CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Nowadays, things have becoming more and more easy to be accessed. This is due to digitalization that has been more and more advanced throughout the years, which causes people to be able to adapt to this constant changing. Students, on the other hand, are no different. Not only that they have to adapt to the rapidly changing digitalization era, they need to be able to acquire several skills that might help them be able to survive both in the world as a human being or as a worker. These sets of skill are known as the 21st Century Skills. Binkley et al. (2010) added that 21st Century Skills can be grouped into four broad categories: ways of thinking, ways of working, tools for working, and living in the world. Each category contains more specific skills that serves as a guide to skills that students may need to equip in order to adapt in this digitalized century.

One of the skills that, in fact, is needed to be acquired as students is critical thinking. According to Ennis (1992) and Pohl (2005), critical thinking is a discipline mental activity where opinions are evaluated, ambiguity identified and judgements made that can guide the improvement of values in order to make correct decisions in everyday life situations. Paul, Elder & Bartel, (1994) also added that the ability to think critically can be considered an essential facet in education and living as it is based on well-founded rational judgements where appropriate evaluative standards are used to determine the merit, true worth or value of something.

As to what is already presented above, it is safe to say that critical thinking is essential to all students as it would be able to help them to think deeper and more rationally. It would also make them wanting to know more about the matter that they find as curiosity would naturally come with the ability of them to think critically. Thus, critical thinking skills can be seen as an essential tool for students to keep their mind active and help them

in their studies. It is also an important skill that would also help them be able to make important decisions in the future.

This is line with the 21st century skills, as critical thinking is one of the six skills that is essential for students in this day and age. In order for the students to acquire critical thinking skills, school has to help them by applying it in their learning process. In her research, Purbasari (2020) found out three of four critical thinking skill indicators (make judgment and decision, solve problems, reason effectively) based on P21 Critical Thinking and Problem Solving of NEA and Alberta Education indicators, especially their sub-indicators, have mostly not been integrated in the three examined syllabi concerning with Literary Studies. This shows that critical thinking in a syllabus needs to be integrated. The CT skills indicators in existing syllabi need to be reevaluated and developed, while the missing indicators must be evaluated, selected, and developed. Then, both the existing indicators and the missing ones would have to be linked to one another, as well as other skills to create well-being graduates.

In their article, entitled *Critical Thinking as a 21st Century Skill: Conceptions, Implementations, and Challenges in the EFL Classroom,* Saleh focuses on the concept, the implementation, and the challenges that the university instructors have to go through while applying critical thinking for their classes. Saleh also explored on some Libyan EFL university instructors' perceptions about the challenges that they encounter throughout the process of employing critical thinking in their class. Saleh was able to gain the result for their research by using an open-ended questionnaire sent via Facebook Messenger to 24 Libyan EFL university instructors. Another one is titled *Thinking Critically About Critical Thinking in Higher Education*. In their study, Lloyd and Bahr analyzed on how both the students' and the instructors' perceptions toward critical thinking that is integrated in the Faculty of Education in a large Australian University. The study then found that the only difference that shows from the students and the instructors answers appeared to be one of perspective and purpose rather than any fundamental difference in conceptual understanding of critical thinking.

Perception is a matter that occurs in one's daily life, even without one being aware of it. People see things differently, therefore they think differently. This is due to the different backgrounds that each person has. How people are raised, where they live, how they are educated, or even their gender play a role on how they see the world around them. Dealing with the study of perception, McDonald (2010) also concluded in their journal that perception is never objective as it is an individual's unique way of viewing a phenomenon that involves the processing of stimuli, and incorporates memories and experiences in the process of understanding.

Just like how critical thinking and perception are applied in daily life, both of them also applied in a more formal environment such as at work or at school. In school, students are most likely to use their critical thinking to help them be able to learn the materials that they are learning, as it helps them to be more active in processing the information that they have acquired. By applying critical thinking, the students will more likely to become more curious about the details regarding the information that was given. With that being said, integrating critical thinking is a necessary skill to be present in any course design. Lloyd and Bahr (2014) concluded in their study that students understand the concept of critical thinking, as well as able to think critically with 'a sense of at all levels of an undergraduate'. They added that study program should also encourage instructors to consider integrating critical thinking even more in their course design. Lastly, they added that 'critical thinking, when explicitly discussed and developed in context, can be viewed as a road to higher level connections with epistemologies of disciplines.'

As what have already discussed above, it is apparent that each studies have its own focuses. For instance, *Thinking Critically About Critical Thinking in Higher Education* focuses how students and instructors perceive critical thinking integrated in the Faculty of Education, and *Critical Thinking as a 21st Century Skill: Conceptions, Implementations.* While *Challenges in the EFL Classroom* focuses on focuses on instructors' perspectives on critical thinking along with its implementation in EFL courses and challenges.

Therefore, this study will figure out how students in English Literature Study Program perceive critical thinking, as well as to figure out whether or not critical thinking has been integrated in Literary Classes. Thus, a survey will be used in order to acquire the result needed for this study.

1.2. Research Questions

From the explanation above, the question that rises is: how do students perceive the integration of critical thinking in Literary Classes?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Meanwhile the purpose of this study is to figure out how students perceive the integration of critical thinking in Literary Classes.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This study focuses on students perceive critical thinking, as well as to figure out whether or not critical thinking has been integrated in Literary Classes.

1.5. Significance of the Study

By doing this study, the writer hopes that the result of this study will be able to help the development of the course syllabus that uses critical thinking. The writer also hopes that this study will be able to help as a reference for future studies.