

CHAPTER V

CLOSURE

This chapter presents the closure of the study, consisting of the conclusion drawn from the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, followed by suggestions addressed to lecturers, students, and future researchers.

A. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion presented in the previous chapter, several conclusions can be drawn regarding how the three participating lecturers conceptualized critical thinking, the strategies they implemented to foster it, and the challenges they encountered in the process, within the context of the English Language Education Study Program at Antasari State Islamic University.

First, the findings revealed that lecturers conceptualized critical thinking as a multidimensional construct involving higher-order thinking, deep reflective reasoning, and the ability to explore and express understanding. Rather than viewing critical thinking as the recall of information, lecturers consistently described it as a process that requires students to analyze, evaluate, connect ideas, and communicate their reasoning clearly.

Second, the findings indicated that lecturers implemented four major strategies to foster students' critical thinking skills: group discussion, problem-based and case-based learning, the use of open-ended questions, and reflective learning and

knowledge construction. These strategies were designed to position students as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. The questionnaire results supported these findings, showing that the 32 participating students generally held positive perceptions of all four strategies, with consistently high mean scores across the related items.

Third, the findings revealed that lecturers encountered four major challenges in implementing these strategies: students' lack of confidence and language barriers, dependence on artificial intelligence (AI) tools, limited preparation before class, and large class size. Among these, limited preparation and language proficiency were perceived by students as the most influential challenges, while large class size was perceived as a comparatively less significant, though still relevant, barrier.

The questionnaire items were developed through a systematic translation of the four major themes identified in the qualitative phase, group discussion, problem-based and case-based learning, the use of open-ended questions, and reflective learning and knowledge construction, along with the four challenge themes, into measurable Likert-scale statements. For each theme, the researcher identified the core instructional behavior or condition described by the lecturers (for example, the practice of organizing small-group discussions, or the practice of posing questions without a single correct answer) and reformulated it into a statement that students could evaluate from their own learning experience. Each questionnaire item was therefore directly traceable to a specific interview excerpt or coded theme; for instance, items Q8, Q10, and Q16 were derived from the group discussion theme,

while items Q1, Q5, Q13, Q18, and Q20 were derived from the open-ended questioning theme. This thematic-to-item mapping was reviewed by the research supervisor to ensure that each item accurately represented its corresponding qualitative theme before the instrument was finalized for validation and piloting.

Within the scope of this study, the findings suggest that lecturers play a significant role in fostering critical thinking through the implementation of student-centered teaching strategies grounded in constructivist principles. However, the effectiveness of these strategies appears to depend not only on lecturers' instructional practices, but also on students' confidence, language proficiency, preparation, and the conditions of the learning environment itself. As these conclusions are based on a small number of lecturer participants and a single cohort of students within one study program, they should be interpreted as context-specific insights rather than generalizable claims about EFL lecturers or students more broadly.

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the qualitative phase involved only three lecturers from a single study program, meaning the conceptualizations, strategies, and challenges identified may not represent the full range of practices among English lecturers in other institutions or contexts. Second, the quantitative phase involved 32 students from a single cohort, which limits the statistical generalizability of the findings to the broader student population. Third, because the questionnaire was developed directly from this study's specific qualitative findings, its items reflect the particular teaching practices observed at this research site and may require further adaptation before

being applied in other educational settings. Future research involving a larger and more diverse sample of lecturers and students across multiple institutions would help determine the extent to which these findings can be generalized beyond the present context.

B. Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed for lecturers, students, and future researchers.

1. For Lecturers

Lecturers are encouraged to continue implementing student-centered strategies such as group discussion, problem-based and case-based learning, open-ended questioning, and reflective or project-based tasks, as these strategies have been shown to support students' critical thinking development. Lecturers are also encouraged to create supportive classroom environments that build students' confidence in expressing ideas in English, for example by allowing low-stakes opportunities for students to practice speaking before participating in full class discussions. In addition, lecturers should consider strategies for maintaining active engagement in large classes and guiding students to use artificial intelligence tools responsibly, so that such tools support rather than replace independent thinking.

2. For Students

Students are encouraged to prepare learning materials before class, participate actively in discussions, and practice expressing their ideas with logical reasoning, particularly in English. Students are also encouraged to use artificial intelligence tools critically rather than relying on them as a substitute for independent analysis. By engaging actively in these practices, students may become more confident in evaluating information and constructing well-reasoned arguments.

3. For Future Researchers

Future researchers are encouraged to investigate critical thinking development in other educational contexts or with larger participant groups, in order to examine whether the strategies and challenges identified in this study are consistent across different settings. Future studies may also examine the effectiveness of specific strategies, such as reflective learning, in greater depth, as this strategy has received comparatively less attention in prior literature. In addition, given the emerging role of artificial intelligence identified in this study, future research could further explore how AI-assisted learning influences students' critical thinking development over time.