

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter will draw general information of study which covers explanation about background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, scope of the study, and significance of the study.

### 1.1 Background of Study

The challenges of universities in industrial 4.0 era are to produce individuals who have skills of the new literacy; literacy data, literacy technology and literacy of how to have great attitudes based on the religion aspect. One of the literacies which have been a concern is literacy data. Literacy data can be defined as the comprehension of individual to read, analyse, and use the data and information (big data) in digital era (Junaidi et. al., 2020). Therefore, due to this government's demand, universities need to provide the process of teaching and learning which support the students to answer the challenges in industrial 4.0 era. It can be done by improving the educational devices; syllabus, learning material and assessment which causes students to think critically or to reasoning in high-order thinking.

There are many reasons why critical thinking must be the concern of educational institutions. Firstly, the process of becoming critical thinker entails minimizing systematic errors that can lead to misinformed and wrong decision and actions. Avoiding systematic errors is to eliminate logical biases (Stein & Haynes, 2011). Secondly, critical thinking is viewed as a method that can help students to

make wise decisions and solve different problems related to their academic and personal lives. Thirdly, It is also considered to be a skill that can help students to improve their academic performance and become useful members of the society (Bazhouni, 2018). The last, these cognitive skills enable students to judge the information – on the internet, environment, workplace – so that the students are able to assess, analyse and/or evaluate them to make reasoned decisions and take purposeful action (Erdogan, 2019).

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), critical thinking also has become a valuable aspect to be incorporated for the successful of English language learners. Critical thinking (if it is sufficiently developed) provides language learners with some necessary skills in the context of using the target language properly and the way of learning it, especially in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Vdovina, 2013). Since language are culturally determined (Crystal, 2004), learners should be aware to the cultural differences between their mother tongue and the target language. Tradition and mentality of particular culture reflect in the languages; in the utterances, vocabulary, grammar structure, modality, etc. In this case, learners need to accept these cultural differences as a fully natural way of verbal expression within a different cultural domain, not as a deviation from their mother tongue. Thus, the role of critical thinking in this context, by identifying these cultural similarities and differences, is as a tool to acquire the target language better.

Furthermore, critical thinking is an active and interactive learning activity and it is relevant to how language learning should be going. Students tend

to learn better by actively communicating with each other in the process of language learning. Therefore, applying critical thinking into language learning process is helpful for students, because they have to comparing their views and ideas, evaluating arguments, analyse information in the classroom task or activity.

On the other hand, speaking is one of language skills that relates with one's cognitive process. (Bakhshizsdeh & Banafsheh, 2017) conducted research which investigate the effect of utilizing problem-solving tasks as an approach to teaching and learning the second language to improve speaking skill. Then, the result expressed that the utilization of problem-solving tasks has a significant effect on improvement of learner's speaking proficiency. Moreover, study that investigates the relationship between critical thinking and speaking ability among EFL students at Payame Noor University (PNU) was conducted and it revealed that English Language learners who are recognized as critical thinkers performed better in their speaking (Ramezani, Larsari, & Kiasi, 2016). It can be concluded that critical thinking skills and speaking proficiency is related to make each skill be developed.

From the reasons above, it can be concluded that critical thinking has a big impact to language acquisition process for students. Thus, it has become a challenge for educators (especially teachers) to provide task or activity that encourage students to think critically. Since learning materials are main references for the teachers to decide the activities that support teaching and learning process (Tomlinson, 1998), so that learning materials is one of essential educational devices which must be concerned.

Teaching/learning materials are one of very crucial elements that have to exist to conduct teaching/learning activities (Harsono, 2007). However, there are still learning materials that is not relevant for what learners are likely benefit from. Those materials (especially commercial materials) are driven by consideration of what the buyers (i.e., administrators and teachers) are likely to want. However, ELT materials should be driven by principles of language acquisition (Tomlinson, 2003).

Some research about critical thinking skills in language learning have been conducted by some researchers. (Junining, 2016) conducted research to produce innovative critical thinking skill strategies that are easily conducted in language teaching (specifically in teaching oral interpretation class) in which the students are expected to be able to apply CTS (Critical Thinking Skills) to master both productive skills (speaking and writing skill) by producing appropriate oral interpretation skills to bridge the gap between two languages. There are three steps in the procedure. They are constructing questions while watching audio-visual media and taking notes to supplement short term memory is the first innovation in CTS teaching, taking the essential notes using signs, symbols and figures to get the essence of the source language, and demonstrating a role play in oral interpretation is the last activity in this study to promote CTS to language productive skills development.

Next, (Rakhmawati & Priyana, 2019) presents the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that are integrated in the English textbook and to find out how those skills are integrated. The result of the study reveals 11 skills integrated in the textbook; critical thinking and problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and

innovation, information and communication technology (ICT), media literacy, leadership and responsibility, productivity and accountability, social and cross-cultural, initiative and self-direction, and flexibility and adaptability. Those skills are integrated through Nunan's task components; goals, inputs, procedures, teacher roles, learner roles, settings, and other strategies including notes, quotes, and points to ponder.

Another study was conducted by (Noorhapizah, 2019). The study is purposed to develop learning materials elementary school students containing critical and creative thinking based on local wisdom in the province of south Kalimantan and describe the effect of the learning materials utilizing. This research use research and development (R&D) method that developed the product in the form of teaching materials and/or textbooks. The result of the study is a thematic textbook entitled "Our Environment of Choice: Thematic Material with Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking Skills". Then, the researcher explained there is a significant effect in utilizing the textbook for the students.

Regarding the previous research of integrating critical thinking into education, this present study intended to bridge the gap in developing critical thinking skills - integrated speaking learning materials for English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) to fulfil government's plan for developing the process of learning based on the necessity of society 4.0 to face 21<sup>st</sup> Century complex life challenge in Indonesia. Speaking skill is chosen since it is the productive language skill that requires learners to activate their knowledge and then to produce the language (Bakhshizsdeh & Banafsheh, 2017). Furthermore, to reach

an international standard of language learning, the researcher will to the CEFR (Common European Framework) to develop speaking language learning materials.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the explanation above, this study intends to answer the following:

Main question:

How are critical thinking skills - integrated speaking learning materials for English Language Education Study Program (ELESP)?

Sub-questions:

1. To what extent do the existing speaking materials for general speaking (B1) of English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) accommodate critical thinking skills?
2. How are critical thinking skills integrated in speaking materials for general speaking (B1) of English Language Education Study Program (ELESP)?
3. How are the design of critical thinking skills - integrated speaking materials for general speaking (B1) of English Language Education Study Program (ELESP)?

## **1.3 Purposes of Study**

In line with the research questions, these present purposes of the research that are mentioned in the following:

The main purpose of the research is:

To develop critical thinking skills – integrated speaking materials for English Language Education Study Program (ELESP).

The sub-purposes of this research are:

1. To analyse the critical thinking skills integrated in the existing speaking learning materials for English Language Education Program (ELESP).
2. To describe the procedure of developing process of critical thinking skills – integrated speaking materials for English Language Education Program (ELESP).
3. To develop critical thinking skills – integrated speaking materials for English Language Education Study Program (ELESP).

#### **1.4 Scope of Study**

The study will be limited on developing critical thinking skills - integrated speaking learning materials for undergraduate students of English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) in Indonesian universities in the level of CEFR B1 (General Speaking). Moreover, Design and Development Research (DDR) method is used in this study. In implementing DDR, five steps will be conducted. Those steps include need analysis, developing course grid, developing first draft materials, Evaluation by the experts, and writing final draft of the materials.

#### **1.5 Significance of Study**

It is undeniable that the study of material development contributes the process of (English Language) teaching and learning which promote critical thinking skills. Materials act as the sources for teachers to carry out the process of teaching and learning activities. Hence, the necessary skill which is relevant for learners to live in this digital era makes English language materials integrating critical thinking skills should be a concern.

The significance of the study is divided into two categories; theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the study hopefully can enrich the concept of an understanding about the essence of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills to be integrated in educational device, especially learning materials and how critical thinking skills should be integrated within English speaking materials. Practically, the writer expects these materials become one of adapted materials for material writers, especially English language teachers who seek for the model of materials which are relevant in 21st century. Specifically for English speaking language teaching and learning process which encourage the students to think critically.

