DEVELOPING STUDENTS’ CRITICAL THINKING SKILL THROUGH RESEARCH ACTIVITY IN EDUCATIONAL ENGLISH DEBATE

Ratna Andhika M.
Nurani Hartini
English Education Department, Swadaya Gunung Djati University
Email: andhika_ratna@lipunswagati.ac.id

Abstract: One of demanding from the Indonesian Qualification Framework (IQF) grade 6 for a bachelor graduate requires them to have Critical Thinking Skill. This study investigates how research activity in Educational English Debate develops the students’ critical thinking skill and how the role of lecturer in this activity is. The result of observation and field note toward 40 students and 1 speaking lecturer in the second grade of one private university in Cirebon are obtained to achieve the objectives of this study. The result shows that through qualitative analysis, it is found that there are multiple actions done by the students in Educational English Debate which meet research activity such as supporting their argumentation, giving explanation, creating analogy and mentioning examples which are based on accepted principle can develop their critical thinking skill. Moreover, the role of lecturer in this activity is guiding the students to think logically and systematically beside providing some debatable topics.

Keywords: Critical Thinking Skill, English Debate, Research Activity

INTRODUCTION
Indonesian Qualification Framework (IQF) of higher education in 2013 gives standard for the undergraduate programs with bachelor degree qualification are located at level 6. One of the requirements of this level is that the students should be able to analyse information and data and give guidance on alternative solution. This requirement is in line with the concept of critical thinking skill as the ability to analyse some facts then giving as well as defending the idea to compare until drawing conclusion to solve the problem (Chance, 1986; Santrock, 2011).

Emilia (2002) identified several keywords as the component in Critical Thinking. They are clarity, relevance, accuracy, depth, breadth, sufficiency, and precision. These components were observed by the writers in order to investigate how the activity of English Debate develops them.

Many studies (e.g. Krieger, 2005; Nesbett 2003) mentioned that debate is excellent activity which engages the language learner through cognitive and linguistics ways. It is very effective activity to develop argumentation skills for persuasive speech and writing. Moreover, this activity also teaches the student to do self-reflection towards the flow and truth of other people’s idea, to defend their argument so that it can teach them to think critically and logically. Fukuda (2003) in Japan reported that there is increasing of student’s ability to deliver the idea from 30.8% before doing debate become 56.7% after doing debate.

Meanwhile, a few students and teacher know how debate can develop the students’ critical thinking and how the role of teacher is in this activity since few researches explain which component in debate that can develop their critical thinking. Therefore, this study gave approval explanation on how research activity in English debate can develop students’ critical thinking skill and what the role of teacher/lecture in this activity is. As the name suggest by the faculty where the data were taken, the topic of debate were related to education so that it was educational English debate.

METHOD
Participant of this study were 40 college students in the second year of the subject speaking which were separated in two different classes. They were 32 girls and 18 boys with the age range 18-19 years old. The participants had got the guidance of doing debate and delivering argumentative speech from the lecturer. There were only three students who had ever experienced in doing debate for competition while the rest of students had not experienced in debate. The observation and field note were taken 3 times for each class in once a week during the speaking subject which was 100minutes per meeting.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Research activity in educational English debate to develop students critical thinking skill
According to Debaters Association of Victoria Inc. there are three components in English Debate namely Matter, manner and method that need to be assessed in doing Debate. From these three components, matter is the most suitable component that meet research activity as mentioned by Eigelbener (1926) that there are five steps in doing research as the following:

1. Identifying the problems and proposing hypothesis (if necessary)
2. Gathering the factual data
3. Classifying data to find the relevance
4. Drawing Conclusion
5. Testing the hypothesis or conclusion

Here are the table of Matter aspect and its indicators that are needed to be achieved by the students in doing debate. This table shows some indicators that need to be achieved by doing a series of research activity.
In order to investigate how this research activity can develop students’ critical thinking skill, the writers analysed the data taken from observation so that the result can be seen from this table.

Table 2. Research activity in English debate develop students’ critical thinking skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Matter</th>
<th>The Students’ Activity in Research Activity</th>
<th>The CT aspects that are developed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identifying the problem</td>
<td>Gathering factual data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matter</td>
<td>The students tried to understand the keyword of the theme, define the topic provide clear parameter.</td>
<td>The students searched some research journal and books as the references, browsing from the internet seek the up to date data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on ELT (CONELT)

and precision. The role of lecturer in guiding the students to do research activity in English debate is also needed to develop their Critical Thinking skill.

REFERENCES