

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights on six subsections; background of the study, question of the problem, purposes of the study, scope and limitation, significances of the study and definition of key terms. The explanation of each subsections is presented below

A. Background of The Study

Critical thinking is one of fundamental skills for students in present education circle. It is demanded during this changing era wherein the diffusion of information is ineluctable, and competition grow extremely. Huitt (1998) sees critical thinking as one of essential aspects for success in the 21st century era. Jeevanantham (2005: 121) proposes, critical thinking involves someone to deal with complex mental processes such as analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, judging and other complex mental processes that make them become cleverer and able to formulate opinion based on boarder frame of reference. Besides, critical thinking is significance to facilitate students becoming independent lifelong learners and provides students who are able to confront enormous of challenges in their real world (Tsui, 2002). Thinking critically likewise constructs students who are effective in learning process, responsible in society life and winning in the job market (Jebbour, 2019: 39).

In English Language Teaching (ELT) context, critical thinking also plays important role. It needs to be intensified among language learners, since it aids to develop effective language learning (Ivanovska, 2017: 41). Kabilan (2000) says language learner proficiency is not only regarding on the using of language and recognizing the meaning, but also using creative and critical thinking through the language. In this sense, foreign language teachers are responsible for facilitating their learners to obtain critical thinking skills in learning the language (Shirkani & Fahim, 2011: 112). Regarding to the previous significances of critical thinking whether in education generally or ELT contexts, it is necessarily to be more focused not only in western education but also in non-western countries such as in Indonesia.

In Indonesia, critical thinking becomes one of national education objectives especially in secondary level. It has been included in Regulation of Republic of Indonesia Number 17 Year 2010 Regarding Educational Management and Administration. Moreover, critical thinking has been incorporated in the latest school curriculum, *Kurikulum 2013* (here in after Curriculum 2013) as well. Ministry of Education and Culture stated in Regulation of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 36 Year 2018 Regarding the revision of curriculum frame for secondary education (*Kerangka Dasar dan Struktur Kurikulum Sekolah Menengah Atas/ Madrasah Aliyah*) that Curriculum 2013 and its textbook publishers are urged to promote critical learning to students. In this sense, every school in Indonesia that implements Curriculum 2013 must include critical thinking in their teaching and learning process. To accommodate it, this curriculum adopts revised Bloom's Taxonomy (2001) as a reference for conveying critical thinking in teaching and learning process.

Bloom's Taxonomy is a well-known cognitive taxonomy in education that classifies cognitive domain into six stages, those are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Remembering, understanding, applying are recognized as low order thinking skills (LOTS). On the other hand, the three higher stages; analyzing, evaluating and creating are identified as high order thinking skill (HOTS), which has the same meaning as critical thinking. In Curriculum 2013, this taxonomy is applied by teacher for planning a lesson. Moreover, it is utilized as operational verbs which are used to convey dimensions of learning process specifically in indicators of competent achievement and learning objectives.

In learning process, critical thinking can be acquired by students through teaching materials that have been prepared, whether they are printed or non-printed materials. In this regard, textbook is an essential source for students to practice critical thinking. Assaly & Igbaria (2014: 25) proposes that textbooks should not only transmit knowledge and information, but also contain activities that promote and support higher thinking processes for students. Moreover, textbooks are considered as a vital teaching material since it carries out goals of learning itself. "Textbooks are best seen as a source of

achieving aims and objectives that have been set in terms of learner needs” (Cunningsworth, 1995: 7). Thus, textbooks necessarily cover activities which may encourage students to think critically.

Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, which organizes the curriculum, recommends textbooks for various subjects in all levels of education including English textbook for senior high school. This recommendation implies that every school which implements Curriculum 2013 should use government’s textbooks as main sources in teaching and learning process. Therefore, the case of using government’s textbooks encourages the researcher to investigate English textbook for grade eleven of senior high school that is published by the government, particularly how critical thinking skills are incorporated in the textbook.

There have been, in fact, many studies of critical thinking in various countries particularly in ELT context, such as Fahim & Sa'eepour (2011) which investigate the relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension in Iranian learners. They find that teaching critical thinking skills in EFL context can enhance language learning, specifically on students’ reading comprehension. Moreover, Jebbour (2019), investigated critical thinking which is manifested in Moroccan English textbooks and discovered that Moroccan English textbooks already promote critical thinking and activities for teaching critical thinking.

In Indonesian context, however, there are few studies which concerned with the study of critical thinking skills incorporated in the textbooks (such as Ilyas, 2015; Zaiturrahmi, Kasim & Zulfikar, 2017). Surprisingly, the findings of those study show that senior high school English textbooks do not promote critical thinking skills. Ilyas (2015), for example, discovers that Indonesian ELT textbooks likely provide textually explicit questions, which do not require students to think critically beyond the text, and there are only few questions in textbooks that promote critical thinking. In addition, Zaiturrahmi *et al* (2017) analyze 227 instructional questions of grade ten of senior high school English textbooks. They find only 29 instructional questions that emphasize critical thinking according to Bloom’s Taxonomy. They come to a conclusion that the textbook is still more on LOTS, not HOTS.

The limited textbook analysis which concerned with critical thinking skills in Indonesian context is in need of further exploration. This study, therefore, attempts to analyze senior high school English textbook for eleventh grade entitled *Bahasa Inggris for SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Grade 11th* published by ministry of education. The purpose of this study is to scrutinize textbook published by the government, since it is used by most of senior high schools in Indonesia specifically for schools which implement Curriculum 2013. Thus, this study is expected to provide valuable information particularly to educational stakeholders to think of seeking high quality textbooks or improving the existing textbooks in accordance with the national agenda. In a more specific, this study will focus on investigating tasks in the textbook whether the tasks incorporated critical thinking skills and what critical thinking skills which mostly are being the orientation of the textbook. This study, however, will investigate the tasks based on revised Bloom's taxonomy cognitive domains, they are; analyzing, evaluating and creating.

B. Question of the Problem

The background has explained the importance of critical thinking skills in education and ELT context. It becomes important to be discussed since it concerns Indonesian current school curriculum. Therefore, the problem of this study is formulated as "How is critical thinking skills; analyzing, evaluating and creating incorporated into tasks in prescribed Indonesian senior high school English textbook?".

C. Purposes of the Study

According to the problem that have been exposed above, this study aims to scrutinize the tasks in grade eleven prescribed Indonesian senior high school English textbook, whether it encourages the students to think critically or not and how critical thinking skills; analyzing, evaluating and creating are implemented in the tasks.

D. Scope and Limitation

Based on the background of the study has been elaborated completely in the previous part, the scope of this study highlights on

critical thinking incorporated into grade eleven prescribed Indonesian senior high school English textbooks. Besides, to simplify discussion of this study, the discussion is limited to analyze the tasks in the textbook regarding to revised Bloom's Taxonomy critical thinking.

E. Significances of the Study

This study hopes to establish an understanding of the conceptions of critical thinking in textbook that could be importance to the:

1. Teachers

This study can be used for the teachers to emphasize students' critical thinking through textbooks' tasks. Also, it is expected to help teachers modifying tasks that can promote critical thinking skills among students.

2. Textbook's Writers

To the textbook's writers, this study can urge them to create tasks which promote critical thinking to the students since it is part of school curriculum.

3. Researchers

The ideas that are presented in this study may be used as reference in conducting new research or in testing the validity of other related findings. This study will also serve the cross-reference that will give them a background or an overview of the predictor of concerning on critical thinking upon prescribed Indonesian senior high school English textbook.

F. Definition of Key Terms

This part is consisting of sort definition that can avoid misunderstanding in reading this study. The definition is contextualized to the context of this study. There are some definitions to understand as follows:

1. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is defined as "high-level thinking and has the following features: analysis, evaluation, reasonableness and reflection, which operate in terms of criteria; it is self-corrective and is sensitive to context; and it allows one to make judgements about the world." (Jeevanantham, 2005: 119-120). From this definition, it can

be understood critical thinking is higher level thinking included some mental processes such as analyzing, evaluating, judging and synthesizing which allocate someone to believe or to do something.

In educational field, critical thinking is mostly associated with Bloom's Taxonomy. Educational practitioners largely use Bloom's Taxonomy as measurement whether they teach or assess critical thinking in learning process or not. According to Kennedy *et al* (1991), the three highest levels of Bloom Taxonomy (analysis, synthesis and evaluation) represent critical thinking. Therefore, this study refers critical thinking to the three high cognitive levels in revised Bloom's Taxonomy; analyzing, evaluating and creating.

2. Textbook

According to Cunningsworth (1995: 7), "textbooks are best seen as a source of achieving aims and objectives that have been set in terms of learner needs". Textbook is a source of learning contained information, knowledge and activity formulated for achieving certain goals.

3. Task

Task is defined as "a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, and in which the intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form" (Nunan, 2004: 4). Task refers to activity that allow students to use the target language to comprehend, produce and communicate to achieve the objectives in learning process.