

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborate background, research questions, research purposes, research significances, research framework, and previous research.

#### A. Background

Critical thinking is a process of judgment reflectively and reasonably which relies upon criteria, self-correcting, and sensitive to the context to decide what to do or what to believe (Ennis, 1985; Facione, 2000 in Fadhillah, 2018). In daily life, critical thinking is used to create sharp decision making, to form an opinion based on reasons, to overcome individualist wisdom and tendencies, and to indicate persuading motives in maintaining conclusions about what should be done and accepted as accurate (Bassham, Irwin, Nardone, & Wallace, 2011, p. 1 cited in Vong & Kaewurai, 2017). According to Adams (2014) critical thinking skills are an ability that students must have especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because students today face a greater challenge in evaluating information than their parents or grandparents did at their age. The cumulative amount of information that exists on the planet, from the beginning of recorded history to the present is [by realistic estimates](#), doubling every two years. Even though digital natives have grown up in the information age, many of the adults and institutions in their lives are still grappling with its implications. In other words, it is likely that the kind of credulity see in young people reflects our own collective uncertainty about what people encounter on the digital frontier. Finally, the skills that students need to effectively sort fact from fiction are often missing from school curricula. News literacy education has the potential to engage students and ignite their critical thinking. More importantly, it can empower them to make better-informed choices in their lives as they move beyond the classroom and into the world.

Considering that since the beginning of 2019 politics in Indonesia has been heating up with the presidential election, there are three students at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung expressing their opinions on social media about their political views, but are they aware that their opinions are accompanied by evidence and facts or are they merely opinions? For example, Selma said that one of the candidates who had previously served as president did not agree with the phrase "*The President is not concerned with the needs of his people*" she said that public facilities such as toll roads are already available in almost all regions of Indonesia, whether people will continue to insist that the president is not concerned with the interests of the people. This can be used as a consideration that the fulfillment of public facilities such as toll roads can already be used as a reference if the president meets the needs of his people or not. Thus, the researcher would like to know the students' critical thinking when reading political articles.

There are several research regarding critical thinking in reading the text. First, research by Maslakhatin (2016) reveals that previewing, annotating, questioning, scanning and skimming, fact versus opinion, summarizing, paraphrasing, synthesizing, and drawing can be implemented to foster students' critical thinking skills. Second, research by Fadhillah (2018) indicates that there are five steps of critical reading strategies as postulated by Sousa (2004) and WSSU (2013) including previewing, outlining and summarizing, questioning, reflecting and evaluating. This research is different from previous research. The previous researches focus on students' critical thinking through reading an argumentative, narrative text, this research centers on critical thinking through political article. Due to the reasons, this study focuses on engaging students in reading political articles to foster their critical thinking skills. This research aims to investigate Indonesian EFL students' engagement in reading political articles and their critical thinking skills. This research is essential to find how far students can build their opinion and distinguish fact and opinion after reading political articles. Paul and Elder (1994) cited in Duron et al. (2006) in Maslakhatin, 2016) said that someone who are critical

thinkers usually bring out some important questions and problems while they are reading, then they state them clearly, collect and evaluate some relevant information, use the ideas which are abstract, think open mindedly, and making communication with the other effectively. These students' opinions and the way they distinguish facts and opinions in an article will be the measurement of their level of critical thinking

## **B. Research Questions**

From the research background, the problems are formulated into the two following questions:

1. How is the process of engaging students in reading political articles to foster their critical thinking skills?
2. What are the students' critical thinking skills specifically in differentiating facts and opinion?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Based on the research questions, this research is formulated into two following purposes:

1. To find out the process of engaging students in reading political articles to foster their critical thinking skills.
2. To find out the students' critical thinking skills specifically in differentiating facts and opinion.

## **D. Research Significances**

In theoretical and practical, this research provides the following benefits:

1. Theoretical, this research is expected to be a source of information to measure the extent to which students can build their opinions, and on what basis students make their opinions, and measure students' critical thinking skills through reading political articles, and are expected to provide some ideas and understanding to English

teachers about students' critical thinking skills through reading learning.

2. Practical, this research gives importance to:

a. Students

The results of this research are expected to increase students' understanding of critical thinking in reading a text so that when they write or express their opinions can be more careful to prevent violations of the ITE Law.

b. Teachers

This research can contribute to all teachers to consider students' critical thinking skills and determine the best strategies in the teaching and learning process to minimize student gaps and maximize their potential in learning English especially in the ability to read texts and think critically.

### **E. Research Framework**

Paul and Elder (2006) quoted in Kizilet (2017) said that critical thinking is what needs to be known while reasoning. In daily life, critical thinking is used to create sharp decision making, to form an opinion based on reasons, to overcome individualist wisdom and tendencies, and to indicate persuading motives in maintaining conclusions about what should be done and accepted as accurate (Bassham, Irwin, Nardone, & Wallace, 2011, p. 1 cited in Vong & Kaewurai, 2017). According to Ruggiero (1984; cited in Taglieber 2000) critical thinking as “the close examination of a proposed problem’s or issue’s solution to determine both its strengths and its weaknesses. In short, it means evaluation and assessment” (p. 129). To Wilson (1988) cited in Taglieber (2000), critical thinking involves predicting results, formulating questions, and responding to text by applying one’s values and beliefs. It is crucial for students need to have critical thinking skills to solve problems, become reflective practitioners and make reliable evidence-based (Agwu, Ogbu, & Okpara, 2007;

Castle, 2009; Ugwu, Ukwueze, Erondu,&Nwokorie, 2010 cited in Pieterse, Lawrence, & Friedrich-Nel, 2016).

There is the fact that many people are simply trying to fool us. Unfortunately, for the most part they succeed—because most of us do not think critically enough, or recognize many of the tricks that these folks use. For all of the reasons cited above, critical thinking is a necessity (Ministry of Defence Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC), 2010). In addition, Robert (2010; cited in Patterson 2016) said that critical thinking is matters in college because:

1. It allows students to form their own opinions and engage with material beyond a superficial level. This is essential to craft a great essay and having an intelligent discussion with their professors or classmates. **Regurgitating what the textbook says won't get them far.**
2. It allows students to craft worthy arguments and back them up. If they plan to go on to graduate school or pursue a PhD. original, critical thought is crucial.
3. It helps students evaluate their own work. This leads to better grades and better habits of mind.

Watson-Glatser (2009) cited in Zulmaulida et al.,(2018) has researched and developed critical thinking skills. This development is based on encouragement in combining the attitudes, knowledge and skills that are formed from critical thinking skills. Watson-Glatser examine how students with critical thinking when they solve a problem are described as follows:

1. Inference Making

Students' ability to distinguish between true or false conclusions from the data given.

2. Recognition of Assumptions

The ability of students to recognize an assumption of a statement given orally or written.

### 3. Deduction

The ability of students in determining a decision on the conclusion that must be followed from the provided information.

### 4. Interpretation (Induction)

The students' ability to consider and decide whether the evidence and conclusions obtained can be generalized.

### 5. Evaluation of Arguments

The ability of students to give more appropriate and relevant arguments through specific questions of the given problem.

Bourke (2006) said that critical thinking incorporates the capacity to assess, compare, investigate, identify inclination, distinguish fact from opinion, see causal associations, make inferences and structure powerful contentions. Expertise at counseling wellsprings of data becomes an integral factor when one looks for data to help settle an issue, as in up-and-comer. Capacity to discover and evaluate data incorporates capacity to assemble and marshal appropriate data (Glaser 1941: 6 in Hitchcock, 2018), to decide whether an statement made by a supposed authority is worthy (Ennis 1962: 84 see Hitchcock, 2018), to design a quest for wanted data (Facione 1990a: 9), and to pass judgment on the believability of a source (Ennis 1991: 9 quoted in Hitchcock, 2018).

The researcher will select several students who will be asked to read the political articles that are given and learn how to distinguish between facts and opinions, then the researcher will give some questions related to the text. Next, the researcher will analyze the level of their critical thinking skills based on their answers.

## **F. Previous Research**

There are several research regarding critical thinking in reading the text. First, a research by Maslakhatin (2016), this research uses a library study and reveals that in reading the argumentative text several alternative strategies can be implemented to foster students' critical thinking including

previewing, annotating, questioning, scanning and skimming, fact versus opinion, summarizing, paraphrasing, synthesizing, and drawing. The author believes that a critical reading strategy will help students improve critical reading, critical thinking, and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), and help students to increase the deep understanding beyond the text.

Second, a research by Fadhillah (2018), the researcher teaching a narrative text to junior high school students in West Bandung. She chooses 35 students of eight grades. There are five steps of critical reading strategies as postulated by Sousa (2004) and WSSU (2013) including previewing, outlining and summarizing, questioning, reflecting, and evaluating. This research indicates that 18 of 35 students (51%) have a high improvement of their critical thinking, and the writer concludes that critical reading strategies were considered could improve students' critical thinking skills in reading narrative text.

Third, a research by Anshori (2011) reveals that the critical thinking ability of Indonesian Language and Literature Education students at one of the state universities in Bandung was still low. The researcher found that the level of student literacy on social issues was still lacking. Every time they read an article, they tend to focus on the headlines that are usually stored in advance of the article. Students are also still not sensitive to the use of language written in an article. According to researchers, students' critical thinking skills can begin with the ability to analyze linguistic aspects and the application of linguistic principles in the media.

This research is different from previous research. The previous researches focus on students' critical thinking through reading an argumentative and narrative text, also critical thinking through discourse analysis, this research centers on critical thinking through political articles.