

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Because of the globalisation, people have to understand and be able to use a lingua franca. The lingua franca that is mostly used in the world is English. No doubt that many school curricula in some countries put English as their basic subject besides maths and their own language (Tomalin, 2009). In Indonesia, English is taught as a Foreign Language and it is the first foreign language that Indonesia chooses to be taught (Yulia, 2014:xiii).

In some primary school, English is a compulsory local content and it becomes the subject that has to be mastered in junior high school until university level. It is based on the national Indonesian educational system (Yulia, 2014:xiii).

There are four basic language skills that language learners learn to master, namely reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Reading and listening are receptive skills which mean that students accept and understand it, while writing and speaking are productive skills which mean that students must produce the language by themselves (Harmer, 2007:265). Productive skills can be mastered by learners by doing many exercises (Bashrin, 2013).

Speaking is one of four language skills which is difficult to learn because learners have to produce it by themselves. Some learners must face some difficulties in learning it. The problems in speaking activities according to Ur

(1996:121) are: students worries at making mistakes, worries at getting a critic, and anxiety of becoming the attracter when they are speaking; students cannot think of something to say; students only have a little time for speaking because the other students dominate the speaking or because they are in a large group so they only get a little chance to speak; and students are not using the target language when they are in a conversation with their friends who have the same mother tongue because they think it is easier and natural.

Because of that, learners need a teacher to guide them so they are able to overcome their problems in speaking activities. Ur (1996:121) states that teachers can help the students to overcome their problems first by using group work so the students will have much time to speak and they will not have anxiety of being the attracter when they are speaking in front of the class. There is a possibility that students may not speak correctly but they will get more time to develop their speaking ability. Second, it is by basing the activity on easy language so students will decrease their hesitation and speak fluently. A teacher can help them to understand the language by reviewing or explaining the vocabulary that they might use in the conversation. Third, it is by choosing a suitable topic and task that can make the students interested. The fourth, it is by giving instruction for some students to be a chairperson in a group to help checking the contribution of the member in the group. The fifth, it is by asking the students to keep speaking in the target language by asking one person to make sure that his friends are doing the conversation in it.

Besides the five items above, teachers can also find some different activities for teaching speaking so the students are able to improve their speaking ability. According to Harmer (2007:348-352) there are some speaking activities, namely: acting from a script: Play scripts and acting out dialogues; Communication games: information-gap games, televisions and radio games; discussion: buzz groups, instant comment, formal debates, unplanned discussion, reaching a consensus; prepared talk; simulations and role-play; and questionnaires.

According to Inoue (2009:3), debate is a spoken communication which occurs between two different sides “pro” and “contra” of the topic. Debate is one of some activities in the classroom that can help teachers to improve students’ speaking skill. It is in Zare and Othman (2014), “Specifically, debates help learners to develop critical thinking by looking into arguments, getting involved in research, collecting information, conducting analysis, challenging assumption, evaluating arguments, and illustrating interpersonal skills”. In addition, they also said that debate helps students boost confidence, overcome the stage fright, and improve team work skills.

Debate is included in Speaking III of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya as a speaking activity for the students in the second half of semester. The learning objectives of Speaking III course are that the students are able to present ideas/meanings with clear communicative purposes; use relevant generic structures to achieve the communicative purposes;

use relevant linguistic features to achieve the communicative purposes; show the ability to carry out speeches for informative and persuasive purposes; show the ability to participate in debates; and speak with the sense of audience.

From the learning objectives of learning debate as mentioned above, the researcher concludes that students who have joined debate must get some benefits for their speaking skill development. However, some English Department students of Widya Mandala Catholic University do not seem interested in the debate activity in their Speaking III so they do not do the debate activity in the classroom maximally and they could not obtain the benefits of it. In connection with this reality, the researcher is interested to dig deeper about the students' perception of debate in their Speaking III class.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the title and the background of this study, a research question is formulated as follows: "What perceptions do the English Department students have on debate as Speaking activity in Speaking III course?"

1.3 The Objective of the Study

In connection with the statement of the problem, this study is intended to find out the perception of the English Department students of Widya Mandala on debate as a speaking activity in speaking III course.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The researcher expects that the result of this study is able to give important information about the students' perceptions of debate for teachers who plan to use debate as speaking activity so that the teachers are able to improve the way of applying it. This study will also help the teachers to review the debate materials. Moreover, this study is able to give a feedback for the speaking III course's lecturers.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Because this study focuses on students' perception of debate as a speaking activity in Speaking III, the basic theory of this study is a theory of perception which comes from Demuth (2012). He states that there are two basic theories which are top-down theories and bottom-up theories. Perception is determined by the content and the standard of sensory input. The researcher also puts the theory of speaking as the subject which uses debate activity. In addition, the researcher also puts the theory of debate from the definition to the debating system which is commonly used.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

Based on the research question, this study is focused on the students of English Department perception of debate as a Speaking activity that is used in the Speaking III course. The main concern is the students' perception on debate practice in the classroom, the reflective feedback, the debate roles, lecturer

guidance in the classroom, challenges in doing the debate, and what they have learned from debate.

The respondents under this study are 45 students. The students are all English Department students of Widya Mandala Catholic University of Surabaya from 2015's batch who have taken and passed Speaking III course, in which debate is included as one of speaking activities.

1.7 Assumption

In lines with the purpose of this study which is to find out students perception of debate as Speaking activity in Speaking III, the researcher assumes that students who have taken and passed Speaking III have their own perception on debate. Furthermore, individual's perception on particular thing can be elicited for research purposes.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid the misinterpretation of the key terms used in this study, the key terms are defined as follows:

- Perception

Perception is the way you think about something and your idea of what it is like. In this study, perception relate to the opinion of English Department students on debate in Speaking III.

- Debate

Debate is an English speaking activity running by two different sides of team (affirmative and negative) consisting of three people called debaters, adjudicators who decide the winner of a debate, a time keeper, and a chairperson who leads the debate. Debaters should define the motion, give arguments, and rebut the others' arguments about the topic or motion given. Debate can be used for a competition or a speaking activity in the classroom.

- Speaking III

Speaking III is a 3-credit course that is offered to the fourth semester students of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University of Surabaya who have passed Speaking I and Speaking II courses.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The researcher organizes this study into five chapters. In chapter I, the researcher introduce the research study by giving 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. Chapter II discusses the review of related literature which is related to the research. Chapter III focuses on the research methodology of the research which is research design, the subject, and the instrument. The result of the data and discussion of the data will be discussed in chapter IV. Last, researcher will give the conclusion and suggestion on chapter V.