CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

Reading is one of the language skills that is important for students to learn, because reading is a way to gain a lot of knowledge that is beneficial to everyone (Ismail et al., 2012; Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2012; Taylor & Maruyama, 1990). According to Ransom (1978: 14), reading is a conversation that is carried out between the writer and the reader. Meanwhile, Willams (2014:79) stated that reading is a person's process of obtaining information and understanding of texts. Goodman (1995) emphasized psychologically reading is a guessing game. Moreover, reading is described as a complicated process, because one has to draw meaning from a text with different purposes in various contexts (Solak E. , 2014). This means reading is a way for readers to receive meaning from the author. By reading the text will be able to obtain information and knowledge, this is beneficial for readers. Reading is a process that requires analysis, coordination and interpretation of many sources of information (Scanlon, 2010). With that reading is a process of analyzing which involves from many sources of information.

When the researchers made observations at school MAS Muallimin Medan, the researchers found in this school the students' reading comprehension is low, this was evidenced by the students' average score in reading comprehension of 67. This was due to several factors that led to low students' reading comprehension, namely because students' interest in reading is low, students' motivation in learning reading comprehension is low, learning is carried out during the day so that it reduces student focus, the method used by the teacher in teaching is very boring, time constraints also cause teachers and students to be unable to do reading comprehension by thinking critical. With the existence of several factors that influence the low interest in reading in students.

Whereas, since the existence of the 2013 curriculum students are required to be able to understand, analyze, conclude, and acquire new things about world knowledge through reading activities. With that students are not only required to

read English text correctly and in accordance with the rules of pronunciation. This is done to see that reading activities not only improve reading skills, but also help students understand social and cultural problems that occur in today's society. The 2013 curriculum is useful for developing passive English learning into critical learning by doing reading activities (Fadhillah, 2017). So with that students are expected to increase their competence in analyzing, interpreting, processing in the presence of facts, and explaining the information that students have obtained from a reading (Palupi, 2020; Wandi & Zakiah, 2021; Arifin et al., 2013). This is not only aimed at learning English, it is useful for improving students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. In the end, students' comprehension skills in reading and critical thinking skills will be useful in student life, as promoted by HOTS.

Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) come from Bloom's Taxonomy, at the thinking process level of Bloom's Taxonomy which is considered as a high level thinking category, namely analyzing, evaluating and create. According to Newman and Wehlage (Widodo, 2013:162) higher order thinking skills students can differentiate ideas or ideas, argue well, be able to solve problems, be able to construct explanations, be able to hypothesize, and also understand complex things into something clearer. In higher order thinking skills include the ability to solve problems, the ability to think creatively, think critically, the ability to argue, and the ability to make decisions (Siregar, 2019). Thus, Higher Other Thinking Skills (HOTS) is a learning concept that emphasizes students' ability to think critically. The critical thinking skills possessed by students can be seen from the attitude of students when these students apply the knowledge they have, and students are also able to develop the skills they have in any condition (Wandini, 2021).

Notably, Tovani (2000) explains that reading comprehension will exist if someone is involved in thinking while reading. Like when someone reads a text, then he highlights a text or sentence, he will immediately be involved with his thoughts and the knowledge he has, with that he will immediately understand what the text contains (Sahibzada, 2020). Meanwhile, Barier (2005) defines reading comprehension as an important fundamental in the education and success

of all individuals. In addition, Duke & Pearson (2009) says that the process of understanding a text is based on the goodness of the reader. Good readers or active readers can build, revise, monitor so they will be able to understand the text. Indirectly means that critical thinking must exist in active readers. (Citra, 2020)

In addition, critical thinking has a very close relationship with reading comprehension, because by thinking critically students will be able to understand what is in the text (Aloqaili, 2012). Critical thinking will enable someone to solve existing problems by making intelligent decisions, so that they can achieve the desired goals in dealing with and solving problems. (Alnabhan, 2014). The relationship between Critical Thinking and reading comprehension is also very well established in the literature. Norris and Phillips (1987) argue that reading is an activity that is more than just saying what is on the page, it is critical thinking. Beck (1989) says that there is no reading without reasoning. Same as Yu-hui et al. (2010) argues that reading is a process of thinking to construct a meaning. Utilizing and combining schema theory with the principles of critical thinking is one of the most effective ways to improve the concept of reading comprehension (Norris and Phillips, 1987). They concluded that critical thinking is a process used by a reader to understand a text (Aloqaili, 2012).

Critical thinking and reading comprehension are the most important parts of educational goals, as written in law No. 20 of 2003 article 1 concerning the national education system, *"Pendidikan merupakan usaha sadar dan terencana dalam mewujudkan suasana belajar dan proses pembelajaran guna agar peserta didik secara aktif dapat mengembangkan potensi yang dimiliki oleh dirinya untuk memiliki kekuatan spiritual keagamaan, pengendalian diri, kepribadian, kecerdasan, akhlak mulia, serta keterampilan yang diperlukan dirinya, masyarakat, bangsa dan negara"* (Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills that needed himself, society, nation and state) (Jannah, 2013).

However, Aprilia (2020:4) noted that there are several factors that cause low

levels of students' critical thinking skills and students' reading comprehension such as: students' interest in reading, students' IQ, and learning strategies used by teachers, and so on. The low interest of students in reading greatly affects the ability to read and think critically of students so that this makes students' ability to think critically very low, even though critical thinking can be improved by reading (Aprilia, 2020). Besides that, the availability of books in the school library is also still inadequate, technological advances also cause low interest on reading in students due to technological developments and information centers, the internet, the development of places of entertainment, or television shows that make students more interested, with that students are lazy to go to the library, and the factors that cause low interest on reading in students are also caused by a lack of family support, which results in students being lazy to read because students do not see any examples of a hobby of reading at home that students can emulate, this also makes students lack of attention and parental supervision of the student's activities (Nurhaidah, 2016)

Triatma (2017) suggests that interest is a factor that influences a person to read. Interest becomes an important thing in reading because without interest, reading becomes heavy and boring (Sari, 2020). The low interest on reading in students is also influenced by the learning taught and given by teachers who require students to read books (Elendiana, 2020). Usually the teacher only gives assignments to students to read books and do assignments, not infrequently this makes students unable to complete their assignments on time, because in fact, many students when given assignments are unable to complete them on time and the library does not yet have a special officer who manages the library effectively and efficiently. (Nurhaidah, 2016). Learning to read can be done by dissecting the contents of the book. A teacher should be able to increase student enthusiasm and enthusiasm by using different reading learning methods, such as giving students the task of reading a book they like and then dissecting it so that it will raise many questions from the contents of the book, with that students will start think critically to answer what is meant by the contents of the book. This will improve students' reading comprehension and also train students to think critically.

Reading comprehension with critical thinking is something that is not easy

(Handayani et al,. 2019; Astuti et al,. 2018; Kadir et al,. 2014). Therefore, learning to read with critical thinking in schools is required so that students have good reading comprehension skills so that later students can think critically with their good reading comprehension and more broadly with students. can develop themselves with the abilities they have (Ten Dam G. & Volman, M, 2014; Kadir et al,. 2014) (Kadir, 2014).

During the learning and teaching process of critical thinking to students on reading comprehension, the teacher usually provides methods that are less attractive and even unpleasant. Most of the methods used by teachers are only result-oriented, not process-oriented (Nurhaidah, 2016). With that the importance of researching appropriate methods to improve students' critical thinking on reading comprehension cannot be underestimated. There are several learning models that can improve students' critical thinking on reading comprehension, they are: Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) method, Numbered Heads Together (NHT) method and Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC), Problem Based Learning (PBL) method, Guided Discovery method, and Scramble method.

Exploring the significances of students' critical thinking these methods are very important. First, by knowing the level of students critical thinking the teacher can use the proper method such as the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) method, Numbered Heads Together (NHT) method and Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC), PBL method, guided discovery method, and the Scramble method. From these several learning methods, critical thinking is very important on reading comprehension, because the presence of critical thinking on reading comprehension can shape students' character to be smart, tough, and courageous in taking action, in addition to encouraging students to be able to filter the knowledge they get (Pujiono, 2012; Nuraida, 2019; Haryani, 2011; Haeruman & Ambarwati, 2017). Thus, ŽivkoviŁ (2016) says teachers need to improve critical thinking in students because this will help the students themselves in getting to the root of the problem and also finding solutions that make sense (Anaktototy, 2022).

There have been various studies which discussed about critical thinking

methods to improve students' reading comprehension, which have been studied by several researchers, namely Monika Syafitri (2018), Andini Aprilia (2020), Nur Afni Fadillah (2020), and Aning Rustantiningtyas Raharjo (2022). However, the effect of critical thinking on students' reading comprehension for the Madrasah Aliyah Swasta (MAS) level using experimental research has not been widely studied. Therefore, this research is intended to explore the effect of critical thinking on students' reading comprehension for students at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, using quasi-experimental research in this study.

Based on the explanation above, this study is aims to explore the effect of critical thinking strategy on students reading comprehension on the level of Madrasah Aliyah Swasta. Therefore, researcher uses the title *"The Effect of Critical Thinking Strategy on Students' Reading Comprehension At 11th Grade of MAS Muallimin Medan"*

1.2 Identification of the problem

Based on the above background of the study, the identification of the study are:

a. The students have low motivation to read.

b. The students feel difficult to understand the contents of the book.

c. The students have low interest in reading.

d. The students have low critical thinking in reading.

e. The students find difficulty to express their idea and giving argument.

f. The teacher uses the usual learning method.

g. The teacher infrequently stimulates students' critical thinking.

1.3 Limitation of the Study

This study focused on the effect of critical thinking as a strategy on students' reading comprehension. This research will conduct in class 11th MAS Muallimin UNIVA Medan

1.4 The Research Questions

Based on the background of the problem, the research formulation is there

an effect of critical thinking strategy on students' reading comprehension?

1.5 Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate to find out an effect of critical thinking strategy on students' reading comprehension.

1.6 Significances of the Study

The findings of this research expected to be useful theoretically and practically.

a. Theoretically

The researcher hopes that the findings and theories in this study can be useful as information for future researchers, and will be able to develop critical thinking skills towards students' reading comprehension.

b. Practically

Finding of the study will expect to be relevant for the

1. For English Teachers, the results of this study are useful for English teachers to be able to liven up the learning atmosphere for students. This aims to make students more enthusiastic in learning reading comprehension by thinking critically and being able to develop students' critical thinking skills to be better and broader.

2. For Students, the results of this study are useful for students to be more enthusiastic in learning reading comprehension by thinking critically, with that students can have broad knowledge.

3. For other researchers, the research results are useful for other researchers to conduct research with the same theme in teaching reading comprehension by thinking critically. Research can be useful as a reference for conducting research on the same topic.