

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In the development of education world that increasingly advanced by the variety of technology and innovations, educators are required to improve learning qualities by using various methods that could attract the attention of students, especially in learning English as an international language. English starts to be taught from an early age from a low level to a higher level by studying four important aspects of English which aim to improve students' competence in communicating and interacting with others. However, providing an understanding in teaching English is not easy, so it requires the right method to be easily accepted by students. There are various learning methods that can be used, but not all methods could follow the development from one era to another because teaching methods should be based on the students' needs. It is advisable to use a relaxed or fun learning method that could improve students' activeness. One of the methods that can be used is a debate. One of the advantages of following the debate club is that students could directly master four language aspects by practicing it.

The debate could be interpreted as an act that gives mutual argumentation between two or more parties, either individually or in groups, in discussing and deciding the issues or differences. It is supported by Dale & C Wolf (2000) which states that debate is an activity that gives different points of view between two or more persons in response to a problem. Meanwhile, according to Duansamosor (2001), debate could be defined as a verbal activity in the form of teams or groups and each group could express their opinions on the topic being discussed.

Debate also could be interpreted as an act to maintain the argument of the team by delivering strong and relevant evidence for the team's argument. This is

based on Sanonguthai (2013) which defines debate as two teams that express their views on a problem to prove to the audience that their idea is better than the opposing team. The same opinion is based on D'cruz (2003) which states that debate is an activity that divides students into two teams of positive or negative to prove which opinion is better. Another opinion comes from Soraya (2005) who says that debate means an interaction between two or more people who are exploring their arguments and have a positive impact on mental and human intelligence.

Based on the explanation described by the previous researchers it could be concluded that debate is an interaction between two parties formed in teams or groups and each person in each group could take part or participate in giving their best opinion which has to be accompanied with relevant evidences to support their opinions in addressing a problem. Debate is an effective action that could provide positive effects in improving students' ability in practicing English where each student could participate and take a part in every activity and this could be proven from some existing researches. A study suggests that students could learn actively when they have an active role during the learning activities (Bonwell, C., & Eison, J.: 1991). Debate is a challenging activity and also could form good relationships between students, which they could share information and work together in teams as stated by Buckley (2008). It is an activity in which the students have more opportunities to explore their English skills than in the classroom, based on Bellon (2000). Alasmari and Ahmed (2012) also stated that the debate could improve students 'ability to speak orally, enrich the students' vocabulary and practice their pronunciation. Satit Somjai and Anchalee Jansem (2015) in his research also found that from this debate activity the students' ability has a significant high progress because the students had more opportunities to practice their speaking skill. In addition, debate is also effective in improving four important aspects of English. Moreover, speaking is the main key of communication and interaction with others and when students talk to others it gives the first impression of how good is someone's ability to speak fluently and understandably (Liao, 2009). Even as others could judge how one's character and abilities are only from the way they speak. That is why this debating is a very

effective way in improving the ability to speak. In the reading aspect, debaters need to read a lot on various topics to reproduce their information so that it could provide a valid data with an accurate source. Reading from various sources could enrich their knowledge so that it could assist debaters in supporting their arguments. This statement is supported by Osborne (2005). Debating could also be used in improving writing skills. During the debate process, debaters are given a few minutes to write their arguments before they are delivered to the opponent, adjudicator, and audiences. This is based on Osborne (2005). In the listening skill, debate provides an opportunity for debaters to listen to some speakers with different ways of pronunciation. Debaters should listen carefully to what their opponents are delivering so they could provide appropriate responses and arguments. This could improve their listening ability because even though with the same topic but every debater delivers it differently (Hall: 2011).

In addition, debating is also useful in another aspect, such as increasing confidence. Debating can help the students get out of their comfort zone and dare to express their opinions in public. From these debate activities, debaters could learn to express their ideas through arguments that they provide. These debate activities could boost their confidence as debaters are encouraged to be brave to express their opinions in front of opponents, adjudicator and audience (Hall: 2011). Those are some of the benefits of debating that have been described based on the results of researches and it gives evidence that the use of debate is very effective not only in developing four important points in English but also able to develop other potential skill that also influences the development of student learning progress. In addition, the use of this method or technique could continue to be used because the topic or issue could be adjusted with the development of society. Therefore the researcher wants to do another review about debating because debate is considered appropriate to improve the students' ability in English either in high school level or even at university level. When it is compared with other methods students could learn to share information, experiences, ideas, and insights and establish a good communication with others and the students also have more time to practice speaking English (Buckley: 2008).

In addition to the benefits which have been already described earlier, the debate is also useful in improving the ability to think critically. This statement is supported by Kennedy (2007) in his research which explains that critical thinking ability could be improved through debate by describing problems, identifying and analyzing relevant sources, opposing arguments from various points of view from the whole opinion. Nisbett (2003) also agrees that debate is an important learning method for studying critical thinking skills. The use of this debate also allows students to add their insights related to the social issues, consider the variety of different perspectives and make them aware that in each case there will be different perspectives and in considering different perspectives requires critical thinking. This debate activity also encourages students to think quickly and provide the appropriate responses.

In addition, debaters should be able to analyze and identify a topic or an issue and provide statements with accurate data and sources. In this debate activity, the students not only learn what to say, but also how to convey their statements. That is why the debate could improve the students' understanding and critical thinking skills (Freeley & Steinberg: 2005). From some explanations above, it could be concluded that the debate has a relationship that is related to critical thinking because in debating students are required to be able to think, identify, analyze and consider things correctly with rational and accurate data in a short time. They are included in the component of critical thinking because the meaning of critical thinking is a thinking process based on logic with a variety of considerations and different point of views that come from accurate data. And of course, the critical thinking or critical mindset will greatly affect the students' speaking ability because people speak based on their minds so that what they say will be more weight or quality. For that reason, in collecting data the writer not only make observations at the time of debate activities, but also will make observations in speaking class to see whether their critical thinking skills are applied in the class and the researcher also check the score of the students in speaking class to compare to the score of the students who do not join the debate program, so the data collected will be more accurate. Before doing the research the author also studied previous researches that have been done by previous

researchers such as Pezhman Zare & Moomala Othman with the title of “Students’ Perceptions Toward Using Classroom Debate to Develop Critical Thinking and Oral Communication Ability” that published on April 2, 2015. This research was conducted with the involvement of 16 undergraduate students majoring in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) at the Faculty of Educational Studies, University Putra Malaysia (UPM). The data collection was done through both quantitative and qualitative approaches like surveys questionnaire filling, reflective papers, and interviews. For the result of research is divided into two which are quantitative and qualitative results. The students believe that the classroom debate is a constructive learning activity. The respondents believe that the debates helped them to improve their critical thinking skills and oral communication ability. In addition, as the students claimed, other benefits of the debates included mastering the course content, boosting confidence, overcoming the stage fright, and improving teamwork skills.

That is one of the results of research that has been done by previous researchers who proved that debate provides a positive influence on the development of students' critical thinking skills. However, nowadays, technology is more accessible by students, therefore, the education world requires the students to be more active than teachers, it is important for educators to know whether the method used is effective or not, not only from the teachers' perception that based on students' grade improvement, but also should be based on the students' perceptions because the students are the ones who feel the effects of using the method so that the outcomes of the method are more optimal. In addition, there are very few educational methods that develop critical thinking skills. Most students learn to argue, criticize, think critically from organizational activities, but not all students join or have experience in organizational activities. In fact, the success of students depends on how extent their ability to think independently, critically and make arguments based on valid data, evidence, and theory. It is important for students to have critical thinking skills and the ability to appreciate various opinions and perspectives of others so that later they could work and establish relationships with others from different backgrounds and different perspectives. By looking at some previous research

results the writer argues that the debate program is very appropriate in developing students' critical thinking skill. For that reason, the researcher wants to review the students' perception of joining the English debate program towards the students' critical thinking ability. The researcher chooses the students from SMAN 1 MANYAR as the participants because this school provides an extracurricular program for debating that has been running for years and now this program is held once a week every Friday. And this school also has many achievements or appreciation in the debate start of the district until province level.

### **1.2 Statements of the Problem**

According to the background above, the statements of the research problem are:

1. What is the students' perception towards English debate program?
2. What is the correlation between English Debate Students' Ability and their Critical thinking ability at SMAN 1 MANYAR?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Objectives of this study are :

1. To know the students' perception toward English debate program
2. To know the correlation between English Debate Students' Ability and their Critical thinking ability at SMAN 1 MANYAR

### **1.4 Hypothesis of the Study**

The hypothesis of this study is :

1. There is positive correlation between student English debate ability and their critical thinking ability

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research has theoretical and practical significance

For theoretical significance :

The debate program for English language education department students is expected it could give advantages for the further development of the debate program.

For practical significance :

1. For the students, it could give information that debate program gives good influence for their improvement especially in developing their critical thinking in speaking therefore it could be a motivation to join the debate program.
2. For the debate coach, it could be a motivation in developing debate program to be more attractive and creative in giving the practice.

### **1.6 Scope and Limitation**

In this study, the writer has scope and limitation. The scope of this study is focused on the students' perception of joining English debate program toward the students' critical thinking ability. Meanwhile, the limitation of this study focused on the students who joining English debate program.

### **1.7 Definition of Key Term**

- 1 Students Perception is a response of students to the information about an object in the school environment through observation with their senses so that the students could give meaning and could interpret the observation object in the form of opinions or actions (Arif Rohman: 2009). It means that student's perception is a process of how students select, analyze, and respond to the information then interpret and present it in the form of arguments.
- 2 The debate could be interpreted as an activity that gives mutual argumentation between two or more parties, either individually or in groups, in discussing and deciding issues or differences (Dale & C Wolf: 2000). It means that debate is an interaction between two parties formed in teams or groups and each person in each group can take part in giving their best opinion which is accompanied with relevant evidences to support their opinions.
- 3 Critical thinking is rational thinking, thoughtful, and wary of the belief or form of knowledge that must be based on a clear support source (Dewey :1993). It means that critical thinking is a process of thinking logically and

reflective to gain the knowledge through the exploration of ideas based on the relevant sources.