

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of study as well as the research question followed by research objective, the delimitation of study which compiles the scope of research which is; focus of this study; the application of debater's critical thinking in argumentative writing, as well as the significance of research which presents a highly significance in terms of theoretical and practical contribution.

Background

Critical thinking is a cognitive activity possessed by all human beings, related to the use of reason. Learning to think critically means that one uses mental processes, such as attention, categoryng, selection, and judgement or decision. Critical thinking ability is providing a proper guidance in thinking and working, and is assisting in determining linkages with other things accurately. Therefore, critical thinking skills are needed in problem solving or seeking for solution, and project management. The development of critical thinking skills is an integration of several parts of the development of capabilities, such as observing, analyzing, reasoning, judging, making decision, and persuading. The better the development of these abilities is the more we can overcome the complex problems or projects with satisfactory results.

Critical thinking is more than just a concept. There are some experts describing the benefits of critical thinking, such as an ability to question; to acknowledge and test previously held assumptions; to recognize ambiguity; to examine, interpret, evaluate,

reason, and reflect; to make informed judgments and decisions; and to clarify, articulate, and justify positions (Regan, 2005; Paul & Elder, 2001).

According to Emilia (2010) critical thinking has become an important as a skill because individuals are faced with having to make an increasing number of important decisions affecting themselves and society in general.

In this era, critical thinking is important for students to gain the challenges of their life. Certainly, teacher expected the students be able to think critically. Kanik (2010) argued that if students are to perform in a highly technical society, they must be prepared with life-long learning and critical thinking skill is necessary to obtain and process information in an ever-changing world.

Critical thinking is the art of analyzing ideas based on logical reasoning. Critical thinking is not thinking harder, but thinking better. A person who sharpens his critical thinking skills usually has a level of intellectual curiosity. So far, there are two ways to measure the critical thinking of others by speaking and writing.

Speaking is one of the basic skills, which should be known and be mastered by English learner. Speaking is the ability to express opinion, ideas, or thought orally; it consist of producing systematic verbal, utterances to convey meaning in order to understood by the people we are speaking with. To fulfill all the criteria above, critical thinking is needed to deliver it.

Like speaking, writing is as a part of skill that need critical thinking to develop ideas in writing. Learning writing skill is indispensable for students as writing skill is one of an important part in communication. By writing, students can transfer information and knowledge in their mind as well as share their ideas to others. As stated by Heaton as cited in Hasanah (2015), “The writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical device, but also of conceptual and judgmental elements.”

There are various types of writing such as; expository, narrative, explanation, descriptive, recount and argumentative. All of those skills are useful for students, however; the ability of argumentative writing seems to be the most crucial one.

In this study, the researcher refers to argumentative writing as a subject of research because it can make the participants to force themselves to think critically and to pour great ideas or opinion in order to persuade the reader and make the readers to change their belief.

In addition, the debaters are the participants of this research because they have the requirements as the people who can think critically and it has been proven when they became delegation of department to the university level. Regarding these statements, this research needs to be conducted because it is hard to find the research about the debaters' critical thinking in argumentative writing. It is known that their ability to think critically mostly useful when they are speaking, but now the researcher come

with the new idea and want to see their critical thinking in writing as the first research that has never been studied before.

This research is intended to find out the level of debaters' critical thinking and its application in argumentative writing. The critical thinking in debate is required, because it can help the debaters to state their argument (Bailin, 2001). In debate, arguments can be agreement statement and disagreement statement, depending on their position whether in government team or opposition team.

As it is mostly known that, the debaters' speaking ability is excellent. It is because they have participated in debate competition, particularly in University Debating Championship (UDC) that their abilities in giving arguments and in understanding others' ideas are greatly first-rate (Fridzzi and Elis, 2011). Regarding this, the debaters are considered good speakers (supported by becoming the winner on debate competition). Besides, there is no doubt in their ability in developing critical thinking through arguments by verbal communication, yet their critical thinking in argumentative writing becomes an interesting phenomenon to figure out.

This research examines debater's critical thinking applied in their argumentative writing.

Research Question

This research focuses on the following research question:

To what extent does the debaters' critical thinking influences their argumentative writing?

Aim of Research

To find out the level of debaters' critical thinking in their argumentative writing.

Research Delimitation

This research focuses on debaters' critical thinking applied in argumentative writing.

It was conducted at English Department students who joined debate in university level. This research employed test in collecting the data. The data were collected from the debaters' argumentative writing.

Research Significances

The result of this study is expected to provide some significances to the following persons:

1. Students

The results of this research will be useful for the students, especially students of English Department, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. It will help them to know the information about their critical thinking skill through writing skill itself. The researcher hopes that it can be the reflection of them, so that they can measure and improve their critical thinking skills in writing argumentative.

2. Teacher

The results of the study can give information to the teacher about the students' ability to apply their critical thinking in writing argumentative essay. The teacher can improve their teaching way and learning writing process by using some media that supported to improves their critical thinking and their writing skill, the skill of argumentative writing in particular.

3. Other Researchers

The result of this study will be useful for the other researchers as a consideration as well as a recommendation in case they will carry out any further studies in the same field.