CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This research discusses the link between English proficiency level and students’ awareness towards the students’ intention in joining English debate club. In order to introduce this research, the researcher presents Chapter 1. This chapter contains of some points, which are background of study, statement of problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and the definition of the key term.

1.1 Background of Study

If learning and practicing may be considered as ways to improve English, it is not easy as we think. There are four skills and four language competences that have to be practiced and understand well on it. English skills were traditionally classified into productive skill (speaking and writing) and receptive-interpretative skill (listening and reading). Moreover, according to Bachman’s theory of linguistic competence (1990), language competence was classified into organizational competence (grammatical and textual competence) and pragmatic competence (Illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence). Individual needs to practice more those skills as much as he/she can, and they also have to comprehend well those competences to improve their English. Indeed, learning English language needs more times and efforts especially for students. Moreover, for learning and practicing English, they also do it out of school curriculum, namely, informal learning.
The researcher argues that students may be able to learn English more through informal learning which is consider as easy to find in English debate club. This type of informal learning can be pleasurable and effective way to learn English. According to Commission of European Communities (Gramegna, 2014), informal learning is resulting of daily life activities related to work, family, and leisure. A student will naturally involve in informal learning process because of a learner has understood the situation of the learning process. In addition, English debate club, as the example of informal learning, provides interesting topics that often students find it in their environment and he/she can express their arguments in English directly.

Furthermore, University of Muhammadiyah Malang has two English debate clubs that are ran by students’ organizations independently. Those are ILF (International Language Forum) and ESA (English Students Association) Progressio. The purposes of these English debate clubs are to stimulate students’ ability in English naturally and enrich students’ achievements through English debate competition. Through these clubs, students have the opportunity to improve and practice their English in order to achieve a better English capability.

In fact, even though English debate clubs at University of Muhammadiyah Malang are such an alternative way to improve students’ English ability, unfortunately students who joint these clubs are considered still few – for example English Department. This is proven by the fact that only 36 out of of approximately 600 students joined English debate club (Darmala, 2011). The result of this, such questions pop up upon this phenomenon. If English debate club is able to increase students’ English proficiency, then, why is the number of
students who joined English Debate club is still low? Why do students have a lack of awareness in joining English debate club? The researcher wonders does English proficiency level of students become the factor that impact to their intention for joining English debate club.

Based on this phenomenon, the researcher is intended to do a research in this topic, which is discussing the correlation between English proficiency level and students’ awareness toward students’ intention in joining English debate club. This is among few researches which discuss students’ awareness. It is hoped that by doing this research, there will be a clear result toward English proficiency level and students’ awareness’ correlation.

1.2 The Statement of the Problem

In line with the description of background of the study, the researcher formulated the research question as below:

“Does the students’ English proficiency level correlate with students’ awareness in joining English Debate Club?”

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

Based on the formulation of problem, this research is intended to:

“To know whether the students’ English proficiency level correlates with students’ awareness in joining English Debate Club.”

1.4 The Significance of the Study

This study is focused to answer how the correlation of students’ English proficiency level toward students’ awareness in joining English debate club. It
also shows their English proficiency level and how it impact to students’ awareness in English debate club.

The researcher hopes the result of this study will contribute the English Departments’ new literature of study about students’ awareness that may be related to students’ motivation.

For students, it is also useful for awareness’ understanding. It gives clear description about how English proficiency level support students awareness’ in joining English debate club. Therefore, they can use it as motivational literature to be in English debate club for increasing their English skill.

1.5 The scope and limitation

The scope of this research is the correlation between English debaters’ English proficiency level and their awareness in joining English debate club in University of Muhammadiyah Malang. Moreover, it is limited to investigate the English debaters’ English proficiency level related to their awareness in joining English debate in ILF and ESA Progresio English debate club.

1.6 The Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding on certain terms used in this present study, it is important to know each definition. The researcher is going to explain some terms as below.

1. **English proficiency level**

   English proficiency level is a high-level qualification of English that is officially recognized by universities, employers and governments around the
world (Assessment, 2015). In this study, English proficiency level is the English qualification legalized by University through Test of Academic English Proficiency.

2. **Awareness**

   Awareness is someone’s consciousness toward environmental events around him and cognitive events occurs in his/her mind such as memory, thought, feeling, and sensational physics (Solso, Maclin, & Maclin, 2008, p. 240). In this study, awareness is students’ consciousness for joining English debate club.

3. **English debate club**

   English debate club is a club for people who are interested in English language practice. (Roger in(S., 2009). Moreover, debate is spoken argumentation formal contest between two teams. (idebate.com, 2015). Then, in this study, English debate club is an organization for the people who are interested in practicing English for advancing their capability in spoken argumentation.

   Following this section, Chapter two will review some related literatures which are needed to expand researcher’s understanding and support the theoretical views of this topic. In the chapter two, the researcher discusses about awareness, English proficiency level, and English debate club in University of Muhammadiyah Malang.