

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Problem

Major improvements in science and technology over the 21st century have increased the amount of intensive information produced and the use of technology for distributing it. In order to keep up with this rapid development and change, it aims to raise people who can produce the necessary information, use it effectively in daily life, solve problems, think critically, communicate effectively, have empathy, and show qualities like entrepreneurship, determination, and creativity.

Researchers' interest in reading difficulties and second language acquisition has grown in recent years. This is because, as a result of increased worldwide mobility, teachers today have the difficulty of properly evaluating and assisting students from a variety of cultural and language backgrounds. There has been increasing awareness in the international community of research on second-language (L2) learners about their past overrepresentation in special education settings and inaccurate identification. Supporting teachers in recognizing and helping students with specific reading difficulties is therefore necessary.

Considering English as an International language used in all countries to communicate; therefore, English in Indonesia is taught from junior high school to university. This is aimed at developing good English communication skills to others, increasing this skill is more emphasized in the college which is the last place and will also become a teacher according to the English study program. As we know, reading comprehension is one of an important skill student need for academic achievement.

Researcher discovered many issues in the learning process in college, especially students in the English study program FKIP, Universitas Jambi. Many students tend to struggle with critical thinking in English, especially in reading. Some of them find it hard to articulating arguments and counter arguments in discussion in the classroom and despite the students usually grasp and comprehend language knowledge, they find it hard to apply it. It appears to be difficult for the students to analyze, and evaluating information. The statement above is in accordance with the experience of the researcher.

From the statement above, it can be concluded that it needed too investigating the issue and searching for solutions and give recommendations to enhance teaching and learning. The

purpose is to provide the improvement in class activities and gain a better understanding of a certain issue in teaching and learning. The researcher is interested about the EFL student's critical reading skill difficulties at English Study Program FKIP, Universitas Jambi.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The research questions of this research are formulated as follow:

- What is the EFL Student's critical skill difficulties often found when they read the English text?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Research**

Based on the research background, the purpose of the research are to describe difficulties encountered in University students that are not competent in reading critically which will be interviewed to gain information and understand student's ability by the researcher.

## **1.4 Limitation of the Research**

This study restricted to students that have the struggle with critical thinking in English at universitas Jambi. This research will concentrate on students in the English study program FKIP, Universitas Jambi. The reason behind it is that the students in this program have the reading courses.

## **1.5 Significance of the Research**

The research advantages are projected to benefit various parties. Firstly for students, this research may be used to understanding their ability to read English critically and find the ways to improving their reading skill. Secondly for lecturers, this research might be used as a reference for lecturers making classroom activities that can enhance students' critical thinking skill. Thirdly for readers, this research can help readers understand the critical thinking and how to improve it.

## **1.6 Definition of the Key Terms**

In order to avoid ambiguity and misunderstanding for the reader, and also to explain the meaning of terminology, there are several definitions of key terms in this research. The first is critical reading skill based on Freeley, A J & Stemberg (2000) is Learner' ability to understand arguments, critically evaluate arguments, and developer gathered by

observation, experience, reflection or communication to defend their own argument. The second is "English as a foreign language" (EFL) describes how speakers of other native languages use or study the language. EFL student is a person studying English in a nation where the language is not widely spoken.