

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This part outlines the background of the study, the research question, research objectives, significances of study, rationale, and previous researches.

A. Background

The development of Critical Thinking (CT) has been an essential skill in 21st century learning. It is clear that the CT process can make human capable of deciding and selecting available information. Depdiknas in Emilia (2010) stated that CT has been one aspect that has assumed great importance in the policies and the government, especially in education. Moreover, critical theory has been regarded as a crucial part of culture because it is associated with quality of thinking that provides students with the more adept way of interacting with other people, getting new knowledge, and dealing with ideas, beliefs, and attitudes (Vdovina & Gaibisso, 2013).

In English learning activities in Indonesia, many teachers involve the students in their task to think critically, even though the teacher does not teach CT directly in the learning material. Therefore, the teachers should develop students' CT skills because these skills are essential that language learners need to build for their academic life (Asgharheidari & Tahriri, 2015).

Although thinking is a heart of education, it is not often explicitly taken into consideration in pedagogy (Moon, 2008). Based on the researcher's personal experience in one of the universities in Bandung, especially the third semester in reading comprehension class, only few students could explore and express what

their understanding from the text they read. It happened because they do not understand the words, and unclear purpose of reading.

Furthermore, in higher education context in Indonesia, especially in English Department, the lack of CT skills possessed and the lack of meaningful activities that support the development of CT skills are assumed to be the reasons why Indonesian university students are not useful in exchanging ideas and information or writing in English. They are more likely to accept opinions than to express their views, especially in matters they should know, for example, political news and issues, corruption, and current educational conditions, without understanding and assessing it whether the report is real or not. It is a serious problem because knowing information less comprehensive can make the students judgmental (R. Epstein, 2006).

However, this study is different from other researches because this research focuses on the students' CT toward moral values on the English Text. There are some reasons why the researcher picks out text with moral value in comparison with other documents. First, the text that contains moral values will usually be controversial, for example, respect for parents. In the Indonesian context, moral value has become a kind of obligation between children to their parents. While, in the Western context, moral value is not necessarily. This condition is possible to happen because of any differences in cultures and customs between West and East. Second, education in Indonesia is an education that is carrying the importance of character education so that using text with moral value is in line with the existing curriculum in Indonesia. Besides, this study expects a teacher that she or he can provide a challenge of tasks that can be taught to students so that they can think

critically. Based on the description above, the research investigates the issue of *“FOSTERING STUDENTS’ CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH READING TEXT WITH MORAL VALUES.”*

B. Research Questions

From the description above, this study is intended to answer the two following research questions:

1. How is the process of teaching CT through reading text with moral value?
2. How are the students’ responses to teaching CT through reading moral value text?

C. Research Objectives

From the research questions above, this study is aimed at obtaining two following objectives:

1. To know the process of teaching CT through reading text with moral value.
2. To reflect the students’ responses to teaching CT through reading moral value text.

D. Significances of the Research

The research is intended to fulfill the significances of study such as theoretically, practically and professionally. Theoretically, this research will be benefit for teachers to have a well-planned lesson. The teacher can prepare a question that engages the student and global needs. It helps the student to broaden

their knowledge and higher their CT skills. Practically, this research can provide alternative materials for teaching English and assessing CT. Besides, it will increase the student proficiency in understanding the meaning of the knowledge. Professionally, this research also expects the teacher to be creative in selecting the appropriate models and materials to engage the students' motivation and to foster the students' critical thought.

E. Framework of Thinking

Learning and thinking have long been regarded as interrelated lifelong processes (Chaffee, 1994). People are determined by their thinking for whatever they do, they feel, and they want is built on their quality of thinking (Paul & Elder, 2002). Therefore, thinking could not be separated from the everyday life of the human being. Furthermore, the term thinking is also defined by the researcher in different meaningful dimension. Frensch & Funke (2002) defines that thinking as the cognitive process of internal memory representations that may appear consciously or subconsciously and may not always follow the laws of logic. Moreover, John- Laird as cited in Frensch and Funke (2002) argues that thinking is goal-oriented, does not support a predetermined series of mental steps, and has no precise starting point.

One of the thinking skills that need to be acquired by students is CT. According to Ennis (2011), CT is reasonable, and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do. Moreover, Fisher (2001) as cited in Moon (2008) defines that CT is a kind of evaluative thinking which involves both criticism and creative thinking and which is mainly concerned with the quality of reasoning

which is present in support of a belief or a course of action. Another expert defines CT as self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way (Paul & Elder, 2014).

In addition, Facione (1990) argues that good critical thinkers have to meet the cognitive skills that should be involved in the way they think. Therefore, he characterizes specific cognitive abilities as the core of CT skills. The cores of CT skill are interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation.

Thinking needs to be evaluated to avoid the ideas of others controlled it. Fisher (2001) explains that CT emphasizes the importance of reasoning in which individuals are expected to give and to evaluate reasons as pleasant as possible by using their ability to evaluate other ideas. Fisher (2001), also emphasizes that CT skills appear when someone is consciously aiming to improve his/her views and create new ideas well reasonably.

CT is believed to have significant contributions to learners' academic context in the era of technology and the explosion of information (Kealey, Holland & Watson, 2005). This statement is supported by Bailin and Siegel (2003) who stated that CT should be the primary goal of education. The critical inculcation of thought in education is essential for reasons to facilitate students to think for themselves and make decisions, to equip them with skills to do well in subjects such as mathematics, science, literature, art, and history, to prepare students for challenges of adulthood and to enable them to lead a democratic life which involves good and analytical thinking (Siegel, 2010).

The relation between CT and reading comprehension is well established in the literature. Norris and Phillips (1987) pointed out that reading is more than just saying what is on the page; it is thinking. It is supported by Ruggiero (1984) who recognized that reading involves thinking. Moreover, Yu-hui (2010) stated that reading is a thinking process to construct meaning. From those statements, it can be drawn that there is a significant relationship between the CT ability of learners and their performance on reading comprehension.

Moreover, reading comprehension has held a prominent place in the English language classroom. Reading comprehension is defined as the activity to understand the meaning of a text which enables the reader to find the information needed (Sahardin, Mukarramah, & Hanafiah, 2015). Hasbun (2006) highlights the importance of reading by stating that reading skills “lie at the heart of formal education” and it is difficult to achieve many things without having the ability to read fluently and good comprehension on it.

F. Previous Research

There are several types of research regarding the implementation of CT in English Language teaching. The first research was provided by Asgharheidari & Tahriri (2015). The study was conducted on 30 EFL teachers who taught English in twelve different English institutions in Abbasabad and Tanekabon (Mazandaran Province, Iran). The result indicates that most of the teachers had a bright idea toward the concept of CT and believed that it is an essential part of their task as teachers to increase the students' CT.

The second research is carried out by Chi-An Tung and Shu Ying Chang (2009). This study investigated the effectiveness of developing CT through literature reading. This research indicates three findings. First, literature reading helped the low-achieving student in the pretest improve their CT skills, particularly in the analysis. Second, the students' English proficiency is not related to their performance in the pretest and posttest. Third, several students tended to show more dispositions toward CT.

In addition, the third research is conducted by Junining (2016). The research aimed at discovering innovative strategies to develop CT skills in language teaching. The result of the study indicates that developing CT skill in language teaching, oral interpretation class, in this case, could be conducted by implementing three procedures namely analysis, synthesis and evaluation which adapted from Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domains.

The fourth, in the area of CT and language proficiency, Rashid and Hashim (2008) investigate the connection between CT and language proficiency. They administered the Cornell CT Test (CCTT) and English language proficiency test to 280 undergraduate students of University Utara Malaysia (UUM). The results indicate that there is a significant correlation between the CT ability of Malaysian students and their English language proficiency.

Last, the research is also conducted by Djiwandono (2013) to a group of who was studying Business Correspondence in Ma Chung University Malang, Indonesia. The researcher carried out brief training on CT skill to the learners that resulted in the students' tendencies to ask more critical questions with higher

frequencies. It is concluded that brief training has improved the students' CT skills in their language class.

However, this research is different from other research because the previous research focuses on the students' thinking skills as one competency that should be required by the students'. While this study focuses on the student's emerged of CT skills through moral values text.

Presumably, this paper due to investigate not only on the comprehension but also the specific problem how students can reflect CT on reading comprehension and their responses to teaching CT through moral issues text as learning evaluation based on knowledge and perspective they had. Hopefully, this study also might be a barometer to raise the reading interests as well as media to add insight to students in Indonesia.

