

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the general information of this study. It provides the background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, limitation of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

The development of critical thinking has become the key point in teaching and learning process. The development of critical thinking is needed to encourage the progress in students' learning and students' thinking ability. Critical thinking as the process of mind and attitude is essential for higher education. Critical thinking is not inherent within individuals rather than it develops through process. From that reason, university as the level of higher education has a role in the development of critical thinking to its students.

One way to develop critical thinking is in the form of debate session. Hall (2011) mentions debate has been used as a teaching tool to develop critical thinking, logic, values and communication skills in the American higher education since 19th century. Through debate, students do not only ask to memorize and remember the theories but also ask to integrate the materials under some circumstances in the form of argumentation whether they are on affirmative or negative positions. From that reason, EDCO (English Debating Competition) 2014 invites all students from any majors in State University of Jakarta to participate in

the debate competition. This annual debate competition requires the participants to use English as the primarily language in delivering their arguments.

The integration between insights and English competencies reflect through their arguments. Argument is kind of utterances require the claim and the supporting data. The debaters ,whether they are on affirmative position or negative position, try to persuade and convince the adjudicators by delivering their arguments based on their perspectives about the subject matters in the debate session. The effort to persuade and convince the adjudicators or the audiences is the matter of constructing the elements of arguments. However, because the limitation of English competencies, the limited knowledge about the motion, the guidance of debate and the debaters' emotion, sometimes the debaters could not construct argument by stating the claim without the supporting data and its reasoning. Therefore, argument is the main tool for the debaters in the debate competition, the argument delivered by the debaters will give impact to the assessment in the competition whether it will makes their arguments easily protested by the opponent sides or it will confuses the adjudicators and audiences.

As previously mentioned, argument becomes the main tool in doing debate. In addition, related study by Mitchell (1998) stated that many educators use the framework of debate competition as to test students' capability of argument. The practice of argument in debate competition is the central point in academic settings because it reflects student' competencies and students' level of thinking. Therefore, debate in the academic setting is still needed to enhance students' level of thinking and to build other competencies and skills of students.

The previous study by Halvorsen (2005) analyzes the technique to encourage skills development into EFL/ESL courses. In his journal titled "Incorporating critical thinking skills development into EFL/ESL courses. He conducts the classes uses 3 kinds of techniques and the debate is one of them. His aim is to create a class that involves all of students participation under some interesting issues in order to encourage students' critical thinking. He divides students into small groups, gives time to search for the topic issues and presents each group to deliver their argument. By using debate technique, he finds out the students' critical thinking and point of view that reflected through their argument in the debate session.

Since, the ability to construct argument in the debate competition is the main aspects that shows the debaters' competencies and level of thinking toward the topic in the debate competition. This research tries to analyze about "How do the debaters construct their argument in EDCO 2014?". This study also tries to know the debaters' perception on the definition of argument and the elements in argument. It will also identify the elements of the argument that have been constructed by the debaters of English Debate Competition (EDCO) in State University of Jakarta. The debaters of EDCO 2014, the annual event held by English Department, have been chosen to be the subject of this study because they come from different majors with various backgrounds. The results of this study are expected to deepen the insights of constructing the arguments, especially during the debate session.

1.2 Research Question

This study tries to answer the major questions which is “ *How do the debaters construct the elements of their arguments delivered in EDCO 2014?*”. In order to answer the major questions, it inquires 2 substantial questions, they are:

1. What are the elements of arguments constructed by the debaters in EDCO 2014 ?
2. How do the debaters perceive the construction of elements in the arguments ?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

In order to answer the research questions above, the purposes of the study are to identify the elements of arguments constructed by the debaters of English Debate Competition (EDCO 2014) in State University of Jakarta and to know the perception of the debaters on the construction of about argument.

1.4 Scope of The Study

The writer limits the study by analyzing the arguments and its elements occurred in the debaters' arguments of English Debate Competition (EDCO) 2014 in State University of Jakarta.

1.5 Significance of The Study

This study is expected to review the competence of the debaters of EDCO 2014 in constructing argument. It is to deepen the insights about

constructing arguments for the reader, especially in the debate session. It is hopefully beneficial for the next debaters from State University of Jakarta to broaden the knowledge of arguments in order to deliver argument for the next debate competition.