

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces background of the study, identification of the problem, formulation of the research questions, purpose of the research, significance of the research, scope and limitation of the research, definition of key terms related to this study.

A. Background of the study

English is an important aspect that must be possessed by everyone. English become one of the international languages that must learn in order to support their studies, work, and other activities. Therefore, we need to learn English continuously. English is known to be language spoken by many people of the world either as native language, as a second language, or as a foreign language. English becomes a foreign language in Indonesia because people do not commonly use it as a tool for communication in their daily or social lives, except for those who are interested in that language. Talking about English skills, we will not be separated from four things, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. In order to be able to follow the whole learning process students must have basic skills, namely reading. Reading plays great role and it is essential as a tool to convey meaning and information through the text. Reading is an active process, it involves interpreting passages, not just receiving message. In reading, serious thinking is required. Critical thinking is one of the factors needed by students to understand reading such as analyzing, dissecting, clarifying, distinguishing, matching, and taking the meanings implied in reading and plays an important role in understanding reading

when students are faced with problems that need to be solved (Ardhian , Ummah , Anafiah , & Rachmadtullah , 2020). By thinking critically when understanding reading, a person will also have a tendency to be critical in conveying ideas through written language. It can be concluded that critical thinking may be considered as an essential substance contributing to the success of students learning a language.

In the 2013 curriculum, one of the competencies that students need to achieve is developing creativity, curiosity, and skill in formulating questions to from critical thoughts and lifelong learning (Nurmayani, 2020). Critical thinking is an ability as well as activity employing mind to think of, to criticize, to analyze, and to evaluate something. Students in junior high have already been taught materials that assist the development of critical thinking skills (Khoiri , Basuki , & Priyatni , 2017). Junior high school students are taught reading various types of text one of them is descriptive text. Descriptive text is a text that describes an object person, animals, thing, and place with clear and detailed explanation (Purnamasari , Hidayat , & Kurniawati , 2021). Mastering descriptive text enables students to create additional types of texts such as narrative text, recount text, and report text (Ismayanti & Kholiq , 2020).

The study related to critical thinking in reading has been carried out by some previous researchers. First, Muslem et.al (2017) investigated the frequencies of using critical thinking in reading among University students. Second, Ploysangwal (2018) assessed the critical thinking of Thai undergraduate students through analytical and critical reading test in a sample of private Thai universities in Bangkok. Next, Mbato (2019) investigated Indonesian learners' critical thinking in reading. Last, the study from Nazar and Hidayah (2020) investigated the problems

encountered by students when using critical thinking skills in reading. All the studies were conducted to university students. Even though many studies have been carried out on critical thinking in reading, none has to investigate the ability of first junior high school students. The importance of critical thinking for students can start from elementary, middle to college levels, therefore critical thinking needs to be trained from the beginning. As Irawati (2014) said that critical thinking must be taught comprehensively at all levels of education in order to make it more practical and quantifiable.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting an analysis of students' critical thinking in reading descriptive text. To fill in the gap, this research about the critical thinking ability of the first-year junior high school students in reading of descriptive text is essential to be carried out. Junior high school students are the next generation, and they will play an important part in the future. Moreover, students' rational thinking starts during their junior high school years (Mislia , Indartono , & Mallisa , 2019). As stated by Zulfa et.al (2020) that generally junior high school students aged 12-14, where at that age students have entered the cognitive level of concrete operations. This cognitive level of operation is the stage where the child has been able to identify things that are concrete but not to enough to be able to identify things that are abstract. Furthermore, the first-year students are transitioning from childhood or elementary school to adolescence or junior high school. An overview will be obtained which can later be used as a reference and material for further improvement for schools and input for educators to be able to develop a learning system that can improve the

critical thinking skills of junior high school . This study focus on students who have learned descriptive text.

B. Identification of the problems

Based on the background of the study above, the following problems can be identified are:

1. Students' critical thinking skills are needed in the development of science, but there are still few students who realize that critical thinking is needed, especially in reading, by thinking critically in reading students will be able to follow the entire learning process because learning is conveyed through reading texts.
2. Ideally a student is able to develop his cognitive abilities with knowledge they already have. Although very difficult developed in students of this age, but there are students who are able to develop cognitive abilities.
3. Not many students know the importance of critical thinking, this because students do not know how important this ability is for further education or life.

C. Formulation of the research question

Based on the identification of the problems above, formulation of the research question can be stated as "How is students' critical thinking in reading of descriptive text at the seventh grade of MTsN 9 Blitar?"

D. Purpose of the study

Based on the formulation of the study above, the purpose of this research was to describe students' critical thinking in reading of descriptive text at seventh-grade students of MTsN 9 Blitar.

E. Significance of the study

By conducting this study, the researcher hopes can give some benefit for the teacher, students and the researcher herself. The benefits of the research are:

1. For the teacher

The result of the research hopefully can be used by the teacher as a starting point to improve students' critical thinking especially in reading and other skill.

2. For students

Useful to find out their critical thinking ability in reading of descriptive text.

3. For researcher

To add insight knowledge and to get degree.

4. For other researchers

The findings of this study could be a reference for another researcher.

F. Scope and limitation of the study

Based on the background of the study, this study has scope and limitation. The scope of this study is analyzing junior high school students' critical thinking. This study limited into seventh grade students' critical thinking in reading that focus on descriptive text. This study includes multiple choice questions that use critical thinking indicators according to revised Bloom's taxonomy by Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) namely analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

G. Definition of key term

1. Critical Thinking

The term “critical thinking” in this study is defined as the students’ ability to find the meaning of reading in text material, both implicit or explicit through the stages of analyzing, evaluating, and creating.

2. Critical Thinking in Reading Descriptive

Critical thinking in reading descriptive text in this study defined as ability to analyze, evaluate, and create in explicit or implicit a reading text material whose contents explain or describe things such as people, objects, and the environment.