



Students' Critical Thinking Aspects in Writing Background of the Problem in Thesis

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ABSTRAK

Latar belakang masalah didalam sebuah skripsi dimaksudkan untuk menjelaskan alasan mengapa masalah dalam penelitian ingin diteliti, pentingnya permasalahan dan pendekatan yang digunakan untuk menyelesaikan masalah tersebut baik dari sisi teoritis dan praktis. Dalam menulis latar belakang masalah dalam sebuah skripsi, berpikir kritis sangat diperlukan. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti focus menganalisis aspek berpikir kritis (*focus, supporting reasons, reasoning, organization, conventions, and integration*) yang diterapkan oleh siswa dalam menulis latar belakang masalah di skripsi. Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian ini adalah rata-rata nilai aspek berpikir kritis mahasiswa dalam menulis latar belakang masalah dalam skripsi yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa program Bahasa Inggris di STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan yang lulus pada tahun akademik 2020/2021 adalah 64.4 yang dikategorikan sebagai *unclear category*. Dengan nilai yang didapat pada setiap aspek adalah 70.4 untuk aspek fokus dengan kategori *clear enough*, 60.6 untuk aspek *supporting reason* dengan kategori *unclear*; 54.5 untuk aspek *reasoning* dengan kategori *unclear*; 69.7 untuk aspek *organization* dengan kategori *clear enough*; 66.7 untuk aspek *convention* dengan kategori *clear enough* dan 61.3 untuk aspek *integration* dengan kategori *unclear*.

Kata kunci: Berpikir Kritis, Latar Belakang Masalah, Menulis, Skripsi

ABSTRACT

Background of the problem in the thesis is intended to explain the reason why the problem in the research wants to be investigated, the importance of the problem and the approach used to solve the problem both from a theoretical and practical point of view. In writing the background of the problem in a thesis, critical thinking is needed. In this research, the researcher focused on analyzing critical thinking aspects (*focus, supporting reasons, reasoning, organization, conventions, and integration*) applied by the students in the writing background of the problem of the thesis. The design of this research was descriptive research in a quantitative method. The finding of this research is the students average score of critical thinking aspects in writing background of the problem in skripsi written by the English students' program of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021 academic year that was 64.4 categorized to *unclear category* which the score of every aspects was 70.4 for focus aspect which categorized as *clear enough category*; 60.6 for supporting reason aspect which categorized as *unclear category*; 54.5 for reasoning aspect which categorized as *unclear category*; 69.7 for organization aspect which categorized as *clear enough category*; 66.7 for convention aspect which categorized as *clear enough category* and 61.3 for integration aspect which categorized as *unclear category*.

Keywords: Background of The Problem, Critical Thinking, Thesis, Writing



INTRODUCTION

Writing is an activity where people do not only write, but also transfer their thoughts, feelings into the paper in order people can get the message (Toba et al., 2019). In university, writing is one of the most compulsory skills that should be mastered by college students because most of their activities are done in writing. If the college students can not write well, they will find some difficulties, such as: unable to finish their assignment, and even can not be able to accomplish their thesis.

Writing a thesis is a research task undertaken by undergraduate students in pursuit of obtaining an academic degree. It's a necessary part of university education requirements, demanding extensive research and scholarly analysis.(Syamsuri et al., 2018) The thesis serves as a final task, showcasing the analytical capabilities of the candidate. It is an exercise in logical thinking, adhering to the discipline of science, compiled to meet the requirements for obtaining a graduate degree. However, students often encounter challenges when it comes to integrating academic instruction into their work.. In writing many students did not identifying, evaluating, and analyzing the topic well. It can be said that they did not still the critical thinking.

Critical thinking refers to a broad set of cognitive abilities and intellectual tendencies required to efficiently identify, analyze, and assess arguments and claims of truth. It involves recognizing and overcoming personal biases and preconceptions, constructing and presenting persuasive reasons to support conclusions, and making informed, rational decisions about what to accept as truth and how to act accordingly. It is a think needed a identifying, analyzing, and evaluating in give an arguments (Bassham et. al: 2011). Critical thinking make people can use her potential to see, solve and create the problem and realize herself. It also stated that in higher education, critical thinking is really important and it is listed among the objectives and outcomes in many programs (Guleker, 2015:6).

Thinking critically in writing the background to the problem in the thesis allows students to more clearly explain the problems that will be discussed in the research (Pramonjati et al., 2020). Critical thinking helps the students in giving guidance in thinking, working and assisting them in determining links with other things more accurately. The students who are critical thinkers will address argument and collect relevant information to support their thought and belief. If it is related with writing, critical thinking skill will help the



students to decide what sources of information that will be used to support their idea, how to interpret those information and organize their writing to be more logical and accurate.

There are some studies have examined students' critical thinking in writing by several researchers. They found that there was a correlation and positive link between critical thinking and argumentative writing ((Abdullah & Sharadgah, 2014) (Pei et al., 2017) (PUTRI, 1970). Other researchers conducted studies which focusing on critical thinking elements in writing (Indah, 2017; Widyastuti, 2018). From the previous research above, it can be seen that there is a gap that has not been discussed by some researchers, namely the aspects of critical thinking. Based on phenomena above, studies concerning critical thinking skills reflected in background of the problem of a thesis need to be conducted. Thus, this study entitled, "Students' Critical Thinking Aspects in Writing Background of the Problem in Thesis English Study Program at STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan".

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive research in quantitative method.(Gay, LR., Mills, Geoffrey E., and Airasian, 2012)descriptive is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems and issues. The population of the problem section of the theses written by the English students program of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021 academic year. In this research, the researcher used total sampling method. That is, researcher use the entire population as the sample.

The data collected from the theses that had been written by the undergraduate students. The researcher came to the library of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan and then asked permission from the librarian to get the document official from other thesis. After that, the researcher used those documents as the source of data then analyze it. In analysis the data, the writer used the rubric scoring are states by (Fiken & Ennis, 1996). Then the researcher classified the scores into the class interval.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

a. Result

The final score from scorer 1 and scorer 2 used as the data in this research.

Table 2 : Students' critical Thinking Score

Code	score 1	Score 2	Score
D1	63.8	61.1	62,5
D2	63.8	63.8	63,8
D3	66.6	66.6	66,6
D4	63.8	63.8	63,8
D5	63.8	58.3	61,1
D6	61.1	58.3	59,7
D7	77.7	75	76,3
D8	61.1	55.5	58,3
D9	72.2	72.2	72,2
D10	61.1	61.1	61,1
D11	63.8	61.1	62,5
Total Score			707,9
Average			64,4

Based on the table above, it can be seen that, the total score of the students critical thinking aspects was 707,9. After that the researcher divided the total score with the number of the data in this research and found the average score of this research was 64,4 with classified into **unclear** category. The score were classified into three class interval as follow:

Table 3 : Class Interval

No	Interval	F	%
1	72-78.9(Very Clear)	2	18,2%
2	65-71.9(Clear enough)	3	27,3%
3	58-64.9(Unclear)	6	54,5%
Total		11	100,0%

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there are three categories, they are very clear, clear enough, and unclear. There are 2 data in interval 72-78 and it included in very clear category with 18,2%. There are 3 data in interval 65-71 and it included in clear enough category with 27,3%. There are 6 data in interval 58-64 and it included in unclear category with 54,5%.

Based on the table of class interval above, it can be concluded that the students average score of critical thinking aspects in writing background of the problem in skripsi written by the English students' program of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021 academic year that was 64,4 categorized to unclear category.

b. Discussion

Based on the research finding, it can be concluded that the students critical thinking aspects in writing background of the problem in skripsi written by the English students' program of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021 belongs to unclear category with the average score 64,4. For each critical thinking aspects in writing background of the problem in skripsi written by the English students' program of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021, the researcher found that the aspect *focus, organization, and convention* is the aspect which get the highest score and the aspect *reasoning, supporting reason, and integration* is the aspect which the lowest score.

As we know, in background of the problem part, the researcher should explain the reason why the problem is raised in the skripsi. In the background, the argument for why a topic was chosen should be included. Background reveals, evidence, data, concepts, and relationship between variables related to the topic. It is line with Hon (2007:2) stated that the background of the problem should indicate the root of the problem being studied, appropriate context of the problem in relation to theory, research and practice, its scope, and the extent to which previous studies have successfully investigated the problem, noting, in particular, where gaps exist that your study with the other research.

The problem of the paper is clear and the position/opinion is announced explicitly in the opening and maintained throughout the paper and can be seen from the aspects of focus, organization, and conventions in the aspect of critical thinking (Fiken & Ennis, 1996). Having a focus will help the researcher to make the purpose of the research clear. The focus will control the idea, main idea, or guiding principle in the writing. If we focus on a particular topic or if our attention is focused on it, we concentrate on it and think about it, discuss it, or deal with it, rather than dealing with other topics. That why this aspect got the highest score in this research. The English students' program of STKIP



Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021 realize that this aspect is an important aspect in writing project, especially in scientific research.

In scientific research, like skripsi, the background of the problem must contain rational reasons that make the research interesting to study, based on fact, data, references or finding of this research (Arsyad et al., 2018). The aspects reasoning, supporting reason and integration get the lowest score in this research. This feature incorporates the strength of three different types of reasoning, the recognition of alternative viewpoints, and the degree of clarity (Fiken & Ennis, 1996).

Reasoning, supporting reason and integration in critical thinking can be defined as the formal structure of an argument (Facione, 1990). In other words, the way that claims and reason are arranged to lead to the conclusion. In reasoning, someone should figure out what claim were being made as part of the reasoning and figure out what logical relationship, if any, these claims are supposed have to each other. It needs skill of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. It requires a lot of skills and complex. It also must be trained by reading a lot of references from what we are going to argue right. That why this skill got the lowest score. The limitation of this research is it only focused on critical thinking in writing, while future researchers can develop it to other broader skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data obtained previously, the main concern of this research is to find out the critical thinking aspects of students in writing background problems in the thesis of the English study program at STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan Payakumbuh. The finding of this research is the students average score of critical thinking aspects in writing background of the problem in skripsi written by the English students' program of STKIP Yayasan Abdi Pendidikan who graduated in 2020/2021 academic year that was 64,4 categorized to unclear category which the score of every aspects was 70.4 for *focus* aspect which categorized as clear enough category; 60.6 for *supporting reason* aspect which categorized as unclear category; 54.5 for *reasoning* aspect which categorized as unclear category ; 69.7 for *organization* aspect which categorized as clear enough category; 66.7 for *convention* aspect which categorized as clear enough category and 61.3 for *integration* aspect which categorized as unclear category. It is hoped that future researchers will be able to develop research on



critical thinking in the next aspects, such as in other skills and in the broader theory of critical thinking.

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