

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the introduction of this research, which contains the research background, statements of the problem, research objective, research significance, scope of the research, and operational definition.

1.1 Background of The Research

The rapid development of technology and science has brought changes in the life of the 21st century. In the industrial revolution 4.0 era, competition is more open in various fields, starting from the economy, politics, socio-culture, work, and even education. Therefore, the young generation needs to adapt to the changes.

There are four 21st-century skills known as 4C, including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. Critical thinking skills are one part of the higher-order thinking skills essential in education. Critical thinking skills are skills of logical thinking through various points of view to find a solution to a problem (Acharya, 2018).

Nosratinia & Zaker (2014) explained that in education, critical thinking skills are requirements that must be acquired to achieve academic success. Even education experts believe that being critical is very important in learning. Because with these skills, students can communicate effectively, think critically, solve problems competently, and become professional in their careers (Živković, 2016).

Meanwhile, English is an international language that is important for students to be mastered. Especially in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0, where competition is increasingly open worldwide, mastery of English will be very needed in various aspects of life.

Although there have been previous studies on the link between critical thinking skills and English achievement, the researcher still found the need gap

between the studies. The Indonesian studies that discussed the correlation between critical thinking skills and English achievement were done in higher education, and they only focused on specific English skills. For example the research from Putra (2017) entitled *The Correlation Between Critical Thinking and Reading Comprehension Achievement of English Education Study Program Students' of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang*, which only focused on reading comprehension skill. Furthermore, the research from Saputra (2017) entitled *The Correlation Between Critical Thinking and Reading Comprehension Achievement of English Education Study Program Students' of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang*, also only focused on writing skills. In contrast, this research focused on two English skills: reading and writing. Besides that, the subjects were the senior high school students.

According to the researcher's observation during the field experience program (PLP II) and her teaching in the tenth grade of SMA Negeri 1 Kudus, some students seemed to have good logic. They were interested in asking and answering during the learning process, providing interesting ideas, and being able to analyze the phenomenon around them. These students tended to have good English skills because they were more engaged in learning and accustomed to thinking logically and effectively.

Based on previous explanations, the researcher was interested in conducting research entitled "The Correlation between Critical Thinking Skills and English Achievement of The Students of SMAN 1 Kudus".

1.2 Statement of The Problems

Based on the background of the research, the statement of this research was formulated as follows :

Is there any significant correlation between Critical Thinking Skills and English Achievement of the students of SMAN 1 Kudus?

1.3 Objective of The Research

The research objective was to determine whether or not there is a significant correlation between critical thinking skills and English achievement of the students of SMAN 1 Kudus.

1.4 Significance of The Research

1. Theoretical

The results of this research provide solutions for improving English achievement by increasing critical thinking skills and provide contributions and references for other researchers to conduct further similar research.

2. Practical

a. For the students

The results of this study are helpful for students to improve and use their critical thinking skills in all aspects, especially in learning English.

b. For the teachers

The Teachers can gain insight into the importance of critical thinking skills in learning English so that it can be applied in the classroom.

1.5 Scope of The Research

The scope of this research was on the correlation between critical thinking skills and English achievement of the students of SMAN 1 Kudus in the academic year 2022/2023. English achievement in this research included two skills, namely reading and writing. The researcher conducted the research with the subject of tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Kudus.

1.6 Operational Definition

a. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to think logically and rationally to form critical interpretations in solving a problem. For this research, the researcher used the instrument of critical thinking test adapted from Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal (WGCTA), which Pearson Assessment published.

b. English Academic Achievement

English academic achievement results from intellectual performance in English subjects taught at school. For this research, the researcher used the data from the English Final Semester Assessment scores of the tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Kudus.

c. Correlational Study

A correlational study is conducted to determine the relationship between two or more variables.

d. The students of SMAN 1 Kudus

The students of SMAN 1 Kudus are those who study in the SMAN 1 Kudus in the academic year 2022/2023. The researcher focused on tenth-grade students of SMAN 1 Kudus in the academic year 2022/2023.

