

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Cognitive consideration refers to the process of giving careful thought of something. In the process of writing, a writer gets through cognitive consideration on how to express his ideas so it can be well accepted by the readers. In relation to this, Deane, Odendahl, Quinland, Fowles, Welsh, & Tatum (2008:17) asserts that cognitive consideration of an argumentative text consists of four aspects, they are: (1) domain knowledge and text organization; (2) reader's attitude toward the subject; (3) textual cues; and (4) reasoning. First, domain knowledge and text organization. A writer needs to think or predict about their readers' knowledge about the subject. If the writer thinks that the readers are not familiar with the topic, then he will need to provide more background as well as clearer information about the issue. To this point, a writer ponders the information that should be explicitly stated and what information can be left out. However, the selection of the information is not enough to be considered. It takes text organization to make the text become comprehensible to the readers. Ramage, Bean, & Johnson (2016:61) mentions that the organization of argumentative text consists of the introduction, the presentation of the writer's position, summary of opposing views, and conclusion. By following the text structure, the writer hopes that his readers will be able to organize the ideas of the writers' in their mind. Second, the reader's attitude toward the subject. It refers to the writer's thoughts of reader's belief about the topic. Third, the

textual cues which refers to the way of how the writer links their previous ideas to the next one so it can be meaningful as a whole. It is characterized by the use of cohesive devices that link one clause or sentence to another. Above the sentence level, textual cues also refer to the use of clear and appealing topic sentence for each main idea through the paragraphs. Forth, reasoning. It pertains to the writer's thinking to present his ideas logically. In order to make a string of logical ideas in argumentative writing, a writer considers what evidence or data will be relevant to the claim.

All of the cognitive considerations above are aimed at persuading their readers as the goal of argumentative writing. The degree to which a text is persuasive to the readers depends on how accurate a writer employs the cognitive considerations. The more cognitive consideration that a writer gets through, the more likely the writer is able to persuade the readers. But, persuading readers is also comprised of the ways of getting the readers accept, agree with the writer's point of view or even do something based on the writer's expectation. This is called as persuasiveness. Connor (1991:67) states that persuasiveness can be measured through three important factors in argumentative writing, they are: (1) the text structure. Text structure adds persuasiveness since ideas should be segmented in paragraphs in order to not confound the readers about main points of the writers. It belongs to the persuasiveness dimensions because readers will likely hold their motivation to continue reading if the text consists of well-organized ideas; (2) reasoning (*logos*). Reasoning or *logos* focuses on the internal consistency and clarity of the

argument. Reasoning for persuasiveness of argumentative writing refers to the use of explicit elements of argument such as claim, ground, and warrant; and (3) persuasive appeals (*ethos* and *pathos*). *Ethos* focuses on the credibility of the writer which is projected in the presence of alternative views in his writing. In addition to this, the writer also needs to balance their point of view with the potential counter-argument. By doing so, the writer can enhance their credibility as being a knowledgeable person of the issue. *Pathos* focuses on the writer's way to get the readers' emotional attractiveness. It is characterized by the use of concrete language, specific examples and illustration, images, and metaphors. The cognitive consideration in writing argumentative text written by an undergraduate student in EFL context can be seen in this following paragraph:

Senior High School students are commonly easy to believe everything without trying to find the truth. It makes them spread hoax or fake news. The most common example is when they spread hoax about their friends at school. The hoax does not only have negative impact to the person they are gossiping about, but it also has a negative impact to themselves as the doers. Firstly, it will suffer the doers when it is known as a hoax because she or he will be sent to jail. Secondly, the hoax can affect the victims. They can suicide because they feel depressed of the gossip.

The paragraph shows that the writer attempts to define hoax indirectly by stating it in the first sentence that is ...*believe everything without trying to find the truth*. It refers to *hoax* in the next sentence. The way the writer uses this sentence represents the writer's thinking about the reader's knowledge about what hoax actually is. After that, the writer also provides an example which is closely related to students' live at school, gossiping about their friends, which is

associated with as a form of spreading hoax. Besides, the writer also tries to persuade the readers by presenting the negative side of spreading hoax even though the writer indirectly addresses the reader by not using second person singular “you” to immediately persuade the readers.

The cognitive considerations and persuasiveness above are a group of ideas that represents the writer’s awareness of readers with the aim of making the readers be able to understand the content of the writer’s argumentative writing and to persuade the readers. In relation to the reader-awareness, Wang (2016) studies the effect of imagined readers vs. interactive readers; and the timing of reader’s interaction (during planning vs. revision). He states that the students’ argumentative writing in interactive readers and in revision stage is better than the imagined reader situation no matter on what timing they are set to. The students get benefit from interacting with their readers in revision timing because they can ask the readers’ viewpoint and provide rebuttal on the issue as well as adjust their ground and warrant in writing. To this finding, the researcher concludes that placing students in interactive reader situation can enhance their awareness of the readers.

The previous research mentioned above focuses about reader awareness in terms of presenting and excluding the readers during the argumentative writing process. Generally, being aware of readers does not only mean to anticipate their viewpoints. It also connotes the writer’s attempt to engage them in his writing by making a hook in the introduction. It affects the readers’ decision whether they want to continue reading or not. In argumentative writing,

engaging readers can be done through clear segmented ideas which are realized in text structure. In persuading readers, text structure is also the elements of persuasiveness which is underlain by the thinking pattern of certain culture. According to Kaplan in Danesi (2009:188), students' way of structuring text is influenced by their cultural thoughts pattern. Atiyeh (2015) studies the text pattern of English and Persian argumentative writing by native Persian. The researcher finds that the natives of Persian writers adhere with the culture of Iranian's that appreciate the use of metaphors and quotes. It is based on their culture that is collectivistic society which emphasizes the needs and goals of the group as their priority. Each member of society maintains relationships with each other so it makes them less direct in expressing their ideas to avoid offending others. In contrast, theoretically, English argumentative writing is linear and direct with the thesis statement and supporting arguments hierarchically arranged.

One of the previous studies above concerned about the quality of argumentative writing when the writers are faced directly with the readers; and the last previous research is concerned about text structure that helps the readers to organize ideas in their mind. Even though the previous researches do not focus on things that pass on the writer's mind, it is believed that during the argumentative writing process, the writers must go through some cognitive considerations that force them to merit the goal of argumentative writing as it is in line with the definition of writing by Nunan (2003:87), writing is defined as the mental process of inventing ideas, expressing them, and organizing them into

statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. To be more specific, argumentative writing requires the writer to undergo thinking of the arguments and how to express it persuasively to the reader.

The cognitive consideration and the factors that determine the persuasiveness in argumentative writing which are realized in English as native Language (ENL) and English as Second Language (ESL) above may be projected differently in Indonesia in which English is used as a foreign language (EFL). This understanding is underlain based on the contrastive rhetoric theory of Kaplan in Danesi (2009:188). Contrastive rhetoric is the study of how a person's first language and culture influence his or her writing in second and foreign language. He further categorizes five types of structuring an argument. The first is linear. Linear model of structuring argument is widely used by the writers whose native language is English like America, England, etc. In linear model, the writer organizes their text hierarchically by using obvious transition and without repetition. The second is semitic argumentative writing which is used by Jewish, Arabic, and Armenian. Semitic group follows a zigzag line with a series of parallel movements in paragraphs development which is signaled by excessive use of cohesive devices. However, the words in argumentative writing are tied to emotions, embedded in and they do not reflect facts as much as the linear one. The third is oriental argumentative writing which belongs to Asian. They tend to write their argument in circularly. The writers tend to use repetition to persuade others, rely on the use of metaphors to avoid stating writer's opinion directly. The forth is romance argumentative writing which is used by French,

German, and Hindi. This thought pattern favors a digressive back-and-forth zigzag line. It is used to provide additional information, suggesting counter-argument. The fifth is Russian argumentative writing. Russian does the same with Romance but with much higher level of digression.

In relation to this, Indonesia is a part of Asia, so the cultural thoughts pattern according to Kaplan in Danesi (2009:188) is categorized as indirect or circular pattern. So, it is expected that Indonesian rhetorical style should be similar to Chinese or Japanese with the tendency of using repetition to convince others and using metaphors to avoid directness since directness is viewed as being impolite. As the underlying reason of this culture, Kumaravadivelu (2007:53) states that Asian cultural thoughts pattern can be obviously seen through the cultural stereotypes especially in language education context. He states that Asian including Indonesia students hold on the value of obedience to their teachers; as the embodiment of knowledge and not to be questioned. Thus, it makes them prefer indirect in expressing their ideas to avoid impoliteness. With the different cultural thought patterns in mind, and also the status of English in Indonesia as foreign language (EFL), this study is intended to see if the undergraduate EFL students of Indonesia will employ all of cognitive considerations in their argumentative writing.

Therefore, this study will be focused on what cognitive considerations are employed; and why the EFL students use them in their argumentative writing.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background, the problems of the research are formulated as follows:

1. How do the writers persuade readers of their argumentative writing?
2. What cognitive considerations do the writers employ to persuade readers in their argumentative writing?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In relation to the problems, the objectives of the study are:

1. To describe the way the writers persuade readers in argumentative writing.
2. To elaborate the cognitive considerations that the writers employ in persuading readers in argumentative writing.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

Cognitive consideration in writing argumentative text consists of: (1) readers' background knowledge and text structure; (2) readers' attitude toward the subject; (3) textual cues; and (4) reasoning. This study is limited to: (1) readers' background knowledge and text structure; and (2) reasoning. In persuading readers, there are three aspects included in this study, they are: (1) text structure; (2) reasoning; and (3) persuasive appeal.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically:

1. Theoretically, the findings will be expected to strengthen or modify the theory of writing argumentative text especially to its relationship with the aspect of reader-awareness.
2. Practically, the findings of this study will be expected to be useful for:
 - a. English language learners in their attempt to write argumentative text to have some cognitive considerations to persuade readers.
 - b. The lecturers in their attempt to teach writing argumentative text better through the writer's cognitive consideration and criteria of persuasiveness.

