



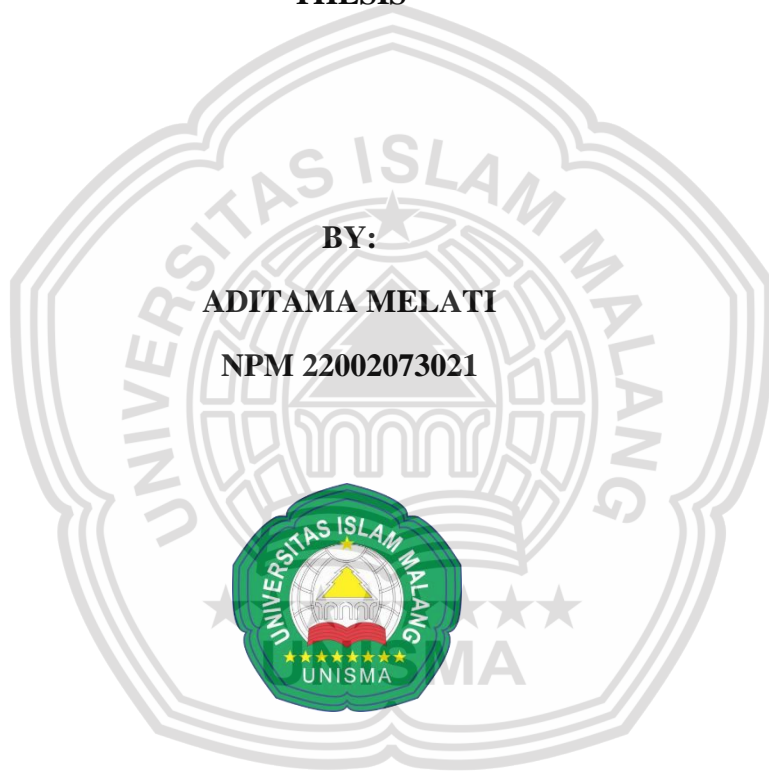
**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN INDONESIAN EFL
LEARNERS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILL AND READING
COMPREHENSION ABILITY**

THESIS

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POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM

APRIL 2023



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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Melati, A. 2023. The Correlation Between Indonesian EFL Learners' Critical Thinking Skill and Reading Comprehension Ability. Thesis, English Language Education Study Program, Postgraduate Program, University of Islam Malang. Advisors: (I) Dr.Drs.Alfan Zuhairi, M.Pd. (II) Prof. Drs. H. Junaidi Mistar, M.Pd., Ph.D.

Keywords: Critical thinking, reading comprehension, EFL learners

Due to the proliferation of information from all sources, such as social media and the recent "fake news" epidemic, the ability to think critically plays a crucial role in the modern era. More than ever before, young people must be able to distinguish between facts and opinions and evaluate the credibility of evidence. Critical thinking consists of the cognitive abilities of reasoning, inference, decision making, and evaluation. To evaluate arguments and overcome problems, humans use critical thinking. To comprehend and manage one's natural and social environments, critical thinking is required. To fathom event causes, scientists must be capable of critical thought. To implement effective policies, politicians must be able to think with precision. As a result, we cannot delegate reasoning to scientists and legislators because we all want to verify the veracity of what they tell us and prescribe for us. We require the capacity for critical thought.

The preponderance of information available today pertains to literacy. To assimilate and organize the obtained information in this situation, reading comprehension skills are necessary. In this instance, reading comprehension and critical thinking are related because comprehending the obtained information requires critical thinking. Reading comprehension-related subjects incorporate critical reasoning for this reason.

In recent decades, critical thinking has received a great deal of attention, despite the fact that the significance of the present study may be contested. Multiple initiatives to cultivate critical thinking were initiated. It is considered an essential element of education, without which little can be achieved. However, when it comes to teaching the four skills in general and reading in particular, it is typically overlooked by educators and instructors in many nations, including Indonesia.

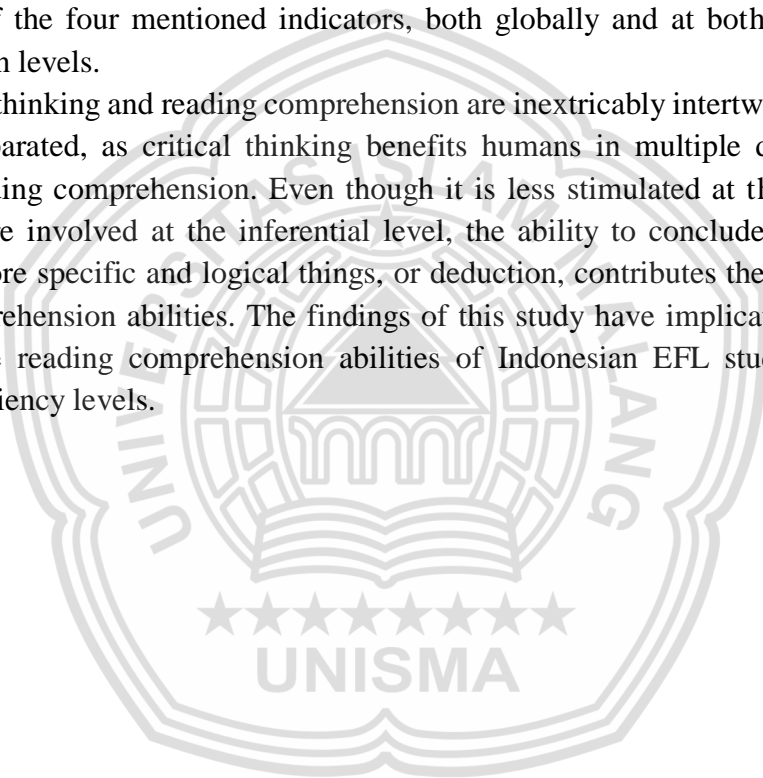
This study aims to determine whether or not critical thinking skills and reading comprehension are correlated. As is common knowledge, critical thinking consists of four components: induction, deduction, credibility, and assumption identification. The researcher wants to determine which of these four factors contributes most to reading comprehension. In addition, the researcher intends to

establish a connection between critical thinking abilities and literal and inferential reading comprehension.

This study involved 125 first-year English Language Education Department correspondents in descriptive correlation research. Correspondents were provided with online versions of Cornell's Critical Thinking Test (CCTT) type X and Reading Comprehension Test (RCT) in order to obtain the essential data. The collected data were then analyzed using a regression test.

According to the data analysis, critical thinking contributes considerably to both literal and inferential reading comprehension. The correlation between the CCTT score and the RCT score demonstrates this. Then, deduction has the greatest distribution of the four mentioned indicators, both globally and at both reading comprehension levels.

Critical thinking and reading comprehension are inextricably intertwined and cannot be separated, as critical thinking benefits humans in multiple domains, including reading comprehension. Even though it is less stimulated at the literal level and more involved at the inferential level, the ability to conclude general things into more specific and logical things, or deduction, contributes the most to reading comprehension abilities. The findings of this study have implications for improving the reading comprehension abilities of Indonesian EFL students of varying proficiency levels.



ABSTRAK

Melati, A. 2023. Korelasi Antara Keterampilan Berpikir Kritis Pembelajar EFL Indonesia dan Kemampuan Pemahaman Membaca. Thesis, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Malang. Pembimbing: (I) Dr.Drs.Alfan Zuhairi, M.Pd. (II) Prof. Drs. H. Junaidi Mistar, M.Pd., Ph.D.

Kata kunci: Pemikiran kritis, pemahaman bacaan, pembelajar EFL

Maraknya informasi dari berbagai sumber, seperti media sosial dan wabah “berita palsu” akhir-akhir ini, kemampuan berpikir kritis memegang peranan penting di era modern ini. Lebih dari sebelumnya, kaum muda harus mampu membedakan antara fakta dan opini serta menilai kredibilitas bukti. Berpikir kritis terdiri dari kemampuan kognitif penalaran, inferensi, pengambilan keputusan, dan evaluasi. Untuk mengevaluasi argumen dan mengatasi masalah, manusia menggunakan pemikiran kritis. Untuk memahami dan mengelola lingkungan alam dan sosial seseorang, diperlukan pemikiran kritis. Untuk memahami penyebab peristiwa, ilmuwan harus mampu berpikir kritis. Untuk menerapkan kebijakan yang efektif, politisi harus mampu berpikir dengan presisi. Akibatnya, kami tidak dapat mendelegasikan penalaran kepada ilmuwan dan legislator karena kami semua ingin memverifikasi kebenaran dari apa yang mereka katakan dan resepkan untuk kami. Kami membutuhkan kapasitas untuk berpikir kritis.

Banyaknya informasi yang tersedia saat ini berkaitan dengan literasi. Untuk mengasimilasi dan mengatur informasi yang diperoleh dalam situasi ini, keterampilan membaca pemahaman diperlukan. Dalam hal ini, pemahaman membaca dan berpikir kritis saling berhubungan karena memahami informasi yang diperoleh memerlukan pemikiran kritis. Mata pelajaran terkait pemahaman membaca menggabungkan penalaran kritis untuk alasan ini.

Dalam beberapa dekade terakhir, pemikiran kritis telah menerima banyak perhatian, terlepas dari kenyataan bahwa pentingnya penelitian ini dapat diperdebatkan. Berbagai inisiatif untuk menumbuhkan pemikiran kritis dimulai. Ini dianggap sebagai elemen penting dari pendidikan, tanpanya hanya sedikit yang dapat dicapai. Namun, dalam hal mengajarkan empat keterampilan secara umum dan membaca secara khusus, hal ini biasanya diabaikan oleh para pendidik dan instruktur di banyak negara, termasuk Indonesia.

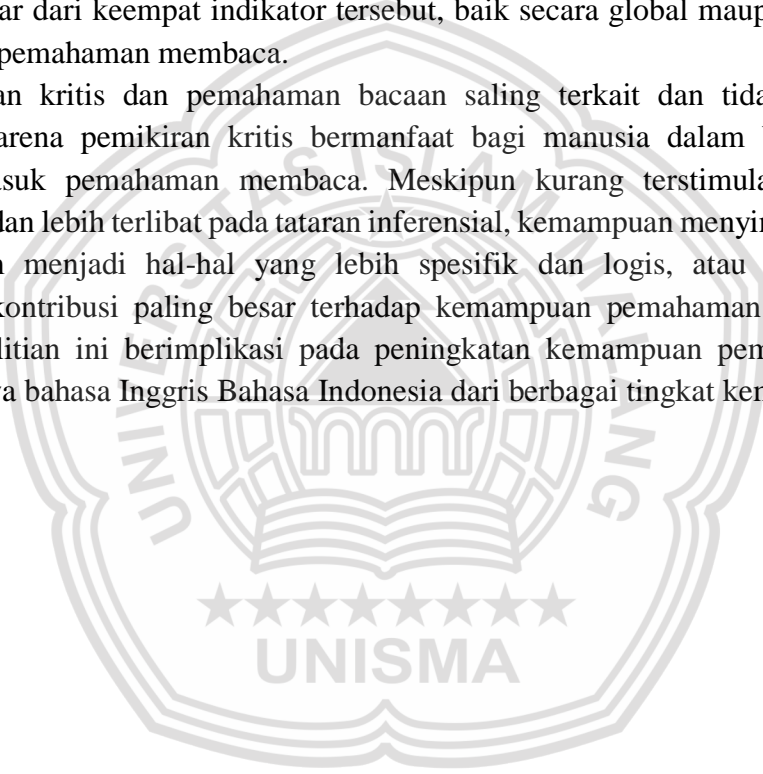
Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah keterampilan berpikir kritis dan pemahaman bacaan berkorelasi atau tidak. Sebagaimana pengetahuan umum, berpikir kritis terdiri dari empat komponen: induksi, deduksi, kredibilitas, dan identifikasi asumsi. Peneliti ingin menentukan mana dari keempat faktor ini yang paling berkontribusi terhadap pemahaman membaca. Selain itu, peneliti bermaksud

untuk membangun hubungan antara kemampuan berpikir kritis dan pemahaman bacaan literal dan inferensial.

Penelitian ini melibatkan 125 koresponden Departemen Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris tahun pertama dalam penelitian korelasi deskriptif. Koresponden diberikan versi online Cornell's Critical Thinking Test (CCTT) tipe X dan Reading Comprehension Test (RCT) untuk mendapatkan data penting. Data yang terkumpul kemudian dianalisis dengan menggunakan uji regresi.

Menurut analisis data, pemikiran kritis memberikan kontribusi yang cukup besar baik untuk pemahaman bacaan literal maupun inferensial. Korelasi antara skor CCTT dan skor RCT menunjukkan hal ini. Kemudian, deduksi memiliki sebaran terbesar dari keempat indikator tersebut, baik secara global maupun pada kedua tingkat pemahaman membaca.

Pemikiran kritis dan pemahaman bacaan saling terkait dan tidak dapat dipisahkan, karena pemikiran kritis bermanfaat bagi manusia dalam berbagai bidang, termasuk pemahaman membaca. Meskipun kurang terstimulasi pada tataran literal dan lebih terlibat pada tataran inferensial, kemampuan menyimpulkan hal-hal umum menjadi hal-hal yang lebih spesifik dan logis, atau deduksi, memberikan kontribusi paling besar terhadap kemampuan pemahaman bacaan. Temuan penelitian ini berimplikasi pada peningkatan kemampuan pemahaman membaca siswa bahasa Inggris Bahasa Indonesia dari berbagai tingkat kemahiran.



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research, including background of the study, research problems, objectives of the study, assumption of the study, delimitation of the study, significance of the study, and definition of the key terms.

1.1. Background Study

Several individuals can obtain information from anyone, anywhere, and at any time, thanks to the efficacy of modern technology. Due to news websites and social media, everyone, including children, adolescents, and even their parents, has access to information. Nonetheless, with the proliferation of information from all sources, such as social media, and the most recent epidemic of "fake news," the ability to think critically is more important than ever. More than ever, young people must be able to differentiate between facts and opinions, as well as analyze and evaluate the credibility of evidence.

In order for students to positively contribute to society through communication, effective leadership, collaboration, and cross-national and cross-cultural understanding, Živković (2016: 103) stated critical thinking skills must be fostered. Since it is a highly regarded educational objective, the development of students' critical thinking skills and abilities is considered of the utmost importance (Larsson, 2017). According to Forawi (2016), educators in today's society place a

high value on the development of a citizen's talents and skills so they can process and comprehend the information deluge.

Critical thinking encompasses the cognitive abilities of deductive reasoning, inference, decision-making, and evaluation. Humans use critical thinking abilities to assess arguments and solve problems. Those who desire to comprehend and control their natural and social environments must be able to think critically. In order to comprehend the causes of events, scientists must be adept at reasoning. Politicians must be able to think effectively in order to execute effective policies. As a result, we cannot delegate thinking to scientists and legislators because we all want to know if what they tell us and prescribe for us is accurate. We all need to be able to think critically.

The emphasis of 21st-Century Learning is on the multiple skills that students must acquire, such as diverse ways of reasoning (Dwyer et al., 2014; Greiff et al., 2015) and communication skills (Siddiq et al., 2016). Critical thinking and problem-solving are regarded as the most crucial abilities that every pupil must acquire among the numerous thinking skills. (Dwyer et al., 2014; (Schmaltz et al., 2017). According to Crowley (2015), critical thinking entails higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), which are required to address the global expansion of the present day. Critical thinkers will be capable of scientific, reflective, and decisive reasoning regarding what to believe and do (Ennis, 2011). In addition, the development of critical thinking skills is a crucial factor that must be considered in higher education institutions, especially for undergraduate students (Kumar.R & James, 2015).

Recently, the rapid advancement of technology and information has influenced the manner in which people think. For instance, the learner must possess the essential skills of creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking in order to adapt to future changes (Fuad et al., 2017). Learning to think critically entails acquiring the ability to use deliberate judgment when making decisions and resolving everyday problems. Nasirahmadi et al. (2014) summarizes some of the arguments made by Buskist & Irons (2009) stating that some students may believe their judgment is inferior to that of an authority figure, students are used to memorizing information rather than thinking about it, students may minimize the consequences of their decisions, students lack the time for genuine critical thinking, and students lack the fundamental subject knowledge required for critical thinking.

In the age of information and knowledge, everyone aspires to increase his degree of skill by swiftly acquiring as much information as possible. Reading is a method for gaining knowledge and information. Consequently, biology instruction should be designed to encourage students to read in order to gain an understanding of the vast number of available knowledge sources. Reading is the most effective form of education because it helps students develop their critical thinking skills, broaden their worldview, understand who they are and how the world functions, and evaluate future events and circumstances (Karadeniz, 2015).

As time passes and the number of global influences that enter through the ease of information access grows, everyone must develop their critical thinking skills. The improvement of critical thinking will have a humanizing effect on all socioeconomic groups and social strata. In this instance, all students and teachers

must acquire critical thinking skills for their own educational advancement and recognize its significance in their future lives.

Reading comprehension is one of the Indonesian language skills that students must develop in education. As the majority of a students' success is dependent on his or her ability to read, reading comprehension has become vital and indispensable. If children have poor reading comprehension, they run the risk of failing to learn or, at the very least, may struggle to advance (Somadayo et al., 2013).

Numerous individuals are oblivious to the fact that reading is one of the most indispensable skills for daily life. Reading has numerous benefits because it can broaden one's horizons and comprehension (Rachmadtullah et al., 2018). Wigfield et al., (2016) mentioned children should be exposed to reading as soon as they enter formal education environments. Students must read in order to acquire various forms of information, including content, and to comprehend the meaning of reading. There are still many students who are too indolent to read or who have little interest in reading as reported by Hahnel et al. (2016), so the low reading abilities of students are already apparent.

The ability to read calls into question the accuracy of one's understanding of words and their meanings, as well as the acceptability of one's word selection to others. This is necessitated by the diversity of the community, which necessitates that each term be tailored to the linguistic context at hand (McGeown et al., 2014). Child et al. (2018) described knowledge of less precise diction or word choice is especially important for reading comprehension, because if the approach to discern

the word choice is erroneous, the reading's meaning will be affected. It takes practice to arrange multiple phrases over and over again in order to become proficient at selecting the appropriate words and comprehending a reading based on the concepts that are to be presented (Castek & Coiro, 2015).

It is possible to query the importance of this investigation. In recent decades, there has been a lot of focus on critical reasoning. Several initiatives to promote critical thinking have been initiated. It is regarded as a crucial component of education, without which little learning can occur. However, when it comes to teaching four skills in general, and reading in particular, it is typically ignored by educators and instructors in many nations, including Indonesia.

The objectives of reading comprehension are unique. Reading comprehension is the ability to fully understand logical arguments, etoris sequences or text patterns, symbolic patterns, emotional overtones, and language strategies used to attain objectives (Rachmadtullah et al., 2018). On the basis of the opinions expressed thus far, it is evident that the purpose of reading comprehension incorporates multiple dimensions. Even if the problems we read are extensive, it is evident that we must have reading comprehension if we are to acquire and understand them.

The potential relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension among Indonesian EFL students appears to be a novel topic worthy of investigation at present. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to assess the relationship between critical thinking and the reading comprehension skills of undergraduate EFL learners in Indonesia. In addition, the researcher is interested to

proving that reading comprehension is influenced not only by critical thinking as a whole, but also by which indicators have the greatest impact on reading comprehension.

1.2. Research Problems

The research problems are specifically formulated as follows, based on the facts presented in the study's background:

1. Is there any relationship between the critical thinking and reading comprehension skills of Indonesian EFL students? If this is the case, which aspect of critical thinking contributes most to reading comprehension?

Then the question above is divided into two, as follows:

- a) Is there any relationship between the critical thinking skills and literal comprehension of Indonesian EFL students? In this case, which aspect of critical thinking contributes most to reading comprehension?
- b) Is there any relationship between the degree of inferential comprehension and the critical thinking abilities of Indonesian EFL students? In this case, which aspect of critical thinking contributes most to reading comprehension?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The researcher formulated the following study objectives based on the background of the study and research problems; this study would establish a correlation between critical thinking and reading comprehension among Indonesian

EFL students. In addition, this research will determine which indicator of critical thinking affects reading comprehension the most. Also, the connection between critical thinking, literal comprehension, and inferential comprehension.

1.4. Assumption of the Study

The researcher anticipated the following result from this study:

1. There is a correlation between the critical thinking skills and reading comprehension skills of Indonesian EFL students.
2. There is a correlation between the critical thinking skills and literal comprehension level of Indonesian EFL students.
3. There is a correlation between the critical thinking skills and inferential comprehension level of Indonesian EFL students.

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

This study examines the critical thinking and reading comprehension skills of EFL students in Indonesia. Participants are limited to freshmen in the English Language Education Department at Muhammadiyah Malang University. The researcher intended to investigate the relationship between their critical thinking ability and their reading comprehension score, specifically their critical thinking capacity when resolving reading test questions. The researcher was subsequently interested in their ability to understand literal and inferential concepts.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This research has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this research is beneficial for gaining a deeper understanding of students' critical thinking and reading comprehension abilities. This study has practical implications for the researcher, the English teacher, and the students.

1. This writing can be used by the researcher as references and to develop the research through another method.
2. This writing will assist the teacher or lecturer in determining the extent to which students are able to interpret a text critically. This additionally helps in the creation of engaging instructional materials for the classroom.
3. This writing has the potential to assist students develop their critical thinking skills, particularly in terms of text comprehension.

1.7. Hypothesis of the Study ★★★★★★

A hypothesis is a preliminary response that must be tested to determine the truth. In this study, hypotheses are classified into two types: alternative hypotheses (H_a) and null hypotheses (H_0). There is connection between the independent and dependent variables. H_0 indicates that there is no effect of the independent on dependent variables. This study's hypothesis is as follows:

1. Strong and positive correlation exists between the critical thinking and reading comprehension skills of Indonesian EFL students.
2. Strong and positive correlation exists between the critical thinking ability and literal reading comprehension ability of Indonesian EFL students.

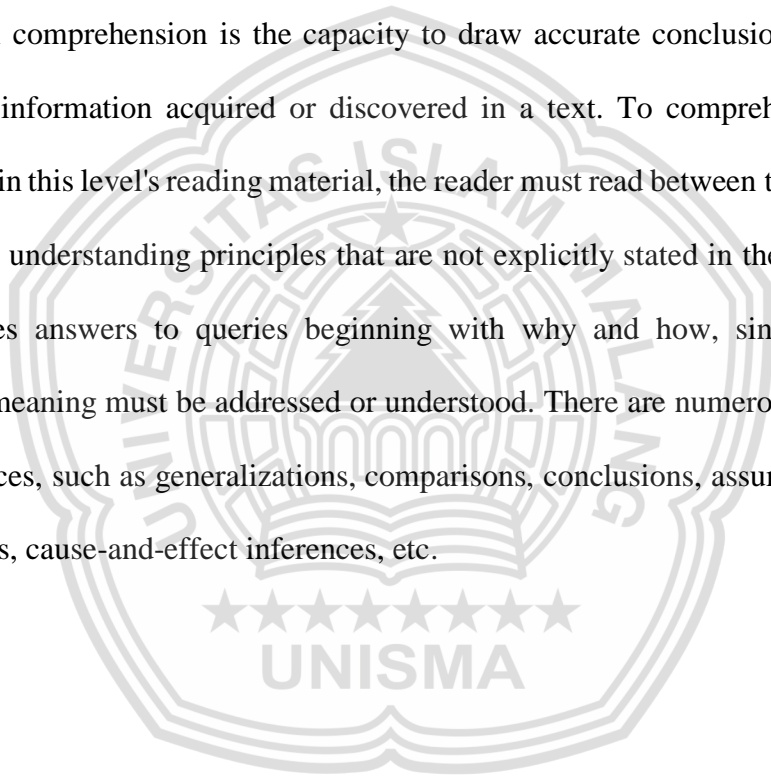
3. Strong and positive correlation exists between the critical thinking and inferential reading comprehension skills of Indonesian EFL students.

1.8. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid ambiguity and misinterpretation, the following terms related to this study have been defined:

1. Critical thinking is the ability to consider critically and remains one of the most valuable traits a person can possess at any time. To analyze and evaluate novel concepts, individuals require critical thinking skills. Critical thinking is now acknowledged as one of the most essential educational concepts, and it has acquired popularity in second and foreign language instruction. Numerous studies have examined the influence of critical thinking on various aspects of second and foreign language acquisition. Several of them are pertinent to this investigation and have been examined.
2. Reading comprehension is the ability to comprehend literature; reading comprehension is the ability to comprehend the meaning of a text and integrate it with what the reader already understands. Fundamental skills required for effective reading comprehension include following the organization of a passage and identifying antecedents and references, drawing inferences about the contents of a passage, identifying the main idea of a passage, answering questions answered in a passage, and recognizing literary devices or propositional strides. Lastly, the ability to infer the writer's purpose, goal, and perspective and draw conclusions about the writer (discourse-semantics).

3. Literal comprehension is the understanding of a text's facts, concepts, terminology, events, and statements. It involves obtaining comprehensive responses to questions or accumulating information for questions beginning with what, where, when, who, etc. Literal comprehension requires plain and explicit responses to text-based questions. It is a required skill because it serves as a foundation for higher degrees of comprehension.
4. Inferential comprehension is the capacity to draw accurate conclusions from facts and information acquired or discovered in a text. To comprehend the sentences in this level's reading material, the reader must read between the lines. It requires understanding principles that are not explicitly stated in the text. It investigates answers to queries beginning with why and how, since their intended meaning must be addressed or understood. There are numerous types of inferences, such as generalizations, comparisons, conclusions, assumptions, predictions, cause-and-effect inferences, etc.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

This chapter attempts to present the research's conclusions, implications, and recommendations for Indonesian EFL students, EFL instructors, and future researchers.

6.1. Conclusions

The results of this research indicate that there is a significant correlation between critical thinking and reading comprehension. In general, critical thinking contributes to reading comprehension. The four components of critical thinking are induction, deduction, credibility, and assumption identification. Deduction has the greatest impact on reading comprehension of the four components. This is supported by an effect value of 1.095 and a significant value of 0.000 ($\text{sig} < 0.05$), indicating that there is a significant influence in a positive direction, i.e., the higher the deduction value, the greater the effect it will have on increasing the reading comprehension test score.

The level of literal comprehension is also related to critical thinking. Similar to reading comprehension in general, deduction is the most important factor at this level. This is demonstrated by the fact that the effect of deduction on the literal reading test is 0.880 with a significant value of 0.014 ($\text{sig} < 0.05$), indicating a

significant influence in a positive direction, i.e., the higher the deduction value has a significant effect on increasing the value of the literal reading test.

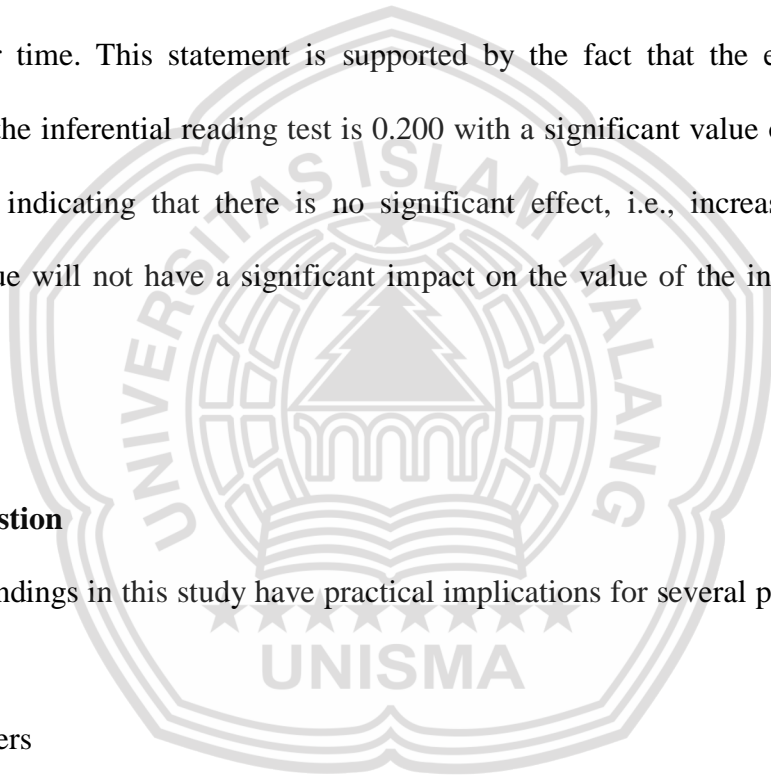
Last but not least, the degree of inferential comprehension is also related to critical thinking, with deduction contributing the most to this level. One of the influencing factors is a critical mindset that is stimulated when confronted with more difficult questions, so that basic concepts become progressively more complex over time. This statement is supported by the fact that the effect of induction on the inferential reading test is 0.200 with a significant value of 0.637 ($\text{sig} > 0.05$), indicating that there is no significant effect, i.e., increasing the induction value will not have a significant impact on the value of the inferential reading test.

6.2. Suggestion

The findings in this study have practical implications for several parties as follows:

1. EFL Learners

To enhance their critical thinking abilities, students can increase their interest in reading. Which is the fact that the students' growing interest in reading as they read the text questions will influence their way of thinking so that critical thinking emerges unconsciously. In addition, the more frequently students read, the sharper their analytical skills become.

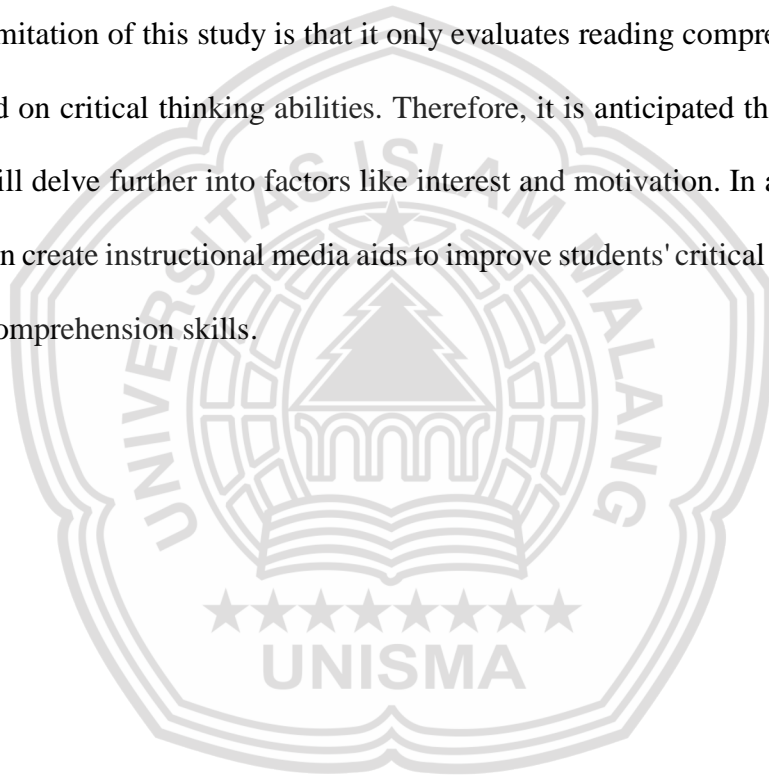


2. EFL Lecturers

Critical thinking is not something that comes intuitively, but it is rarely taught openly and systematically in educational settings. Therefore, lecturers can design active learning that encourages students to continuously think critically in order to improve reading comprehension.

3. Future Researchers

The limitation of this study is that it only evaluates reading comprehension capacity based on critical thinking abilities. Therefore, it is anticipated that future researchers will delve further into factors like interest and motivation. In addition, researchers can create instructional media aids to improve students' critical thinking and reading comprehension skills.



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