CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

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A Summary and conclusion of the study are presented in this chapter. Some suggestions are given afterwards.

5.1 Summary and Conclusion

This study was aimed at finding out the critical thinking skills as manifested in the student-generated questions and the students' answers to teacher's provided questions in reading an English text. The study was inspired by the fact that students need to have critical thinking skill since this mental skill is very useful to help them analyze and find a solution of their academic problems as well as problems that they will encounter in their lives.

This study made an attempt to describe not only the students' critical thinking as manifested in the student-generated questions and the students' answers to teacher's provided questions, but also describe the correlation of student-generated questions and students' answers to teacher's provided questions, and whether critical thinking is gender-specific.

Based on the objectives of the study stated above, a descriptive study was then employed in this study. The population of this study was the fifth semester students of English Department of Wijaya Kusuma Surabaya University. The samples were selected using convenient sampling. The data used in this study were

the students' test scores. They were obtained from 55 samples. A test consisting of two parts –generating critical questions and answering the given questions- was used as the research instrument. The results of the test were categorized into five critical thinking abilities proposed by Devine (1981:103-110), such as: recognizing the writer's purpose, noting special point of view, being aware of the writer's choice of language, evaluating the writer's argument, and evaluating inferences. The mean calculation and coefficient correlation were used to analyze the students' test scores. The employment of mean calculation was to explain to what extent the students could generate critical thinking questions from the text they read and to know what extent the students could answer the given questions, while the employment of coefficient correlation was used to find out whether there was any correlation between the students' abilities in generating critical questions and answering the given questions.

This study finds that the students' critical thinking skill was poor. They performed poor critical thinking ability both in generating questions and answering questions. Furthermore, most questions generated by the students were included in evaluating inferences, while the questions that represented the other four critical thinking abilities were generated by a small number of students. This present study also reveals that there is no gender-specific in critical thinking ability since the differences between the female students' and the male students' critical thinking abilities are not significant.

The students' disposition to think critically, the unsupportive culture, and the teachers' knowledge and abilities in critical thinking might cause the poor critical thinking abilities of the students. In addition, this condition might be due to the fact that the students had not been taught how to think critically on a topic or issue. They might be used to spoon-feeding learning process, in which they only accepted what was told and given to them and had less opportunities to criticize, to respond and take initiatives.

5.2 Suggestions

This study has proved that the students' critical thinking skill was poor. Only a few students could perform good critical thinking ability. This finding triggers the following suggestions.

5.2.1 Suggestions for Educational Practitioners

The students' inability to think critically on the text causes a deep concern especially to all educational practitioners. As educational practitioners, we are responsible for the quality of our students. The findings of this study show that our students were unable to summarize, analyze, hypothesize, and evaluate the ideas they encountered in the reading passage. Since university students are intellectual people and the future of nation, this situation harm Indonesia. Based on this consideration, teaching critical thinking to the students is a must. Thus, the curriculum makers need to realize the importance of teaching critical thinking to the

students. The students must be taught critical thinking skills as early as possible. Practically, the teaching critical thinking must be included in all levels of education and should be inserted in syllabuses.

Teachers hold a strategic position in determining the quality of students' critical thinking skills. They are the persons who know their students' weaknesses best. Therefore, they must know the best strategies to teach their students how to think critically according to the students' characteristics. Teachers must develop the students' awareness that everything they see, hear, and read is very possible to contain biases.

Before resolving to nurture critical learners, teachers should take into account the important element needed to accomplish the purpose, and that is the change of teachers' attitudes towards students, pedagogy, and themselves as teachers. Students are not empty vessels which need to be filled with knowledge so that teachers should not assume that the students do not have or little prior knowledge and experiences regarding the subject matter that is going to be taught in the classrooms. If teachers ignore the individuality of the students, they fail to understand and appreciate the students' unique experiences, and concepts, notions and view of the world. This attitude will lead a boring and unimaginative classroom because of the minimal participation and involvement of students. The students will feel left out and assume their opinions and beliefs as not important enough to be heard in the classroom. Eventually, this would lead them to be passive students, and be a detriment to critical thinking. Teachers could gain much by listening to the

students' opinions and beliefs. It obviously becomes the enrichment of experiences, ideas and thoughts in a discussion of an issue. To make this discussion flow without hindrance, teachers should develop a mutual relationship with their students. Besides creating a situation of two-way communication, teachers must also involve respect and provide collaborative learning. Thus, the students learn from the teacher, and the teacher learns from the students.

Producing critical students is not an easy task, but it can be achieved by engaging the Pedagogy of Question which requires posing questions to students and listening to students' questions. This is a practice that forces and challenges the students to think critically. Teachers should also avoid spoon-feeding teaching learning process which does not challenge and stimulate the students' thoughts. They must create atmosphere that can encourage the students to give their opinions, to think alternatives and to take initiatives instead.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes about themselves, and their functions in classrooms have significant implications for students' ability to think critically. If the teachers think that their primary roles are to teach and provide answers and information, then the students are exposed to the culture of "spoon-feeding". Consequently, the students' ability to look for answers and solutions, and to inquire, to decide, to question, to reject and accept ideas will diminish. Teachers need to believe that their major roles are to think, guide, initiate, facilitate and encourage the students. This will put them in a right frame of mind and lead the students to become critical thinkers.

5.2.2 Suggestions for Further Research

Due to limitedness concerning the situation and condition during the research, this study has some weaknesses. When a further and deeper study is done to investigate the same topic, the following suggestions can be considered in order to get more accurate and detailed results and explanations.

The tight academy schedule during the study was being conducted was the main reason this study employed convenient sampling in choosing its sample. This style of sampling, however, to some extent can not reveal results that can be generalized to the whole population. When planning a further research, it is worth doing to prepare a careful random sampling to determine the subjects of the study so that the result can be generalized to the whole population.

Since this study was done to find out to what extent the students' critical thinking ability, the results did not explain about the causes of the poor critical thinking ability of the students. In the next research, it is suggested to investigate the causes of the poor critical thinking ability more detail.

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