

Critical thinking and literacy at the crossroads: a reality checks on Indonesian academic writers

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Abstrak

ABSTRAK

In light of centering the discussion on how reading and writing skills help foster critical thinking (Arons, 1985; Carr, 1988; Miller & McKenna, 2016), and vice versa, this paper investigates aspects of critical thinking in the production of words in form of writing. A total of 1700 sample writing authored by 534 Indonesian academic writers of both gender, various social backgrounds, and field of studies were involved in the period of three years, in 2015-2017. The participants' essays were evaluated, provided with feedback, and coded. Results show that most Indonesian authors struggle in demonstrating their critical analysis within the three major areas in writing that highlight failure in identifying a research gap, stating a thesis, and presenting the overall analysis with data. Implications on how cultural environment may contribute to the lack of skills are reviewed, including national literacy rate consequences public or community library shortage, and the overall reading culture in Indonesia. Suggestions on some ways to help promote a better reading and writing culture are discussed.