students are in developing level and just the three of them are in mastering level. The data was first obtained through students' worksheet and supported by the data interview.

DISCUSSION

Once the findings were identified, the discussion include the understanding of critical thinking in semiotic perspective which is concerning on multimodality and social semiotics. The data obtained were analyzed and interpreted to draw conclusions. Based on the number of pictures, the picture discussion will be divided into 3 parts as follows:

1. **Picture and Interpretations**
   a. **Picture 1 Discussion**

   Table 1 showed that there are two students who chose Picture 1 for interpretation i.e. *Student 2* and *Student 6. Student 2* clearly identified the integral relationship of the issues by confirming that Picture 1 exactly explains the education system in Indonesia where the teacher wishes for the students having the same thoughts like him/her. *Student 2* strengthened her assumption by

reviewing the bubble minds' shape. She said that, *"I saw from the teacher's perspective. She has a rectangular bubble mind, right? While the third and fourth students' own are different but being cut. So, I think the teacher wishes everyone has same thoughts".* But it contradicts with the opinion of **Student 6**. She assumed how these bubble minds interpreted as knowledge that builds equal understanding between teacher and students by this process (bubble minds cutting).

This is how social semiotics works and gives meaning to diversity. We can see how the same object is viewed differently in terms of the social context. It can come from the influence of the environment or social interactions. The theory of social semiotics deals with meaning in diversity where meaning arises from social context; environments and interactions to make it more meaningful. It differentiates social semiotic theory from other semiotics. It provides an understanding of how signs are created and contributes to the cultural environment to maintain the social function and meaning in the communication landscape. Meanwhile, multimodality offers a way to communicate meaning in multiple ways at the same time, which requires dialogue engagement. This means that each part of the object, especially on the picture, is a means of communicating meaning in a variety of ways. If we take a social semiotic approach to multimodality, it means that we look at the form and meaning of signs altogether.

This idea fits with Iedema's ideas (2003) that the term of multimodality is a technical term intended to emphasize that we live by the meaningful work that exists in conversation, gestures, facial expressions, and other contiguous resources such as physical distance, position, movement or stagnation. Unfortunately, **Student 2** and **Student 6** did not really go into more detail as the picture includes multiple modes including color, facial expression, spaces, and other entities. They were only concerned with the picture subjects meanwhile the green color does make sense to communicate. Moreover, the color green is commonly associated with nature, which is associated with grasses, plants and trees and is believed to reduce stress, symbolize healing, and promote feelings of empathy. It also represents growth and renewal as it is the color of spring and rebirth. The other association is "getting the green light" to move forward, which connects it to taking action. But the use of green is certainly inseparable from the intent that the creator wants to convey. However, we cannot always accept the creator's explanation, so we need to think deeply and critically.

Based on the meaning of the green color, which symbolizes the peace of nature, the use of this background implies the message that education can also be interpreted as a fundamental tool that anyone can access to achieve an advanced and prosperous civilization in the hands of more virtuous and civilized individuals. However, this context is very contrary to what was interpreted by **Student 2** and **Student 6** regarding the activities of the teacher and the student in the picture.

Furthermore, the way the students illustrated in the picture is possible to interpret such as asking ourselves of why do they seem sitting lethargically? Even

before and after teachers cut the bubble minds. It is questionable, indeed. Additionally, no one put smiles on the face. The teacher looks unhappy and annoyed while cutting. It can be assumed that the teacher follows her own ego, especially in an academic setting where she wishes things to go the way she wants them to.

Interestingly, both students were willing to share their personal experiences to support the interpretation regarding with the picture. **Student 2** confessed that one day, her teacher declined her friend's answer even though it was logically accepted. **Student 2** assumed that the teacher becomes superior as if knowing everything yet she tried to think moderately by claiming that *"I believe that it is only some cases and some teachers"*. Meanwhile, **Student 6** emphasized that each student experiences the same thing; from nothing to a better understanding since the teacher gave clear explanations. She also said that Picture 1 says more than she could possibly express.

Furthermore, during the interview session, the researchers sharpened each student's opinions by asking them to respond the opinions of other students. **Student 2** respectfully accepted the point of view of **Student 6**, yet **Student 2** emphasized her own analysis by further observation of students' expressions on the picture. She argued that the students find this method of teaching so boring that they have to follow the teacher every time. It is not possible to express freely how students really feel. Here is the part of interview and how she defended arguments and position:

Given the other student's interpretation
Researcher:
"According to Student 6, teaching and learning settings in the picture says about how the teacher hopes to transform knowledge to the students for having the same understanding. It can be seen from how she cut the shapes to the same way. What do you think about this?"

Student 2:
"In my opinion, the argument is acceptable but is not it the same, I mean there is a 'limitation' for students"

Researcher:
"Is not it a little different? He sees in positivism then more emphasizing on the power of the teacher than on the limitation itself"

Student 2:
"From the expressions in the picture, the students seemed to be bored when they had to follow such learning, which must always be in line with the teacher, and what students expressed was never be accepted by the teacher"

Yet, it contradicts to **Student 6** who argued that at first, students had no understanding at all before the teacher gave an explanation where this can be seen in the picture when the mind bubble was cut into the same shape which according to **Student 6** is an indicator of understanding from teacher to student. Besides, **Students 6** also claimed that there are several factors that influence a

student's interest in learning. Unfortunately, she did not explain much about it. After knowing the other interpretations, there is no change in her argument and position. Here is what she said in the interview:

Given the other student's interpretation
Researcher:

"According to Student 2, the picture shows how teachers become dictatorial to their students, so that students are required to think and act the way the teacher does. However, students have different abilities. So, we can see from the picture, basically the teacher does not give any freedom to think in expressing thoughts or creativity. What do you think about this opinion?"

Student 6:

"But then I focused on the shape of bubble mind. Two students out of 4 had a bubble mind in the shape of a circle, two of which already had a box-shaped bubble mind like the teacher owned. So, I can conclude, from the beginning, these students have the same bubble mind shape, it is circles".

In the end, **Student 6** concluded that the teacher's intention is really good, as it gives students insightful knowledge so that they have the same understanding. On the other hand, **Student 2** offered alternative thoughts, *"It would be better if the teacher did not make the students think in the same way. Perhaps the students have different thoughts or abilities. There are students who dominate using the left or right brain, right? In my opinion, if the opinions or answers can be justified and logically accepted, that is fine instead of having to force students to think the same way since the teacher is not always right".*

These explorations provide a starting point to look at how multimodality provides perspective and meaning in all semiotic complexity and richness (Iedema, 2003). The multimodality perspective emphasizes that the language used is not the only tool to convey meaning, but everything depends on the integration of meaning, such as font size, image color, page color, texture and so on. In this study, meanings were taken from one picture with two different perspectives. Furthermore, both students were able to associate their personal experiences with the picture, which helps their personal arguments as students often change their minds and perspectives on different topics after reading or having discussion (Brown, 2009).

By interpreting Picture 1, both students tried to convey the meaning on the student's worksheet and further enhance it through the interview section. They also provided some evidences to support their assumptions, whether empirical or scientific. This can be seen in Table 2, taking into account the student's reading habits and the fact that extensive reading builds for someone's cultural background, which can generate a schematic understanding (Maher, 2013). Basically, **Student 2** and **Student 6** had a reading habit before taking the extensive reading class. They prefer fiction readings to nonfiction ones. But after the extensive reading course ended, they began to love non-fiction materials due to its benefits. From this point, we can see how extensive reading help students

develop critical thinking skills, especially when reading a sequence of signs in a picture and understanding the meaning of particular values. They also reflected and tried to convey meaning from different perspectives based on their own prior knowledge.

Based on the students' interpretation, the overall score of students' critical thinking by **Student 2** is achieved in a number of 27 with its calculation number of 64. It means that the critical thinking level of **Student 2** is in developing level. Additionally, the overall score achieved by **Student 6** is 22 with the number scale of 52. It simply means that the critical thinking level of **Student 6** is in developing level.

b. Picture 2 Discussion

As it can be seen from Table 1 that there are five students chose Picture 2 to interpret. Those five students are **Student 1, Student 3, Student 5, Student 7** and **Student 8.** They actually conveyed the same point that Picture 2 is all about money and education but they had their own reasoning which are slightly different from each other. **Student 1** assumed that the picture illustrates the struggle of a father in sending his child to the higher education. He does not care of how much money will be spent.

She also figured out some elements of seesaw; buck of money; and the school door. From these sequences of signs in the picture got her thinking that the seesaw is a media to get the child goes up and reach out the edge of school door. In addition, **Student 1** declared that how the man pouring the money was such a struggle. She also delivered an alternative of other's view by strengthening her evidence. In the end, she concluded that, *"Parents will always want the best for their children with all their efforts"*. In line with this, **Student 5** explained similar views that it would cost too much to get a higher education and it consequently demands sacrifices from parents. She mentioned that a good education always requires a lot of money, such as an internationally based school or what was so-called as RSBI *(Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf Internasional – International Standard School Pilot)* system due to the quality and performance of school facilities.

Meanwhile, **Student 8** delivered arguments well for both written in the worksheet and in the interview regarding with Picture 2. For her deeper understanding, financial issues are less important than parents' main priority i.e. children's education. Here is a piece of her interview considered to her understanding of the issues:

Student 8

"I have explained in the worksheet that most of parents are willing to sacrifice a lot of money for their children's education because it is the main priority for every parents especially in Indonesia. In my surrounding, there are many parents who work so hard for the sake of favorite schools for their children. I think, favorite schools are extremely expensive due to its quality. We certainly know that parents do not want their children to be left behind. Parents are usually willing to spend a lot of money for their children such as transportation costs, pocket money, books and semester fee, etc. Even we can

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see in the picture that the man wants his son to be in a favorite school"

Student 8 also added that, "*We don't have to send our children to expensive favorite schools. The important thing is that we consider the economy aspect of the family and also the ability of children*". She believed that people should have the same opportunity to access education and take into account several aspects such as financial support and the interests of children. On the other hand, **Student 8** also associated this picture with her empirical experience since she discovered a social disparity from the upper middle class to the lower middle class.

This idea is balanced by **Student 3**, who believed that the picture shows the one who wants to get education or needs proper education will have to pay more but it is not always easy to obtain due to financial issues. **Student 3** also argued that even after the government regulated educational equality, yet a huge gap does exist. She authoritatively said that, "*In fact, this is not at all fair. There may be other ways for an accessible education for everyone*". This argument is supported by her own empirical evidence when she was being in high school where everything depends on money since it happened to her friends. Even after failing for school entrance, money can do anything for it.

To the same point, **Student 7** reinforced final opinion of **Student 6** that the problem captured on the Picture 2 is something common in Indonesia where manipulations could be done at any time. She tried to analyze the picture with the psychological consequences. Regardless of what adults have done, it will be such an imprint in our mind including a bribe. She mentioned one concrete example when someone wants to go for medical school but having the average score would not be a matter as long as they are capable to pay certain amount of money. Administratively, they will pass the entrance but their competencies will be considered doubtful.

From these 5 students, none attempted to correlate all the modes within the picture. They only deal with the financial problems and the struggle of the parents. However, **Student 7** drew a different perspective from the context of the picture. It is a good point but she only mentioned the consequences of inappropriate action. Rather than limiting the context, other students did not correlate the items or modes.

It can be actually seen from how the man looks like. He seems restless while paying the money off. What if he could not afford for it? Will the child go upstairs and reach out the school door? Fundamentally, it is not just about financial issues or how much money is spent on education, but also how education is being capitalized. Ideally, education should be accessible for everyone since it is the fundamental rights but practically becomes a promising business. As a result, many social inequalities emerged, as noted above by those 5 students.

On the other hand, the picture sets out in a sunny day. The blue color is a little brighter, but in contrast to the overall values within; the facial expressions of the man, the smiles of the boy and the way the teacher teaches. They all are integrated as well as the existence of the seesaw. These elements can actually be

elaborated for a comprehensive interpretation. Using mode means to work with abstract ideas and transform them into content for easy access (Bezener, 2012). Modes fundamentally enrich our meaning and understanding through various combinations of elements. In summary, all modes own semiotic resources to enable communication. It works this way when we need to express a complex idea or meaning in either way.

This corresponds to Matin's statement (Liu, 2013), that all semiotic modes have significant drive or potential, and multimodality is primarily focused on studying the interrelationships between different modes of communication; whether it is auditory; visual; words; or images. Basically, Picture 2 has a complex combination of activities in social, cultural, economic and technical contexts and how multimodality conveys meaning in different modes. This is consistent with what Kress (2010) said that, *"Each mode does a specific thing: image shows what takes too long to read, and writing says what would be difficult to show".* These interpretations are socially constructed and culturally shaped in society to relate to personal experiences in the same context. Here is the following summary of how those 5 students expressed their personal experiences and arguments:

Student 1 linked the picture to her own context. She explained that she had experienced a dilemma from family perspective, where father asked her to continue further education while mother encouraged her to go for work only because it costs a lot to study in the university. According to her, such things can happen because educational institutions are commercial in nature.

Meanwhile, ***Student 3*** mentioned a concrete case of how the power of money is applied to our societies. For example, when a person studies at Institution X, he / she will be guaranteed admission in the preferred university. In fact, most of the students entering Institution A are from the upper-middle class. According to her, this kind of situation is exacerbated by the privatization of schools or school labels that meet international standards, so it seems that only certain groups have access to education.

With the same point yet in a limited way, ***Student 5*** also provided an example of an international standard schools which are very expensive due to the facilities offered. Thus, the operational needs will be covered through tuition.

Furthermore, ***Student 7*** shared the experience of her friends who were confident that they could get into any school since a good financial support. In her point of view, it happens all over again because it has become such culture where anything is possible with money and power.

While according to ***Student 8,*** the social inequality issues like this must be experienced by anyone, including she herself. Despite being lucky enough to get into favorite school, yet she also had friends from low-middle-income families. Social status and social recognition are indispensable for the scope to arise. Even she asserted that there was a policy which prohibited students from taking exams or taking transcripts before paying tuition. In addition, there were

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also parents who had difficulty paying for extra lessons or those struggling parents who came to school asking for waivers. Besides, for digital needs such as cell phones or laptops were also to be brought to the school, but not all students were able to do so. Even though school offered computer labs, the gaps are still clearly visible and we often encounter such things.

After various arguments above, we may perceive that this one picture can be very expressive and has many levels of meaning. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) argued that image, color, music, typography, and other visual forms are like language, and together they accomplish three broad communication of meta-functions and how language works. In this way, the way these 5 students interpret the picture is unconsciously influenced by their cultural background. This is formed by a personal reading habit as one of the factors. We all know the importance of this reading, especially enjoyable reading (read: extensive reading). This large amount of reading provides students with comprehensive input (Krashen, 1982). Through this habit of reading on before and after given the extensive reading program (see: Table 2), it definitely helps students to develop ideas and provide alternative views since the picture offers different insights of how people attach to the live they deal with and how they give it meaning. Each of the students has their own reasoning and perspective to communicate their arguments based on the given picture. Here is how edusemiotics use signs as the central component. As an educational philosophy, edusemiotics promotes the values of relationships rather than personal ones. By developing a meaningful relationship with real personal life, it can be seen as interpretive signs of human experiences. When focusing on the experience of signs, the strong ontological dimension of edusemiotics can affect someone's personal conceptions, subjectivity and reasoning. In addition to her investigation, Semetsky (2015) pointed out that the process of ontological dimension in edusemiotics gives us insight into the vitality and response to signs.

The students' interpretations given above are measured with the certain criteria and its calculation shows that the overall score of **Student 1** is 27 with the number scale of 64. It means that the critical thinking level is in developing level. Besides, the overall score of **Student 3** is 38 with its calculation of 90. It means that the student's critical thinking level is in mastering level. Additionally, **Student 5** overall score shows a number of 22 with its calculation of 52. It means that the critical thinking level is in developing stage. Next, the **Student 7** overall score is shown a number of 30 with its calculation of 71. It means that the critical thinking level is in mastering level. The last overall score is from **Student 8**. It shows a number of 34 with its calculation of 81. It means that the critical thinking level is in mastering level.

c. **Picture 3 Discussion**

Table 1 shows that 3 students have chosen Picture 3 i.e. **Student 4, Student 9,** and **Student 10**. Unfortunately, **Student 4** did not really spell out the problems. She missed some supporting points of why the alphabets in the picture are wasted

and did not explain how it could be. It has not even been clearly stated in advance. In fact, she could have offered more explanation and made her own position specific by considering all the modes. Here is what she said on the interview:

Researcher:
"Why is that so? How could it be?"
Student 4:
"In my opinion, it may be happened because the student does not focus on the lessons being taught. So it doesn't seem like the material is well-explained"
Researcher:
"So, you assume that way from the student's point of view?"
Student 4:
"That's right"

According to the interview, **Student 4** did not initiate another perspective to support the argument while she interpreted the picture from the student's point of view only, without strong evidence. Still, she did not say much about her personal views and experiences. She just said, *"I do the same sometimes"*. What it meant by "do the same sometimes" is that she often caught on daydream in the classroom. She then tried to explain why all this happened. The first reason is because a boring teacher. Second reason is the roaming problem in head. These two factors can create a certain gap between teachers and students. There actually so much to say but she did not explore more about it. Yet, she tried to deliver arguments in a limited way. She said that, *"Maybe the students also need to pay more attention, to be more focus. While for the teachers, they need to know well about students' attitude, who actually see and listen to them or just keep on daydreaming. So that there is no distance, and the material can be easily understood"*.

For the next interpretation comes from **Student 9**. She determined her own position and clearly stated the issues. She assumed that the teaching method is such an odd thing. She also noticed the question mark that pops up onto the student's head. For her, it highly probably means that the student cannot understand well to what is spoken by the teacher. Based on her experience, she asserted that, *"The are some teachers who kept on sitting behind their desk without even bother explaining the material. We absolutely understand nothing. They sometimes explain things but talking to themselves then it is all about tasks in the end. No evaluations whether we understood or not, even no practices. For instance, in English subject. We are not really practicing skills like speaking nor writing but the teacher kept on explaining then got us doing the tasks, again and again. Is not it confusing?"*. In this part of having the personal view-based, she uttered the way she felt clearly. **Student 9** also assumed that there are factors of why it happened. She demonstrated that different nature affects teacher's teaching behavior. For her, a friendly attitude of the teacher may attract students' attention.

Furthermore, **Student 9** offered a new perspective apart from methodological issues. She asserted the importance of such a psychological approach in the process of teaching and learning. Consistent with this point, **Student 10** also illustrated the meaning of the picture based on the perception that goes out of the topic while giving the material then it caused the students having lack of understanding. She pre-identified the problem using an example and it follows her deeper understanding:

Researcher:

"Why do you assume that the teacher speaks out of topic?"

Student 10:

"Because the picture shows how a teacher talks about a b c till z but hard to understand. There is an obvious gap over there and it is all wasted away"

From this part of the interview section, **Student 10** tended to deliver arguments with some evidences taken from the Picture 3. She also emphasized this context with her own empirical experience that she often meets this kind of teacher but **Student 10** delivered it in less of explorations. When she was asked how could it be, she answered things like, *"Teacher may think that they already explained the topic but based on the students' perspective, they get nothing"*. She also mentioned how bad this will be impacted to students' growth - students will be passively follow the class. On the other side, **Student 10** tried to clearly justify her own view while respecting other's. Let's see from the piece of interview as follows:

Researcher:

"So here is your friend's opinion. She said that, if we see it from student's perspective, the student is actually not focusing on the teacher so he just wondered about what is going on. What do you think, then?"

Student 10:

"I think, we can also see from student's point of view but from teacher's, that's right that she just talks too much and there is no good communication between both students and teacher. As a result, students become passive yet teacher is speaking out of topic"

This part implicitly tells us how she tried to analyze other's perspective and gave an alternative view. She drawn a conclusion and more like giving suggestion that there should be a good interaction and a good communication between teacher and student so that teaching and learning process may run well and beneficial. Unfortunately, these three students did not explore further nor notice each entities of the image. They only focus on the subjects' consequences. Meanwhile, the gradation of blue is not merely meaningless. It can be interpreted as well. The darker it becomes, the deeper it gets. So when the letters fall down, it means that they are falling into a very deep abyss. Consequently, the spoken words could be so much meaningless. This can cause a huge gap between the

student and teacher even while the teacher is standing on the edge. It shows how quiet the education system or its process actually is. In addition, the student is illustrated all alone, with no friends but his own confusion.

Regardless to inappropriate method used by the teacher, the wasted words spoken can be interpreted that school materials are actually irrelevant to students' life. The theories do not always fit to the reality as well. As a consequent, students learn abstract things without a single understanding. This is symbolized from the question mark onto student's head. It can also be seen from his expression that he gets nothing in the class. That huge gap is real. Meanwhile, the teacher has no attention at all – seen from her facial expression. Additionally, it can be seen from her gesture and how she keeps on talking even though it is all overwhelming. Essentially, the spirit of education in pedagogy aims to enrich valuable experiences with value and meaning-oriented values. This can be a tool for re-conceptualizing the educational perspective as a process of habit change and a meaningful learning experience. Therefore, there are no barriers to limiting education with standardized tests. Indeed, education is meant and needs to bring out the best in each individual. In this case of education and semiotic, Olteanu and Campbell (2018) pointed out that edusemiotics does not mean semiotics applied to education, as a teaching tool, or as a research tool but becomes the base of educational theory and practice in the broader sense. In line with this, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) assumed that *"Image and other visual modes can represent objects and their relations in a world outside the representational system, they have the capacity to form texts, complexes of signs which internally cohere with each other and externally with the context in and for which they were produced".*

From these interpretations, the three of students who actually chose the same picture, absolutely have different reasoning based on their ability to communicate meaning. Each student has different style in expressing their minds even though in the most limited way while they ought to analyze it deeper by correlate all the entities in detail. Based on the result of students' rating criteria and rating scale, the overall score of **Student 4** shows 17 with its number scale of 40 from its calculation. The critical thinking level is in developing level. Meanwhile, the overall score of **Student 9** is 26 with its number scale of 62. It means that the critical thinking level of **Student 9** is in developing level. The last result is the overall score of **Student 10**. It shows the number of 24 with its number of scale written 57. It means that the critical thinking level is in developing level.

CONCLUSION

Considering life as a multimodal means the ability and understanding of situations in diversity, especially in an educational environment. In this study, the pictures have become the media to communicate meaning and conversion of values. At the very least, understanding the pictures will make us independent in giving meaning and not to trust the creator of the image easily. In fact, multimodality and social semiotic really help us to think critically and look at things in more detail (Leonardo, 2018). In sum, the result of this study

shows how the ability to read sequences of signs on the picture and to think critically of students can be encouraged.

Even though the result shows that there are 7 students out of 10 whose critical thinking level is in developing level. Meanwhile, the critical thinking level of the 3 students out of 10 is in mastering level. Most of them are basically love reading and keeps on reading even though the extensive reading program was over long time ago. This habit of reading is actually unconscious activity in shaping the way they generate ideas and reasoning. From the level obtained, it can be seen that students who really like to read, no matter what content they are reading, it helps them a lot in expressing thoughts and feeling appropriately. Some of them were able to give written arguments in the worksheets but most of them were really good at expressing ideas verbally. This confirms the benefits of extensive reading (Ferdila, 2014). Extensive reading enhances students' positive attitudes towards reading habits, among other benefits. This means that the habit should continue even after the program is over. The more they read, the better they express emotions and thoughts. In terms of meaning interpretation, positive reading habits also help students read the picture and interpret its meaning.

But for those who are less interested in reading is still able to communicate the meaning of the picture by elaborating ideas to their life experiences. It confirmed that the picture meanings are interpreted on the basis of social construction. The concept of social semiotic and multimodality offered perspective of how meanings are constructed. From this point, it shows how social semiotic contributes something to education which later be best called as edusemiotics where two fields are merged into one and become as the fundamental theory in education. This new direction of educational philosophy demonstrates semiotic as a key feature to mediate meaning and convert values. This integration of the conceptual framework promotes real life as substantial symbols and signs that engage the specific human experiences that we can learn in the educational system (Semestky, 2015).

Throughout the sequences signs on the picture, the abstract ideas are easy to convey by the students yet powerful since we need no extra words. Moreover, multimodality guides us to understand that language is not the central way to communicate meaning because we are surrounded by any other entities in daily basis. Furthermore, language has its own limitation while signs that involved in each mode in multimodality has its power to communicate as best asserted by Kress (2010). He declared that each mode can do one specific thing in the picture since it shows how long it takes to read and how writing easily tells about what would be arduous to show.

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