

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the importance of this research needs to be conducted, the significance of the research for teaching in virtual classroom and some theories from the expert to make this research more valid.

A. Background

According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2005), critical thinking is one of the 21st-century skills that is needed for everyone especially for students to survive in this globalization era. In the Indonesian context, as stated in Government Regulation Number 81A year 2013, critical thinking has been written as one of the goals of education. Furthermore, the Curriculum of 2013 gears towards developing active, creative and effective learning that can create challenging conditions as well as provide a diverse and meaningful learning experience.

There are many advantages to having the ability to think critically. Paul and Elder (2002) state that individuals who have critical thinking skills could survive in such a complicated life. In the classroom context, students can easily understand and evaluate arguments on the topic they are learning through the process of developing their knowledge (Bassham G et al., 2011). Meanwhile in a social context, Bassham et al., (2011) further explain that students can be productive, contributive, and responsible for the community members. It indicates that the students can also solve their problems faced in their surroundings. Thus, the ability to think critically is essential for gaining academic and social success.

Having critical thinking skills, as well as literacy skill is quite central for today life. However, many Indonesian students, critical thinking skills remains low (Alwasilah, 2008 in Hapsari, 2016; Zetriuslita, 2016). Indonesia National Assessment Program 2019 in critical thinking skills reveals that they have low quality of critical thinking skills. Further, the assessment reveals that Indonesian students are good at working on the rote questions but in applying and reasoning are still low (Pusat Penilaian Pendidikan, 2019). Moreover, based on the result of the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA) between 2013-2015, Indonesia score in reading skill is rated 371 from the highest score 555. It is ranked 72 of 78 countries that joined PISA (PISA, 2019). Furthermore, Yasiska (2018) found that most students were still confused when they are told to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the information provided by the teacher. Students tend to accept what the teacher

gives without any questions.

It cannot be denied the fact that there are a lot of factors that caused the students' not to acquire critical thinking skills. Richmond (2007 as cited in Djiwandono, 2013) suggests that Indonesian students have been restricted by conformity to group, teacher-centred instruction, rote-learning and practically, the result of this study can inform teachers or education practitioners about the implementation of PjBL especially relating to the development of students' critical thinking skills.

There are some research reports dealing with critical thinking skills. First, research conducted by Rochmahwati (2015) discusses fostering critical thinking through PjBL. The research reports a significantly positive attitude toward the implementation of PjBL. Second, research by Fatimah (2018) reveals that PjBL has a significant effect on the creative thinking skills of students in using free project-based learning. However, the present research is different from previous research. While the previous research focuses on the university students and the scope is only in speaking context, this research focuses on investigating the using of PjBL methodology to the students' critical thinking skills in Senior High School and in reading scope through online class. Therefore, the research is entitled **“The Implementation of Project Based-Learning to Develop Students' Critical Thinking Skills”**

B. Research Questions

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

1. How is the process of implementing PjBL in improving students' critical thinking skills?
2. How are the students' critical thinking skills after the implementation of PjBL?
3. What are the students' responses to the implementation of PjBL in improving students' critical thinking?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research question above, this research is aimed at obtaining the two following objectives:

1. To describe the process of implementing PjBL in improving critical thinking skills.
2. To reveal the students' critical thinking skills after the implementation of PjBL.
3. To find out the students' responses to the implementation of PjBL in improving students' critical thinking.

D. Research Significances

The findings of this research are expected to be useful both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretical Significances

This research is expected to enrich the theory related to the implementation of PjBL in developing students' critical thinking skills in virtual classroom context. Furthermore, it is hoped to give understanding of how the students learn through the PjBL.

2. Practical Significances

The findings of this research can be beneficial at all for English teachers to gain students' critical thinking through the implementation of PjBL. It is expected that students' ability could improve since they focused with their project in creating it. Moreover, to English teachers, it is hoped to be an alternative way to implementing PjBL as the learning method.

E. Research Framework

This framework elaborates the general variable of those elements through figure and its explanation.

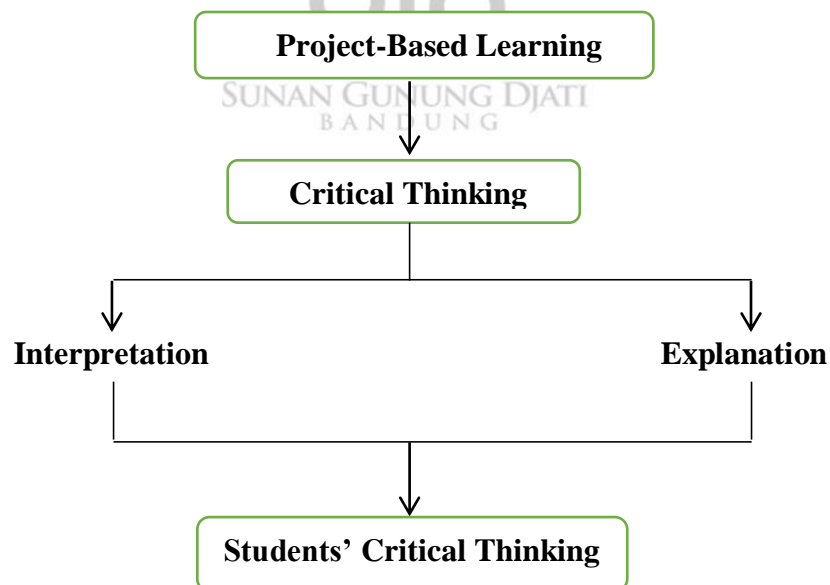


Figure 1.1 Research Framework

Teaching critical thinking is one of the essential aspects for everyone to have good thinking skills and abilities in order to encounter the demands of this modern life. It indicates that critical thinking development offers students with the skills they need to make decisions in a changing world, discover solutions to social justice problems, and develop into lifelong learners (Birgili, 2015). Teaching critical thinking skills in the EFL classroom helps students to become independent thinkers and voters who engaged in some issues. Tanner (2013) describes that the essentialist curriculum's retrenchment to basic academic skills and testable, factual knowledge represents a return to the drill-and-kill pedagogies of the 21th century and inevitability neglects the development of higher levels of cognition. Furthermore, this study focuses on finding out the ways Project-Based Learning develops students' critical thinking skills in virtual classroom context. The critical thinking aspects investigated in the study are limited to critical thinking cognitive skills according to Facione (1990); such as interpretation, analysis, evaluation, inference, explanation, and self-regulation.

F. Previous Research

This section presents some previous research regarding the implementation of Project-Based Learning in developing students' critical thinking skills. These previous researches are beneficial since they give a reason for researcher to seek information as much as possible regarding the topic of the study.

There are several research results deal with the implementation of PjBL in developing students' critical thinking skills from Indonesia and other countries that will be elaborated below.

The first study was conducted by Rochmahwati (2015) who discussed fostering critical thinking through PjBL. The participants were the lecture of TEFL 1 course and 25 students of the fourth semester. This study used descriptive qualitative method and the data is obtained from observation sheet and interview guideline. The result shows that the steps in implementing of PjBL that fosters students' critical thinking in the TEFL 1 class are; (1) Discussing the materials, (2) working with the group to construct scenario, (3) practicing the scenario, (4) recording the teaching practice into video,

and (5) evaluating the product. Rochmawati suggests that this research should be repeated with a different course content and target audience.

The second, Dimmitt (2017) elaborates the power of PjBL for university students. This study investigates students' needs for developing critical thinking skills at the first-year students at the Petroleum Institute and challenges of these students. The study utilizes a qualitative action research and data is obtained from several resources such as surveys, interviews, and observation. The results indicate that a PjBL method can give students with effective techniques for improving self-reliant and critical thinking skills. The paper concludes with recommendations for best PjBL practice and strategies for developing independent, critical thinking abilities which are essential for students to be successful in their academic endeavor.

The last, research by Fatimah (2018) discussed the effect of project based science learning on PGSD students' creative thinking ability. The participants were students in fourth semester amounted to 2 classes. This study used a Quasi-Experiment through observation and creative thinking skills test. The result shows: (1) PjBL have a significant effects on creative thinking skills of students; (2) improvement of students' creative thinking skills using free project based learning is better than guided project based learning.