# CHAPTER 1
# INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates the rationales of research topic selection. It consists of background, questions, the purpose, significance of the research, clarification of terms and organization of the paper.

## 1.1 Background of Research

The emergence of 21st-century notion has awakened the educators about the goal of education. A long time ago, education was used to transfer teacher's knowledge to students; therefore, the active participant was the teacher, not the students. This knowledge transfer was applied as the consequence of standardized test orienting curriculum in which students were generalized by a number of questions and they were valued by the score. However, nowadays, the education paradigm is slowly shifted from knowledge transfer into skills transaction and transformation. This means that education is not the only way to enrich and prosperous people's life in terms of financial matters. Education is seen as a medium to build people awareness on social phenomenon happened in society. In other words, education has shifted from traditional system, and what Freire calls a banking system of education, into the modern system of education (Freire, 2005). This modern system of education demands the output of education as the social agent to create human society.

As the paradigm of education has changed, the language education paradigm has also transformed. Learning a language is not only to train students' to be a good communicator but also to empower students as the agents of change in order to build better society (Fajardo, 2016). Learning a language, especially a foreign language is not merely about how to decode linguistics features or construct literal meaning embedded in the texts. However, it is also used to build critical awareness, to think critically, and to connect what they have learned with what happened in society. This is what Freire calls as reading the word and the world (Freire & Macedo, 2005). Through analyzing the relation of language and power, students are expected to take actions to eradicate social injustice such a discriminations, inequality, oppression, and violation of human rights (Janks, 2014).

The aforementioned statement about the relation of language and power has realized the language educators to shift the way literacy and texts are learned. No text are values free, socio-political contexts are

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embedded in the ideas presented in the text (Janks, 2013). Texts are potentially able to manipulate readers' mind to believe in the ideas

embedded in the texts and become the unconscious victims of language and texts (Fajardo, 2016). And more powerfully, language and texts are used to change people's beliefs, attitude, or even actions. As stated by Crookes and Lehner (1998) language through text can affect people mind to act in their social life. In another word, text can determine type of society that will be created (Shor, 1999). This powerful language and text can create better or worse society, as well as humanize or criminalize people and their society.

However, students are facing numerous types of text in their everyday life, especially by the emergence of technology. Literacy activities have changed from traditional into digital literacy (Baker, 2001). Students are not only challenged to read single mode of text, such as written text in paper or book, they are also challenged by multimodal and multi-semiotic text that require special skills to understand the information stated. Texts are presented not only with words but also with music, graphics, table, art, visual text, and other components (Kuo, 2014). In addition, students are also getting in touch familiarly with less filter internet-based information. Internet is a perfect media to spread information in a short period of time where people are also easy to find text or information without clear source stated on it. Consequently, students are easy to access untruthful information that might contain hoax and the black campaign of particular issues, or even the hatred-contained articles (McInulty, 2014). We find that people easily take and absorb the information in Facebook or other social media for granted, without rethinking the author's intention or ideology. Therefore, students nowadays should be equipped with critical awareness to filter any information spread around them.

Realizing the real goal of education, the power of language, and the demand of literacy activities in the globalization era, it is important that language learning requires teaching practices that enable students to critically absorb the language and discourse. Language teaching and learning are not only expected to be focused on teaching the language aspects, but it also takes attention to develop critical awareness so that the students can take action using the language they have learned (Crookes & Lehner, 1998). Thus, teaching language especially English is not only about how to make students able to write, read, speak, and listen in English but also importantly it is about how to make students to be problem solvers and social justice agents through the language used. In line with this statement, Shor (1999) believed that when language is

used in a proper way, it will be the power to create a humane society by eradicating inequity and prospering society through critical awareness. Based upon this, students will be the agents of change who promote better social values. As stated by Fajardo (2016), successful pedagogy practice creates good students as the peacemakers, social justice practitioners who will actively contribute to social empowerment and transformation.

Seeing this phenomenon of proposing language as a way to make a better society has raised the critical literacy notion. Critical literacy is introduced by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, as the response of the oppression happened at that time. Critical literacy aims at fixing the world phenomenon in which inequity and social injustice spread around the world and still be an unresolved problem (Shor, 1999). In line with this, to be a problem solver of world phenomenon in general, and in the country in specific, becomes the goal of education in Indonesia. To realize this goal, the government has developed new curriculum that does not only emphasize on cognitive aspects but also develops problem-solving, creative thinking, and analytical capacity to solve social problems happened in Indonesia (Permendikbud No 67). Through the latest curriculum, the 2013 curriculum, government designs an instructional activity that does not only build students cognitive aspects but also students' characters through developing life skills. In line with 21st-century paradigm, the 2013 curriculum aims to develop students' life skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (Partnership, 2018). Those skills are expected to equip students to have their own role to participate actively in real life society as the agents of change.

In addition, the implementation of the 2013 curriculum also shows the government commitment to increase literacy skills among Indonesian students. It is evidenced by the regulation of the Ministry of Education that obligates students to read any book for 15 minutes before the lesson begin (Permendikbud No 21). This program aims to grow the students' reading interest as the response of Indonesia PISA result 2012. Indonesian students' reading skill in literacy has low score. It was shown that Indonesia was positioned at rank 64th out of 65 participated countries in the OECD survey (OECD, 2018). To support the literacy movement, government also mandates every school in Indonesia to have reading corner to facilitate students' reading; it is called "gerakan membaca".

Therefore, language education, especially literacy activities, is expected to empower students to be critical by understanding real-life problems and take apart to solve the existing problems through the activity of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating texts. To support Indonesia government's aim of creating critical students, National Examination 2018 for secondary and high school students implemented HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) in the test items. As stated by the Ministry of Education, Muhajir Effendy, the implementation of HOTS in final examination aims to encourage students' critical thinking in mathematics, literacy, and science subjects (Liputan6.com, 2018). Therefore, literacy activities in school, especially in EFL classroom is intended to make students critically literate by analyzing and evaluating information embedded in the text.

The demand for critical awareness in English classroom in Indonesia has developed researchers' interest in critical literacy investigation. Critical literacy has been studied by several researchers in Indonesian EFL classroom. Gustine (2013) conducted a teaching program about the implementation of critical literacy with an English teacher in secondary school in Bandung. By employing four dimensions model of critical literacy from Lewinson et al (2002) she helped students to be active and reflective readers to relate the texts to their world. Through everyday text topic, critical questions and multimodal texts, students are guided to find multiple perspectives and authors' voice. Students were asked to evaluate the text, take their stance, and pronounce their voice toward issues being discussed as the result of reading the text in critical lens.

Another study about critical literacy was also conducted by Astarina (2015). She conducted research in junior high school in Bandung. Through a teaching program, it was reported that critical literacy helped students to develop critical capacity and English proficiency. By employing suitable contextual topic; authentic materials and various media; comprehension and critical questions, the teacher successfully guided students to be critically literate. Meanwhile, a research conducted by Dewi (2016) was done to tenth-grade students of senior high school in Bandung. She researched critical writing of hortatory exposition by integrating critical literacy and genre-based approach. She conducted teaching program by combining conventional literacy and critical literacy. Therefore, she focused on both reading comprehension and critical capacity. Using stages in genre-based

approach, she guided students to develop critical capacity through everyday text choice, multimodal text, and critical questions. Even though students, especially low achievers students had difficulties, the use of L1 helped students to express their voice regarding the issues being discussed.

In spite of the teachers' effort in conducting critical literacy practice in EFL classroom is developing, it seems that the use of song lyrics as text is still limitedly implemented. Whereas, song lyrics are possibly used in critical literacy practice to promote critical capacity (Kurki, 2015; McLaughlin & DeVogd, 2004; Mena &Chapeton, 2014). There are some justifications to consider the use of song lyrics in critical literacy practice. First, song lyrics are popular text around the world, and people, especially students have great interest in music and song (Mena & Chapeton, 2014; Oh, 2015). Second, song lyrics contain situated learning practice in which students are provided a meaningful experience to interact reflect their understanding of real issues in their surrounding (Levy & Byrd, 2011; Mena & Chapeton, 2014). Third, song lyrics contain figurative language that might boost students critical thinking (Royse, in Levy & Byrd, 2011); and sociopolitical aspects of the songwriters that might promote critical awareness. Based upon this, the use of song lyrics as a text for critical literacy practice in EFL classroom seems to have a promising result.

Apart from challenges and limitation of the implementation critical literacy using song lyrics in EFL context, the research of critical literacy implementation has proven that EFL learners, including Indonesian learners, are able to investigate text through critical lens (Gustine, 2013; Suarcaya & Prasasti, 2017). In line with this practicality, the latest curriculum also supports the implementation of critical literacy. Therefore, to understand more about the practicality of critical literacy implementation in Indonesian EFL classroom it is essential to investigate how critical literacy principles are implemented by the teacher in the EFL context as well as understanding challenges encountered by the teacher and students. Thus, this study is intended to find out efforts done by an English teacher to develop critical literacy in the classroom as well as challenges encountered through data triangulation; observation, interview, and document analysis.

## 1.2  Research Questions

Seeing the phenomenon happening right now, this study is conducted to answer these following questions:

1. How does the teacher promote critical literacy through the use of four resources model and song lyrics in a secondary school in Pamekasan?
2. What are the challenges encountered by the teacher in promoting critical literacy through the use of four resources model and song lyrics?
3.

## 1.3 Purpose of the Research

By answering the aforementioned research questions, this study aims:

1. To discover the implementation of critical literacy using four resources model and song lyrics done by the teacher in a secondary school in Pamekasan.
2. To discover the challenges encountered by the teacher in a secondary school in Pamekasan in implementing critical literacy using four resources model and song lyrics.

## 1.4 The significance of the Research

The analysis of this study is expected to give significant contributions in educational field. Investigating teacher's implementation and barriers in developing critical literacy are expected to enrich the data about critical literacy research in Indonesia. The result also might give useful information to develop critical literacy model that is suitable to be implemented in EFL context, especially in Indonesia. Besides, this research is expected to give reflection to the researcher as a teacher about their teaching practice, as well as it is used as consideration to learn more about critical literacy and become critical teacher. Finally, this study is expected to give information to policymakers about teachers' needs in increasing their teaching competencies regarding which part of critical literacy principles that should be developed through professional developments, especially hands-on training to enrich their knowledge in implementing critical literacy.

## 1.5 Clarification of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the following is definition of terms that will be frequently mentioned in this study.

| Critical literacy | : | a way of conducting literacy activities that constitute the process of breaking codes, investigating semantic and pragmatic practices, as well as challenging the power and language related to promoting |
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| | | reflection and action. |
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| Critical literacy using four resources model | : | Teachers' implementation of critical literacy using four resources model proposed by Freebody & Luke (2003) in EFL classroom. The model employs activities of code-breaking, text meaning, text participating, and text analysis. |

## 1.6 Organization of Research

This research is organized into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction
This chapter becomes the initial part of this research, presenting the rationale behind the research topic selection, the purpose of research, the significance of research, clarification terms, and organization of research.

Chapter II: Literature Review
This chapter highlights several relevant theories that are used as the foundation of the research. Besides the theories also use to develop research instruments; to guide the analysis procedures, interpret research findings and discussion; as well as to draw a research conclusion.

Chapter III: Research Methodology
This chapter presents the methodology uses in conducting the research. It provides the setting and participant of the research, data collection procedures, teaching procedures, data analysis.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion
This chapter provides findings of the data that have been gathered from all data collection procedures. The findings were analyzed and interpreted based on the relevant theories presented in chapter literature review.

Chapter V: Conclusion, Recommendation, and Limitation
This ending chapter provides the conclusion derived from the findings and discussion chapter. Meanwhile, the limitation elaborates the difficulties and weaknesses encountered by the researcher during the

research. It is used as a reflection for the future research. Recommendation section provides a suggestion for the future researcher to conduct further research about critical literacy.

## 1.7    Concluding Remarks

This beginning chapter has presented the rationale behind topic selection for the research. Besides, statement of the problems, research purposes, research significance, clarification of terms, and organization of the research also presented in this chapter. Further theories about the research topic are described in the following chapter.