

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

An overview of the study is provided in this chapter. It contains the background of the study, research questions, research purposes, research significances, framework of thinking, hypothesis, and previous studies.

#### A. Background of the study

This study intends to examine the correlation between EFL students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) and their reading comprehension in their fourth semester at English Education Department at State Islamic University Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

All university students must have the ability to grasp complex English reading materials to have access to the huge academic and global knowledge available. This is particularly crucial when English is the exclusive language of instruction within the university setting (Galloway and Ruegg, 2020). Nevertheless, the cognitive processes associated with higher-order thinking, such as the analysis of textual organization, evaluation of arguments, and synthesis of information with prior knowledge, exhibit variations among individuals in the context of reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is crucial to the learning process. Making predictions, asking questions, drawing inferences, drawing conclusions, synthesizing information, identifying the central concept of a section, summarizing the text, and analyzing the text are just a few of the numerous skills that fall under the category of reading comprehension. According to (Grabe & Stoller, 2013), reading comprehension is grasping textual information and correctly defining the text. According to the Indonesian government, HOTS is meant to aid students' academic progress (Munawati, Nursamsu, 2019). The goal of learning HOTS is to make sure that all students are capable of evaluating, analyzing, or developing their understanding, according to Ariyana, Bestary, and Mohandas (2018). In this situation, HOTS is anticipated to

increase students' reading comprehension, enabling them to read and comprehend what they read.

According to Anderson (2004:11), reading is one of the most important language skills, as it can indirectly enhance vocabulary and speaking abilities. A word must be translated before comprehending, drawing conclusions, and describing concepts from an English reading text. In this instance, however, students frequently encounter difficult words they need help understanding, making it difficult to comprehend and draw conclusions from the English reading texts they encounter. Therefore, many EFL students read the text's content without critically analyzing and comprehending it. They are unable to interpret what they read as a result. Poor reading comprehension skills impact students' ability to succeed in school, according to Dr. Linda Sillbert (2014).

For this reason, reading comprehension skills are essential. However, the issue is that students need more motivation to read texts that generally improve their reading comprehension. Although students can read and are familiar with every word, they must still understand the material.

Research on higher-order reasoning skills (HOTS) and reading comprehension ability has been conducted previously. The majority of articles discuss students' reading comprehension achievement using HOTS as a learning strategy. However, the current research is distinct from previous research. This study examines whether there is a correlation between EFL students' higher-order thinking skills and their reading comprehension ability in the fourth semester at the English Education Department of the State Islamic University Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.

Therefore, this study compares the higher-order thinking scores of EFL students enrolled in critical reading classes. This study examines the issue of students' reading comprehension scores, which may be affected by their critical thinking. It also attempts to determine the significant effects of students' levels of critical thinking on their classroom reading comprehension scores.

## **B. Research Questions**

The researcher tries to discover the following issues based on the context described above:

1. What are the students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in English Education at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung?
2. What is the student's reading comprehension of English Education at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung?
3. How significant is the correlation between EFL students' higher-order thinking skills and their reading comprehension?

## **C. Research Purposes**

The following purposes of this study are related to the questions raised above:

1. To find out the students' higher-order thinking Skills (HOTS) in English Education at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.
2. To find out the students' reading comprehension of English Education at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.
3. To determine the significant correlation between EFL students' higher-order thinking skills and their reading comprehension.

## **D. Research Significances**

The study would be beneficial from a theoretical and practical standpoint.

1. Theoretically

This study's findings contribute to our understanding of distinctions in the critical thinking abilities of English language learners, particularly in their reading comprehension.

2. Practically

The results of this study are designed to expand information about differences in students' critical thinking abilities in learning reading comprehension. So that students and readers can learn to read English text

with comprehension better, even though they have different abilities in critical thinking. Moreover, students can utilize this research to generate answers regarding drawing conclusions and conveying ideas using higher-order thinking skills. In addition, teachers can obtain more information about HOTS and use the research to analyze students' difficulties comprehending English reading text.

### **E. Conceptual Framework**

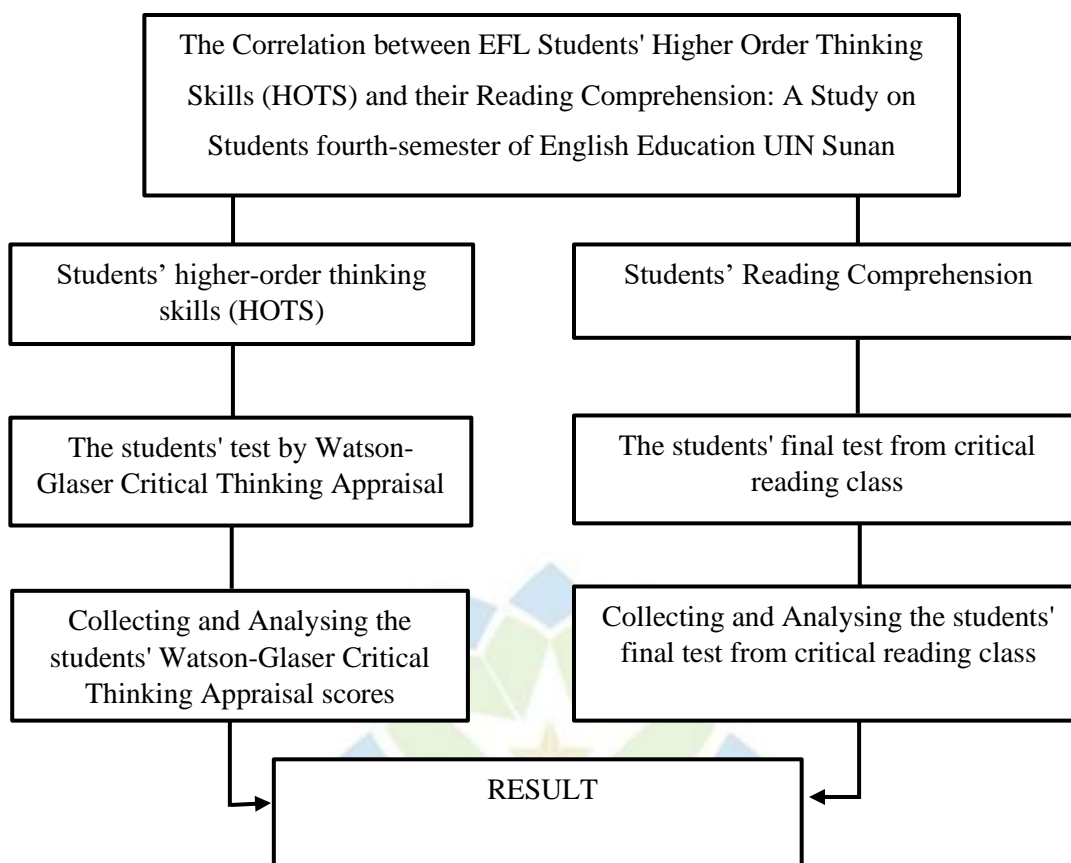
A person's critical thinking capacity with other people can be the same or different. Even though critical thinking skills are not innate, they can be developed (Peter, 2012). This implies that everyone can improve their critical thinking skills. In that critical thinking abilities may be taught and practiced, this viewpoint agrees with those of Facione (2016) and Kaleliolu and Gülbahar (2013). According to Shukla and Dungsungnoen (2016), critical thinking is a part of higher-order thinking. Using diverse views to understand logically and solve problems is critical thinking (Valenzuela et al., 2017). Solving problems requires a set of mastered skills and an individual's thought process (Kalelioğlu & Gülbahar, 2014).

Critical thinking is an essential skill for students to have. Students must think critically to make decisions and solve problems effectively (Setyowati et al., 2011; Peter, 2012). In agreement with Peter, Jumaisyaroh et al. (2015) asserted that students need the ability to think critically in order to be rational and make the best decision for themselves. In addition, Jacob (2012) asserts that the ability to think critically encourages students to be independent and to solve problems encountered in school, college, and daily life. Moreover, according to Nuryanti et al. (2018), critical thinking is one of the skills required to solve numerous problems in people's daily lives. Thus, it can be asserted that students' critical thinking is essential not only in the education world but also in the real world (the world outside of school).

Reading is one of the language skills that students must master. Students' proficiency in reading is determined by how well they comprehend the texts they read, particularly in English. If students have a strong command of vocabulary, it will be simpler for them to comprehend text or reading. According to Klingner (2007), Reading comprehension involves the complex and dynamic coordination of several cognitive processes to build meaning. Therefore, reading comprehension is crucial so students do not misunderstand the text's or reading's meaning.

Reading is characterized by a profound interaction between the reader and the text, resulting in intuitive reading fluency. Grabe (2010) asserts that the capacity to read is a crucial language skill for a student learning English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL) in an academic setting. (Alderson 2005, P.144). According to Nuary (2015), for many EFL students, cultivating excellent readability can involve extensive combat; it is essential for anyone with a low level of comprehension. This circumstance will result in a substantial loss of interest and a decline in fluency and comprehension.

Harmer (2011:99) states that reading has become significant for numerous reasons. Students read and comprehend texts for their careers, and reading can be a model for effective writing. Lastly, excellent reading texts can introduce intriguing topics, stimulate discussion, elicit imaginative responses, and serve as the basis for well-rounded, engaging lessons.



**Figure 1.1 Schema of Research**

## F. Hypothesis

According to Creswell (2012), In quantitative research, hypotheses are assertions in which the researcher speculates or predicts the outcome of a relationship between multiple characteristics or qualities. This study has two variables: student higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) (variable "X") and student reading comprehension (variable "Y").

The following statistical hypotheses will be examined as part of this research:

1. The alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ): There is a correlation between the students' higher-order thinking skills to their reading comprehension. It denotes that the correlation between the two variables X (EFL students' higher-order thinking skills) and Y (students' reading comprehension) has been accepted.

2. Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): There is no significant correlation between the students' higher-order thinking skills and their reading comprehension. It denotes that the two variables, X (EFL students' higher-order thinking abilities) and Y (students' reading comprehension), have been rejected.

## **G. Previous Studies**

Reading comprehension is closely related to the students' higher-order thinking abilities. Ariani. E. (2020) found a significant correlation between students' reading comprehension and their higher-order or critical thinking ability, based on the results of her study. The findings of this study, which corroborated and concurred with some earlier research results by Sheikhy Behdani (2009), further confirmed a strong, substantial association between students' reading comprehension and their capacity for higher-order thinking skills. It can be deduced from the current study and earlier research that students' capacity for higher-order thinking skills positively correlates with their capacity for handling reading passages. It implies that students can reason critically, draw conclusions, and take action to understand specific reading passages better.

Dzakiah conducted the second previous study (2020), "The Use of Higher Order Thinking Questions in Reading Comprehension to Improve Students' Critical Thinking." This study aims to determine whether teaching critical thinking in reading comprehension classes may be improved by including higher-order thinking questions. The participants were all second-graders at Makassar, Indonesia's Ulul Albab Islamic Senior High School. The sample for this study is 20 students; hence a pre-experimental study design was used with just one group. According to the study's findings, using higher-order thinking questions to assess students' reading comprehension can help them develop critical thinking skills. The pre-test means a score of 4.45 was used as evidence, which increased to 6.50 in the post-test. The t-test value further supports the claim. The researcher discovered that, at the significance level, the value of the t-test (8.542) was higher than the value of the t-table (2.093). It

indicates that the student's pre-test and post-test results differ significantly. As a result, hypothesis H0 was rejected, and H1 was accepted (Dzakiah., 2020).

The third research was conducted by Dumaris E. Silalahi et al. (2022) under the title "An Analysis of Students' Achievement in Reading Comprehension through Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)." This study aimed to determine how well students in SMP Yayasan Perguruan Keluarga Pematangsiantar's eighth-grade reading comprehension performed utilizing HOTS as a teaching approach. With the help of Eighteen reading comprehension questions and questionnaires, this study used a qualitative methodology. The academic year 2021 comprised the participants in this study. The findings indicated that students' cognitive abilities significantly improved when responding to HOTS phase encounters. Compared to medium and low groups, students with high thinking abilities are more competent at responding to HOTS questions (Silalahi et al., 2022).

The fourth previous study was conducted by Maria Melati Sitorus et al. (2021) under the title "The effect of Higher-Order Thinking Skill (HOTS) in Reading Comprehension." This study aimed to determine whether or not students in junior high school could improve their reading comprehension by engaging in higher-order thinking. This study included a quantitative and qualitative research design. There are 30 students in the treatment group and 30 in the control group. As a result, HOTS encourages students to read extensively to understand the text's content, and the researcher also questions students to assess their understanding of the reading text. This strategy has been shown to improve the reading comprehension skills of 8th-grade students at SMPN 7 Medan. They indicate that the HOTS method impacts the students in SMPN 7 Medan's eighth-grade reading comprehension skills (Sitorus et al., 2021).

Desi Mutiara Natalini Allo et al. (2022) conducted the fifth previous study, titled "The Implementation of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) On Students' Reading Comprehension at SMA Negeri 18 Makassar." The purpose of this study was to learn about the impact of higher-order thinking skills on students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 18 Makassar. This study was



a pre-experimental study with one group pre-test post-test. This study's population consisted of class XI students from SMA Negeri 18 Makassar in the academic year 2021/2022. The data was collected in the form of multiple-choice reading test responses. The findings suggest that implementing HOTS in reading comprehension can help students enhance their reading comprehension. The average score of students on the pre-test and post-test demonstrates this. The students' mean score on the pre-test (before the activity) was 36.53, and their mean score on the post-test (after the action) was 68.07. Based on the findings of the study, it is possible to conclude that using higher-order thinking abilities can increase students' reading comprehension in class XI Social 4 SMA Negeri 18 Makassar (Allo., et al., 2022).

This research is different from previous research. Previous research investigating the higher-order thinking on students' reading comprehension used pre-experimental pre-tests and post-tests as instruments to find out students' higher-order thinking skills and reading comprehension scores. This study focuses on investigating the students' reading comprehension based on their critical thinking through correlation research design using Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal for the classification of students' higher-order thinking skills and using the final test for students' reading comprehension.