

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is aimed to convey the background of the study, research problem, objective of the study, theoretical framework, limitation and scope, significant of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the proposal. These parts become the foundation of this research.

1.1. Background of the study

In the era of globalization, English language plays an important role in communication and other aspects of life, specifically, education. Being the most dominating language in the world, people are now expected to be able to understand and use English. Schools around the world has English as their compulsory subject. In Indonesia, English as a foreign language is taught throughout the primary and secondary schools until university level.

There are four language skills taught formally at schools, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. People need to master all of the four skills to support their life activities (study, profession, academic purposes, etc.,). According to Ur (1996, 120), speaking seems intuitively the most important of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Speaking is also considered as productive skill because learners need to produce the language.

Zhang (2009) argued that speaking is the most difficult skill to master. Learners generally encounter two problems in learning speaking; linguistic and non-linguistic problems. Linguistic problems are related to aspects of language such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. On the other hand, non-linguistic problems are not related to aspects of language, such as learners being shy, not confident, unsure of what to say, afraid of making mistakes, not comfortable when making mistakes and not interested in the topic given as what Taiqin (1995) stated.

Therefore, students need to overcome their problems in learning to speak English by doing a lot of practice through speaking activities. One of the activities that can be used to improve students' speaking skill is debate. According to Alasmari (2013), debating is a formal method of interactive and representational argument aimed at persuading judges and audience. Debate is a great speaking activity because it is not only improving students' communication skill because they are required to speak actively but also their critical thinking.

Debate has been a compulsory speaking activity for the second semester students in Speaking A class of the English Education Study Program, Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University. The types of debate that students learn are British Parliamentary and Australasian Parliamentary system. In this debate activity, students are expected to be able to make definition, create argument, criticize some issues presented, rebut opponents' opinions and provide evidence. Debate is employed not only in the classroom, but also in an English club. The English debate club's goal is to make it easier for those who want to improve their speaking or debate skills. It means that students who join the English debate club will be able to develop their speaking skills. It is beneficial to form a club where students meet on a regular basis to practice their English, according to Webb (2000) in Putra (2015). Furthermore, according to Freely (1696: 35), debate is an excellent way for pupils to manage their speaking anxiety.

However, not all students find the English debate club interesting. Therefore, the English debate club in Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University was lack of participants. One of the reasons is supported by Al-Mahrooqi & Tabakow (2015) statement, saying that debate forces students to think about the multiple sides of an issue and it also forces them to interact not just with the details of a given topic, but also with one another. To understand more about how the students perceive debate as one of the activities in Speaking A, a study entitled "The English Department Students' Perception of Debate on Speaking Activity as Used in Speaking A Class" is worth

conducting. As a result, the researcher is going to explore the students' perception in joining the English debate club.

1.2. Statement of the Problem/ Research Problem

The researcher formulates research problems to show the significance and purpose of the research. The research problems are formulated as follows:

- What is the perception of the students of the English Education Study Program on the use of debate as a speaking activity in speaking A class?
- Why are the students of Speaking A class of English Department interested in joining the English debate club?
- Why are the students of Speaking A class of English Department not interested in joining the English debate club?

1.3. Objective of the Study

In accordance with the background of the study and the research above, this study aims to find out the perception of the English Education Study Program students on the use of debate as speaking activity in speaking A class. Further than that, this research also finds out the reason why the students of speaking A class of English Education Study Program do not participate in English Debate Club.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

- This study is based on the theories of perception, speaking, and debate because this study main focus is to find out English Department students' perception of debate on speaking activity as used in speaking A class. The first theory will start from the theory of speaking. According to Brown (1994) and Burns and Joyce (1997) speaking is the process of composing information orally in the purpose of expressing idea. Furthermore, the researcher also includes the theory of debate to this study. According to Kennedy (2007), debate is an instructional strategy which enhances learning particularly, in areas of mastering in content and active engagement, developing critical thinking skills, oral communication

skills, and empathy. As for perception, Walker and Avant (2005) stated that it is an individual's way of judgement of a certain event.

1.5. Limitation and Scope

This study is limited to the English Department students' perception of debate on speaking activity as use in speaking A class. The subjects are the second semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to be reflective feedback for the lecturers of Speaking A course, in which debate is included as one of the speaking activities. Such feedback may help the effort to improve the quality of the teaching and learning of Speaking.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, some key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

- Perception: Perception is an individual's way of judgement of a certain event. (Walker and Avant, 2005)
- Debate: Debat is a formal method of interactive and representational argument aimed at persuading judges and audience (Alasmari, 2013)
- Speaking: *Speaking* is an interactive process constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns &. Joyce, 1997)

1.8. Organization of the Proposal

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, theoretical framework, scope and limitation, assumption, and the definition of key terms. The second chapter, the researcher gives information about related review of literature which consists of related theories and related previous study. The third chapter presents research methodology. There are research design, population and sample, material, the treatment, the instrument, procedure of collecting data, and

technique of data analysis. The fourth chapter deals with the result of the data and discussion of the data. Finally, the fifth chapter serves the conclusion and suggestion.