

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present general information about the study, including a description of the study's background, research questions, objectives, scope, and significance.

1.1. Background of the Study

Critical thinking skills are essential in the global competition era of the twenty-first century because the level of complexity of problems in all aspects of modern life is very high. Critical thinking belongs to the high level of a cognitive domain as a continuation of essential competencies in the learning process (Chang, Li, Chen, & Chiu, 2014; Huff, 2014; Lai, 2011; Liu, He, & Li, 2015; Piergiovanni, 2014). Developing critical thinking means developing the activities of lifelong learning (Gibby, 2013), a requirement for individuals to become active members of democratic societies, and can solve the social problems they will face (Oguz & Saricam, 2015). Tinio (2003), states that one of the skills needed to face the future challenges that will come is critical thinking.

Moreover, the main aim of education is not only to teach basic knowledge but to use thinking skills such as critical thinking skills, creative thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and scientific and technological abilities as these are skills needed for sustainability and lifelong education. (Segal et al.1985; Runco, 2015; Tortop, 2013). While Yang, Gamble, Hung & Lin (2013) state that Critical thinking is an essential 21st-century learning skill that students must be taught and learned to be successful academically. Students must not only think but also think critically to be successful academically.

Critical thinking has a pivotal role in teaching and learning activities. Implementing the development of critical thinking in the classroom is one of the most important skills of the 21st century. The Indonesian government places critical thinking as one of the most important skills to be taught and learn in school or university, as evidenced in the issue of 2010 Decree No. 17 about the Indonesian education system and its implementation; "intellectual skills include the ability to mastery of technology, science, and/or art related to the field of study, think critically and creatively, and conduct research with a scientific approach".

However, learners' critical thinking skills in Indonesia are low (Ramdani, A. et al., 2021; Zubaidah et al., 2018). It can be seen from The Conference Board (2006) report that the result of a survey of human resource professionals found that 70 percent of employees with a high school education were lacking in critical-creative thinking skills. According to the most recent PISA Report in 2019, there has been no significant improvement since joining the international program, with the country consistently ranking at the bottom of the rankings.

Based on the report, it was known that Indonesian students were ranked 74th out of the 79th participating countries around the world in terms of reading skills (OECD, 2019). It can be inferred that Indonesian students still lack literacy skills, especially basic literacy skills (reading). Kartikaningsih (2016) also reported that Indonesian students lack critical thinking in argumentative texts that they have created for course assignment purposes due to their limited knowledge of both the concept of critical thinking and approaches to applying it in their literacy skills.

The goal of all educational institutions is to develop critical thinking. Educational institutions should make sure that students acquire the skills necessary to think critically and objectively, as well as to become successful citizens who can

reason ethically and act in the public interest. At all grade levels, critical thinking lessons must be integrated into the curriculum's content, structure, and sequence. It means that the educational institution must improve the quality of its students by developing both their knowledge and their critical thinking skills by utilizing a variety of learning methodologies, media, and materials that are incorporated into socially relevant real-life situations. Therefore, applying critical thinking in the language learning (reading) materials process helps learners compare their views and ideas, evaluate arguments, and analyze information in the classroom activity or task. Because, through reading activities, learners can improve from a critical thinking perspective, develop new and different perspectives, understand themselves and the world, and interpret the events and situations they encounter in the classroom activity or task (Karadeniz, 2015). In line with this, Grabe (2013) asserts that reading is the process of drawing and interpreting the meaning of the text. In the learning process, the syllabus, materials, and teachers should be directed to encourage learners to find out the various sources of available information by reading.

From the reason above, Integrating critical thinking skills into the learning materials will be proposed to create a better learning activity that will make more critical learners. Learning materials become the main references in the teaching and learning process (Tomlinson, 1998), and also learning materials have a fundamental impact on students' and teachers' activities. Learning materials are used in all language skills including reading skills. Therefore, English Language teaching should be driven by principles of language acquisition (Tomlinson, 2003).

Some research about critical thinking skills in language learning has been conducted by some researchers. (Noorhapizah, Agusta and Pratiwi, 2020)

conducted research to develop learning materials containing critical thinking and creative thinking skills based on local wisdom. This study uses the research and development (R & D) method to develop a textbook or learning materials as a product. The result of this study is thematic material with critical thinking and creative thinking skills." It is appropriately applied to the students.

Second, (Junining 2014) researched to integrate EFL reading with critical thinking skills by implementing three strategies (internalizing, applying, and evaluating). It can be concluded that implementing the three strategies can critical reading strategy that is crucially needed in comprehending both informational and literary texts, especially in higher education.

The last study is entitled "Developing Critical Thinking in the English Language Classroom: A Lesson Plan" by Elena Vdovina (2013). This study aimed to share both theoretical and practical ideas about critical thinking development within English language teaching and learning contexts. The object of this study is to find out what critical thinking is, why to integrate and develop critical thinking in ELT, and how to create lessons including an element of critical thinking development.

Regarding the previous research on integrating critical thinking into education, this study aimed to bridge a gap in developing critical thinking skills by integrating reading materials as provide students with a to face the 21st century. Furthermore, to reach an international standard of language learning, the researcher will to the CEFR (Common European Framework) to develop reading language learning materials.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the explanation above, this study intends to answer the following main question”

How are Critical Thinking Skill-integrated reading materials for English Education Study Program?

Before the above questions, the following sub-questions are crucial to be clarified

1. To what extent do The Existing Reading Materials for English Language Education Program (ELESP) accommodate Critical Thinking Skills?
2. How is the development of Critical Thinking Skill-integrated reading materials for the English Education Study Program?
3. How is the design of critical thinking skills – integrated reading material for the English Education Study Program?

1.3. Objective of the Study

To answer the research question, the objectives of the study are stated as follows:

1. To analyze the critical thinking skills integrated in the Existing Reading Materials for English Language Education Program (ELESP).
2. To describe the procedure of developing process of Critical Thinking Skill-integrated reading materials for the English Education Study Program
3. To develop the Critical Thinking Skill-integrated reading materials for English Education Study Program

1.4. Scope of the Study

This research focuses on designing critical thinking skill that integrates in reading materials for English Education Study Program. Afterward, this study applies the method of Research and Development (R&D) by adapting Jolly & Bolitho's Model (2011). The researcher analyzed the existing reading materials to figure out the extent to which the materials integrate with critical thinking skills. The analysis was focused on level CEFR B1.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Based on the objective of the study mentioned above, the study hopefully can give several contributions as follows;

1. Theoretically

This study is expected to give a thoughtful understanding of the educational field of designing critical thinking skills integrated reading materials for the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP), especially in level CEFR B1. Furthermore, the result can be used as a reference for the future researcher.

2. Practically

The researcher hopes this study can help the practitioners in education to use this designing critical thinking skills integrated reading materials for English Language Education Study Program (ELESP).