CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the background of the study, the research problems, the objectives of the research, significance of the study to let the reader recognize about the value of the result of study, scope and limitation of the research and definition of key terms.

A. Background of Study

In this era, university students are expected to be able to think critically. Critical thinking is important to gain the information which was gotten, to have better chances and to life with the society. It is like Robinson's opinion, if students are to perform in a highly technical society, they must be prepared with life-long learning and critical thinking skills is necessary to obtain and process information in an ever-changing world.¹ When someone thought about something which wants to be done, the person needs to decide whether the thing is appropriate or not. To do this well, the person had to have a good ability in critical thinking.

Critical thinking plays an important role in language education. Wallace stated that critical thinking skills should be embedded in the subject matter and

¹ Figen Kanik. Doctoral Dissertation. An Assessment Of Teachers' Conceptions Of Critical Thinking And Practices For Critical Thinking Development At Seventh Grade Level. (Middle East Technical University. 2010), 1.

woven into language education.² Since language is an important tool for acquiring knowledge, therefore it is important to acquire on the way into the nature of the critical thinking ability of the students and its possible link to their language proficiency.

The English learners can measure their ability to think critically through reading, especially in understanding the texts which are read. When they reading a text, they can think about the concept, see the value from many points of view, able to make a logical conclusion, and link their ideas with the text they read. By doing these activities, the students are able to measure their ability to think critically through reading. As Nodoushan statement that measuring students` ability to think critically using a test of reading could be justified on the following part. Firsts, many of the critical thinking tests through reading texts with questions related to interpretation, inference, analysis, and evaluation. Second, there were high correlations between tests of critical thinking skills and the reading text. It was showed by studies in both United States and the Middle East.³

Critical thinking gives much contribution to the successful of someone's reading, especially in reading class. In thinking process, this is proposed to engage students when talking about text they read. This activity leads the students to be critical. By having this ability, the students will able to answer the questions

² C. Wallace. *Critical reading in language education*. (Palgrave Macmillan. 2005) accessed on 15th June 2015

³ Mohammad Ali Salmani Nodoushan. *International Journal of Language Studies (IJLS) – volume* 8(2). (Massachusetts: EBSCO Publishing, Inc. 2014), 124.

of reading test, give evidences, facts, or proof to make a convince answer and elaborate information of the text with their own ideas.

In education department, especially in English Teacher Education Department of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya, have high critical thinking is important for candidates of the teacher to be a creative, professional and active teacher. Without having this ability the students will not be able to show their view and their wellconstructed argument. As Judge, Jones and McCreery say that If the students are able to confront others' ideas in this way it enables the students to construct their own judgments, which in turn enhances their self-confidence in exploring any evidence or literature and its implications.⁴

Critical thinking is also important for shaping creative candidates of English teachers. The students need to think critically to come up with creative solution to a problem. It must also be the circumstance that the new ideas being produced are useful and relevant to the task at hand. Critical thinking plays a central role in evaluating new ideas, selecting the best and adapting them if necessary.

Regardless the major, in fact, critical thinking plays an important role in shaping the students` creativity. In this case, the candidates of English Teacher in State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya must have ability to think critically. It cannot be imagined that a candidate of teacher are unable think

⁴ Brenda Judge, Patrick Jones and Elaine McCreery. *Critical Thinking Skills for Education Students*. (Learning Matters Ltd. 2009), 4.

critically. It means that the candidate is unable to construct the argument well, to create creative teaching instruments, and to teach the students well. Critical thinking improves language, writing and presentation skills. Thinking clearly and systematically can enhance the way expressing ideas. In learning how to analyze the logical structure of writings, critical thinking also enhances comprehension abilities. Without knowing the ability to think critically, the candidates of teacher will never know whether they are able to construct the argument well or not.

In order to live a meaningful life and to structure our lives, justify and reflect on our values and decisions are needed. The tools for this process of selfevaluation are provided by critical thinking. By having this ability, the people are able to choose the best step or way for their future life, to reflect their life in the past and to make their life better in the future by learning from their experience in the past.

Arguments which are explored do not usually mean disagree with something; it simply means presenting a strong case to support a point of view. The speaker should not be an argumentative person to do this. On the other side, good critical thinking means using reason and evidence to support the point. ⁵

In developed countries, various studies have been conducted to reveal teachers' conceptions of critical thinking, the degree to which teachers are actively involved in improving their students' critical thinking and the factors that

⁵ Brenda Judge, Patrick Jones and Elaine McCreery. *Critical Thinking Skills for Education Students*. (Learning Matters Ltd. 2009), 4.

foster and inhibit teachers' efforts to teach for critical thinking. But, there are still many questions about critical thinking especially in education which are not answered yet.

In conclusion, since reading is a part of important ways to acquiring knowledge, it is important to gain critical thinking ability of the university students and its possible link to their reading. The researcher is interested to conduct the research entitled "The Students' Ability to Think Critically in Critical Reading Class of English Teacher Education Department of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya 2015."

B. Research Question

Based on the background of study above, the statements of the problem for the current study is "what is the students` ability to think critically in critical reading class of English Teacher Education Department of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya 2015 ?."

C. Objective of Study

The objective of this study is "to know the students` ability to think critically in critical reading class of English Teacher Education Department of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya 2015."

D. Significant of Study

This research is conducted to find out the students` ability to think critically in critical reading class at English Teacher Education Department of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya 2015. Researcher expects this research will give some benefits, at least such below:

- 1. Lecturers
 - a. The lecturer can increase the students' ability in critical thinking and give them some more exercises to improve their ability in it.
 - b. The result of this research can be used by the lecturers for looking for the best way to teach critical thinking.
- 2. The students can measure their ability in critical thinking whether their ability is high, fair or low.

E. Scope and Limitation

Critical thinking is used in many ways in this word. However, this research focuses on students` ability to think critically in reading class. Scope and limitation will be explained below:

 This research concerns on the students` ability to think critically in critical reading class at Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya year 2015. It is limited to the students of critical reading class at Faculty of Education and Teacher Training of State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya year 2015.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Ability

Thurstone saying which was quoted by Tapsfield in his book defined ability is best understood.⁶ Tucker stated that the word ability refers to the capabilities of human nature. It can either be moral or immoral abilities. The ability to perform immorally derives from the physical abilities, but the decision to do so clearly issues from minds.⁷

In this research, the term `ability` means that maximal performance of someone when think critically on reading class.

2. Critical thinking

Brenda says that critical thinking is" the ability to think about your own thinking in such a way as to recognize its strengths and weaknesses and, as a result, and re-present the thinking in an improved form."8

In this research, critical thinking is defined as a way to recognize and re-present the thinking in an improved form.

⁶ Ian Dennis - Patrick Tapsfield (Ed.) *Human Abilities, Their Nature an Measurement*. (United States of America: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 1996), 200.

⁷ John Allen Tucker. *Itō Jinsai's Gomō Jigi and the Philosophical Definition of Early Modern Japan.* (Brill, 1998), 153.

⁸ Brenda Judge, Patrick Jones and Elaine McCreery. *Critical Thinking Skills for Education Students*. (Learning Matters Ltd. 2009), 2.

G. Research Report Writing Organization

The organization of a research paper is provided in order to make readers understand the content of the paper as follows.

The first is the introduction. It consists of the background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, and research report writing organization.

The second is review of related literature. It consists of previous study and underlying theory. The underlying theory consists of critical thinking, critical thinking tools, importance critical thinking in education, ability to think critically and some previous studies.

The third is the research method. It consists of type of research design, hypothesis, population and sample, setting and subject of the study, research procedure, data and source of data, data collection technique, research instrument and data analysis technique.

The forth is research finding and discussion. It consists of some data analysis from test which is given by the researcher and other data gotten from questionnaire.

The last is conclusion and suggestion. The conclusion was provided based on the previous chapter which discussed about the result of students' score. The suggestion is divided into two parts. The first suggestion is for English teacher and the second one is for the next researcher