

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Critical thinking is an essential skill that the students and teachers must be possessed in the 21st century. It means that teacher should possess not only pedagogical skill but also critical thinking skill (Petek & Bedir, 2018 cited in Ma & Luo (2020). The critical thinking skill will support students' ability in looking inside a new problem and how to solve it and decide what they believe and do (Smogorzewska, 2014).

A person's method of making rational judgements or judgments about something is known as critical thinking (Chikiwa & Schäfer, 2018). Someone who can think critically will constantly evaluate his thinking to ensure that he doesn't come to the wrong conclusion or solution. Critical thinking is the process by which a person makes decisions about the complicated issues that he or she is confronted with (Husna, 2020).

Critical thinking skill in English language class has become the importance and inevitable skill since it promotes the development of students' creativity in English class (DfE, 2013 cited in Ma & Luo, 2020) which it consists of ability of using language for speaking and language productivity (Smogorzewska, 2014). The integration of critical thinking can help students and teachers to internalize English language acquisition (Liang & Fung, 2021). One aspect of English acquisitions is reading skill requiring critical thinking skill to be integrated in the text that the students read (Heidari, 2020). Heidari (2020) reveals that the internalizing process requires critical thinking to bridge the students to the background information from a text or passage and to help them to understand the real meaning of the passage. Moreover, Afshar & Rahimi (2014) explicate that critical thinking has a main role to develop speaking ability by giving the students a challenging task in conveying meaning so students will have more opportunity to speak confidently.

Teachers have important role to develop students' critical thinking. They become a facilitator in integrating strategies to implement the critical thinking activity such as problem solving activity and undertake the group task (Fung et al., 2016). Umar &

Rathakrishnan (2012) also emphasize the role of teachers in developing students' critical thinking skill as the pedagogical facilitator for students and as a moderator who creates the good social environment in the classroom.

The previous studies discussed the practise of professional teachers in developing their critical thinking conducted by Sheybani & Miri (2019). However, Liang & Fung (2021) explain that a scanty study investigates the application of critical thinking instruction in English class conducted by pre-service teachers. According to Kusaeri & Aditomo (2019) findings, pre-service teachers should pay greater attention to the relevance of critical thinking and the function of constructivism learning in building critical thinking abilities. Meanwhile, Zetriuslita, Ariawan, & Nufus (2016) published a study on students' critical thinking skills depending on their ability levels, the results show how students at each level of high, medium, and low thinking ability are able to answer questions. 21st-century learning necessitates that pupils have 4C skills (communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking), pre-service teachers must be able to think critically (Husna, 2020). According to Susanti & Arista (2019) research on the degree of pre-service teachers knowledge of skills 4C, 19 percent had high abilities, 51 percent had moderate abilities, and 30 percent had low abilities. According to Susanti & Arista (2019) research, pre-service teachers' critical thinking skills are still low. Therefore, this research is important to be undertaken to fill the gap and extend the existing literature. This study aims to investigate the application of critical thinking conducted by pre-service teachers in English classrooms at junior high school level.

1.2. Research Question

Research question of this study is “To what extent do Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers apply critical thinking in English instruction?”

1.3. Aims of the Study

This study aims to investigate the application of CT conducted by Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers in English instruction.

1.4 Scope of the study

This study focuses on the application of pre-service teachers' critical thinking in English instruction. The study selects four pre-service teachers' of English language education study

program at one of private university in West Jakarta, Indonesia. It employs Defianty & Wilson (2019) blooms taxanomy theory to explore the pre-service teachers' critical thinking practice in English instruction in junior high school level.

1.5. Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Teacher

The result of the study offers the critical thinking practice as the guidelines for in-service and pre-service English teacher. It is expected they can integrate it in their English class.

1.5.2 Teacher Education Program

This research is expected to be an input for teacher education program designer- especially for the English language education department to develop critical thinking skill instruction for prospective teacher education program.

1.5.2 Theoretical

With this research, it is hoped that it will become the basis for developing critical thinking skills for Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

Some definitions are provided to help understand some of the important words used in this research.

- Pre-Service Teachers : Teachers who will become teachers in schools will need to be competent to handle community concerns (Cheong, 2010).
- Critical Thinking : The process by which a person makes decisions about the complicated issues that he or she is confronted with (Husna, 2020).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

There are six chapters in this paper. Chapter one describes the urgency of the research, the gap or novelty by providing the previous studies, research problem, purpose, research scope and research significance. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework. Chapter three describes research methodology containing research design, procedures, research setting, data collection and data analysis from the research that we are going to do. Chapter four

explains the research findings. Chapter five represents the discussion by explaining the findings and supporting theories. Chapter six discusses conclusion and recommendation.