

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of Study**

Critical thinking is a skill that all students currently need because many positive benefits can be obtained by thinking critically. Therefore, students are required to familiarize themselves and master critical thinking skills. According to Rashid and Qaisar (2016), in the classroom, critical thinking skill is an important thing that every student must have because the purpose of education is to encourage individual focus and the development of critical pedagogy. Furthermore, it stated that critical thinking also has benefits for the education itself, including that the particular concerned will become more evaluative in solving problems through their judgment (Aldossari and Aldjani, 2021).

The importance of critical thinking for students will affect their future life and the academic achievements they will get, both in school and in their social life. In line with the statement from Novitaningrum et al. (2020), they stated that nowadays, many jobs require to rely critically on influential thinking or require critical thinking such as analyzing data, making decisions, and being responsible for work.

A school is a place that must and is obliged to facilitate students to get used to critical thinking. Muharram et al. (2019) claimed that the role of schools or educational institutions is crucial in providing provisions to students to increase

their critical thinking to go through the challenges of the times because the role of schools is not limited to delivering knowledge in this ever-growing era.

Therefore, many efforts have been made by authorized officers in the field of education to promote students' critical thinking; one of the attempts that have been held is to develop a curriculum that focuses on student learning and provides opportunities for students to explore their abilities, one of them is by thinking critically. In line with the statement by the Ministry of Education (2014) in Setianingsih et al. (2019) that in the 2013 curriculum (K-13), students have the capability of critical thinking by developing and perfecting the mindset of student-centered learning by using a scientific approach through various Learning Resources.

Critical thinking among students is a crucial skill in learning because students need it in obtaining or analyzing information. In the same position as solving a problem, students must get the best solution to a problem with their critical minds. As stated by Ariyana et al. (2018), critical thinking is a problem-solving activity that involves making decisions, analyzing and examining them all based on factual evidence and data to generate thoughts that provide the required knowledge. At the junior high school level, students need the ability to think critically. All the basic lessons that impact higher education were learned at this level. Akhdinirwanto et al. (2020) claimed that critical thinking in junior high schools would play a significant role in building knowledge to continue to higher education, namely at the senior high school and university levels.

Moreover, critical thinking becomes an information sorter for students to be more observant in receiving information. Paul and Elder (2019) assumed that people who think critically would be cautious in providing an overview of the argument for information; they will consider far more about fake news. Therefore, critical thinking is an existence that has a significant impact on the education field.

Allah, the almighty says in surah Ali-Imran verse 191:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ  
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

The verse explains that Allah the Almighty created humans with reason and made humans creatures with advantages over others. Allah the Almighty gives humans a mind that has benefits to pay attention to the greatness, oneness, remembering, and remembering the favors of Allah the Almighty. In this verse, Allah the Almighty is the object of remembrance, while the thing of reason is a creature created by Allah the Almighty in the form of the universe and all its phenomena. Therefore, it indicates that the knowledge of Allah the Almighty is mainly based on the heart, while the human mind uses the knowledge of the universe in the way of thinking. (Shihab, 2011)

Concerning critical thinking, this verse explains that Allah the Almighty gave humans a reason to use them to think and use intelligence to describe Allah's majesty. In line with Hasan (2020), he stated that intelligent humans use their minds to take compassion and guidance, depicting God's majesty. Therefore, critical thinking greatly influences students' ability to make decisions, give

reasons, and express arguments that can support their academic development and achievement. As stated by Muharam et al. (2019) that critical thinking is an academic competence that students must have because it has a significant influence on student academics, where it can provide a presentation model that is trustworthy, concise, and convincing through analysis of interpretation of various problem processes, arguments in critical thinking.

However, in the scope of education, all activities and capabilities related to students cannot be separated from the teacher. Laine et al. (2020) stated that the teacher has an essential role as a mediator, facilitator, and director for their students' learning. Moreover, to promote students' thinking critically, the teacher must transform from the center of learning to become a facilitator and motivator (Novitaningrum et al., 2020). Therefore, the teacher has a vital role in promoting or familiarizing students with critical thinking. Although teachers do not take over all of the control of the learning process, their role as facilitators in the classroom environment is essential.

To optimize this role, the teacher has several strategies for promoting student critical thinking. One of them is using the interaction strategy. According to Xuerong (2012) in Sulistiyorini (2019), the classroom interaction strategy consists of code, emotional, and managerial strategies. The code acts as a teaching medium in the classroom in the interaction strategy. Furthermore, the emotional method is how the teacher conveys the lesson using gestures and humor. At the same time, the management strategy plays a role in choosing topics so that students are active in class. On the other hand, the teacher feedback strategy

focuses on student outcomes and performance. At the same time, the important one is the questioning strategy.

The questioning strategy used in the classroom to gather information and gain student interactions also the student's critical thinking. Milawati and Suryati (2019) in Lestari (2021) claimed that the role of questioning strategy in the classroom to promote student critical thinking has proven effective. In conclusion, the teacher's questioning strategy in the classroom is an important thing that can increase student participation and promote students' thinking skills in learning.

Allah, the almighty says in surah al-Anbiya verse 7:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَسَلُّوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

That verse explains the command to ask when you don't know something or want to know more about something. It's the same with the learning-teaching process. In this case, not only students can ask their teacher when they don't know the answer. However, teachers can also ask students to achieve learning objectives. Syarifah (2017) stated in her thesis that in surah al-Anbiya verse 7, the Prophet used questioning when learning with friends. Therefore, the use of questions in the learning process has been exemplified in the al-Qur'an and has been implemented by the Prophet; peace be upon him.

Moreover, in the classroom, questioning is the main object needed by the teacher in teaching. Questioning is the essence of learning, where each learning phase has a question. For example, brainstorming is an obligation for the teacher to carry out before starting learning. According to Strother (1989) and Cotton

(2001), as cited in Hassan and Al- Noori (2020) that questioning can motivate students, focus their attention, and be able to make them think deeper when processing information. Furthermore, students' knowledge, mastery of content, and understanding can be seen significantly by questioning. In short, questions have an important role that takes many parts in teaching and learning activities.

Generally, questioning has been approved as an important teaching method for students to participate in the lesson actively. Nashruddin and Ningtyas (2020), cited in Lestari (2021), states that the role of the teacher in asking questions is a way of making students naturally involve themselves in the lesson or the learning atmosphere. Therefore, by asking questions, teachers can stimulate students' word production and guide them to think deeply about the information they get in class.

Meanwhile, the phenomenon of many students taking lessons without understanding the teacher's learning can be indicated as a lack of effort in critical thinking. As stated by Rosalina and Setiawan (2019) in their research, they suggest that students with less critical thinking skills usually passively receive knowledge from the learning conveyed by the teacher in the classroom. At the same time, in the pre-observations that the researchers did at the MTsN 2 Kota Banjarmasin, a case was found that most of the students in the class would be silent after the teacher explained the material; they did not respond whether it was a question or a statement.

At the time of observation, the researcher noted that the teacher throws questions at students, such as, "*Bagaimana pendapat kalian mengenai cerita ini?*"

at this stage, many students do not answer. Then, the teacher clarified and changed the question to, "*Apakah cerita ini menarik? Bisakah kalian menceritakan kepada ibu apa moral dari cerita ini?*" the students suddenly had various interpretations of the answers from their results analyzing the teacher's questions regarding the moral value of the story, and this indicates that they have critical thinking.

In this case, the teacher uses a questioning strategy: rephrasing. Rephrasing is one of the five questioning strategies proposed by Wu (1993), which means expressing the question in another way. The first question, "*Bagaimana pendapat kalian mengenai cerita ini?*" is still too general for students to analyze the right answer. Then, it is changed to be more detailed by using the question, "*Apakah cerita ini menarik? Bisakah kalian menceritakan kepada ibu apa moral dari cerita ini?*" at this stage, many students are able to analyze and create various answers according to what they understand about the story.

Consequently, the researcher can conclude that the stimulation of questions and the questioning strategies conveyed by the teacher is the appropriate and suitable target for making students think more deeply and critically. Therefore, it becomes attractive for researchers to know about the questioning strategies that can promote students' critical thinking carried out by the teacher and how these questioning strategies are implemented in the classroom so that they can promote students' critical thinking at MTsN 2 Kota Banjarmasin.

In line with this study, especially in critical thinking, questions have the function of helping students to achieve them. Phan and Nguyen (2021) stated that

the role of questions is to enable students to share their thoughts or opinions or build on their understanding, as mentioned by Chin (2007); Long and Sato (1983) are critical. Stephens (2005) stated in Putri and Reflinda (2020) that questioning strategy is essential in developing critical thinking abilities. Therefore, the questioning strategy is one of the interactive strategies that are believed to increase student activity in the classroom, specifically in the critical thinking field.

Several studies have already been carried out a study about this questioning strategy. For example, research conducted by Rashid and Qaisar (2016) showed that the questioning strategy was stated to have a positive role in the critical thinking of Pakistani students. Moreover, Yunion (2020) conducted a study about "Teacher Questioning Strategies During the English Classroom Interaction at the Seventh Grade of Mts Negeri Surakarta II." It showed that teachers use four types of questions in classroom interaction. Meanwhile, Ong et al. (2016) explored the study entitled "Promoting Higher-Order Thinking Through Teacher Questioning: a Case Study of a Singapore Science Classroom." It founds that the teacher's questions have been proven to help students think deeply about scientific subjects, and the teacher's answers to student responses have been demonstrated to strengthen students' conceptual understanding and foster reflective thinking.

In summary, the questioning strategy is one of the interaction strategies closely related to students' ability in critical thinking; Moreover, the research has proven questioning strategies delivered by the teacher could improve students' critical thinking.



As the previous studies mentioned above, the researcher can conclude that the questioning strategy is suitable for promoting student performance in the classroom, especially in promoting students' critical thinking. However, in practice, most researchers focus more on the questioning strategy's effect on students and use a quantitative method where data collection is carried out by holding pre-tests and post-tests on students. In contrast, in the current study, the researcher uses a qualitative method described in detail.

Moreover, in the previous study, the previous researchers examined the various questioning strategies used by teachers in the classroom regarding classroom interactions carried out by teachers and students, while in this study, the researcher focused more on the various questioning strategies used by teachers in promoting critical thinking students. Therefore, to fill the gap in this literature, the researcher carried out research titled "**THE USE OF THE QUESTIONING STRATEGY IN PROMOTING STUDENT'S CRITICAL THINKING.**"

## **B. Definition of Key Terms**

To clarify the key terms in this research, the researcher provides several essential definitions to understand as follows:

### **1. Questioning Strategies**

The teachers use questioning strategies to stimulate students' critical thinking by asking questions. The questions that are the focus of this study are Bloom's taxonomy questions; they are knowledge, comprehension, application, synthesis, and evaluation questions. In addition, the questioning strategy as a means to promote students' critical thinking. In this study, the questioning

strategies are divided into five categories proposed by Wu (1993): rephrasing, simplification, repetition, decomposition, and probing strategy.

## 2. Promote

Promoting in this study is the process of improving students' critical thinking skills through the questioning strategy used by the teacher, including the types of questioning strategies used and how the teacher delivers the questions.

## 3. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking in this study is students' ability to think critically, which is influenced by the questioning strategy used by the teacher in the classroom. The indicators of critical thinking students in this study are students who ask important questions about problems, collect and assess relevant information, make conclusions and solutions with proper reasoning, think with an open mind, and communicate effectively in conveying solutions to problems.

### **C. Research Questions**

Based on the background above, the questions of this study that will be discussed are as follows:

1. What types of questioning strategies are used by the teachers in promoting students' critical thinking?
2. How do the teachers apply questioning strategies to promote students' critical thinking?

**D. Objectives of Study**

Based on the research question above, the researcher created the objective of the study as follows:

1. To find out the types of questioning strategies used by the teachers to promote students' critical thinking.
2. To know more, how do the teachers apply questioning strategy in promoting students' critical thinking.

**E. Significance of Study**

This research is important from a theoretical and practical perspective:

1. Theoretically, this research is important to provide a theoretical description of the types of questioning strategies used by the teacher in promoting students' critical thinking.
2. Practically, this research is expected to provide an overview of the application of questioning strategies in the classroom by teachers, which can improve students' critical thinking.