CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to give a description concerning the procedure of this study. The first section covers the formulation of problems which comprises the issues being analyzed in this study. Later, the research design applied during the course of this study encompasses a conceptual structure used in the research. It constitutes the design of the collection of data and the analysis of the data collected.

3.2 Formulation of the Problems

This study presents an examination of argumentation that is used in a presidential debate. It covers an investigation of the strength of presidential candidate's argument in convincing the public that he deserves to be the nation's leader. Here, the strength of an argument is determined by a 'logical relationship' between each element that constitute an argument. The constituent elements of an argument, namely: *claim, grounds, warrant, backing, rebuttal* and *qualifier* that are used in this study is based on Toulmin Argumentation Model(1958)

The study involved the two American presidential candidates 2012, Barrack Obama from the Democratic party and Mitt Romney from Republican party. The researcher took the latest debate of the 2012 American presidential candidates as the research data of this study. In particular, the researcher aims to determine the strength of arguments from both candidates and compare them to determine the winner of the latest debate. On the other hand, the purpose of examining the argumentation elements and its relationship is also to discover what are the argument structures that exist in the latest debate.

3.3 Research Design

The study employed the theory of measuring arguments' strength proposed by Toulmin (1984). The framework is well known as 'Toulmin's Argumentation Model' which contains two levels of analysis, namely: *soundness analysis* and *strength level analysis*. In this study, the researcher added the term 'cogency' from Birkett (2005) as the initial level to further simplify the study in determining the feasibility of argument.

Thus, there were three stages of analysis in conducting this research. The stages include: *cogency analysis*, *soundness analysis* and *strength level* analysis. At the cogency analysis, an argument was analyzed according to the factuality of its grounds and the validity of its warrant. Then, the researcher looked for the presence of backing element that was required to determine an argument's soundness. The last, the strength of an argument was measured and determined based on its appropriate qualification (qualifier).

3.4 Data Collection

The data of the present study was a debate transcription of the latest American presidential debates in 2012. The data was taken from a relevant internet source, www.debates.org. This website is shaded by a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, namely the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD). CPD was established in 1987 and chaired by Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr. and Michael D. McCurry. The primary purpose of CPD is to sponsor and produce debates for the United States presidential and vice presidential candidates. The website is also provided for research and educational activities relating to the presidential debates.

From the main transcription, the researcher selected 40 arguments which contain at least the three primary elements, such as claim, ground and warrant. The importance of the presence of these three basic elements in constructing a 'proper argument' has been explicitly explained in the following definition:

"Claim (C) as the main purpose of an argument that tells what exactly an argument is about, where the argument stands for and a certain position that must be considered by the audience so that they will agree with the outcome of the argument. The grounds (G) are the underlying foundation that must be solid and reliable or based on facts. Last, the warrant (W) is an assumption which links the claim to its grounds. Here, an argument is said to be cogent if it has factual grounds and a valid warrant." (Toulmin, 1984: 25)

The selected arguments consist of 20 arguments from Obama and 20 arguments from Romney. Later, the selected arguments were analyzed in the data analysis section.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis was divided into several steps. The first step was related to the observation of Toulmin's argumentation elements in the debate. Each transcription that has been collected was examined and marked according to the type of element contained therein.

The second step was restating the data that have been marked into an indirect form which involved the assignment of reporting and paraphrasing. This step was intended to shorten a very long statement so that the data easier to understand and facilitate further analysis.

Later, in the third step of analysis, the researcher implemented the three stages of analysis to the research data.

3.5.1 Cogency Analysis, Soundness Analysis and Strength Level Analysis

The study contains three stages of analysis, such as: *cogency analysis*, *soundness analysis* and *strength level analysis*. Cogency analysis is the initial stage of analysis to determine the feasibility of an argument. Meanwhile, soundness and strength are the two levels of arguments' strength analysis, which has been proposed by Toulmin (1984). Thus, at the first stage, each argument is analyzed according to the factuality of its grounds and the validity of its warrant.

By examining the cogency of an argument, the researcher was not only able to determine the quality of the three basic constituent elements, but also able to see the connection between these essential elements.

In the second stage of analysis, backing (B) is required as an additional element to support the strength of its warrant. According to Toulmin (1984), an argument will carry real weight and support its conclusions only if the warrants is reliable and also to the point. Thus, the presence of backing in an argument is able to make the warrant to be more sound and relevant. Thus, in order to pass this stage, there are four elements required, such as claim, grounds, warrant and backing. The soundness of an argument is occupied from Toulmin's Argumentation Pattern.

The final stages of analysis deals with the strength of the connections on which the argument depends. In this stage, the researcher has to pay special attention to the notion of qualifier and rebuttal. Qualifier has a function to indicate the kind of rational strength to be attributed to claim on the basis of its relationship to Grounds, Warrant and Backing (Toulmin, 1984).

3.5.2 Examples of Data Analysis
3.5.2.1 Stage 1: Cogency Analysis

The first stage of the data analysis of this research was the analysis of cogency. The analysis is presented as follows:

Table 3.1 The Primary Elements of Transcription No.2

Primary Elements	Description	Type of Elements
Claim	Obama first job as US President is keeping the American people safe.	Claim of Fact
Grounds	- The war in Iraq has ended and Al Qaeda's core leadership has been decimated. - Afghanistan has been transited in a responsible way. - Obama took the lead in organizing an international	Grounds Based on evidence (true)

	coalition that has liberating Libya from a dictatorship over the past 40 years. - Ten thousand Libyan in Benghazi marching after the events and saying: "America is our friend".	
Warrant	Obama has successfully eradicated terrorism in a more responsible manner. This should be put to good use.	Warrant Based on Ethos (Source of credibility)

Table 3.1 above displays the primary elements of the transcription No.2 which is also used as an example of analyses presented at chapter IV. The first column of the table indicates the primary elements of the transcription No.2. The second column indicates the description of the primary elements or several arguments which had been marked as the primary elements. The third column indicates the types of the primary elements.

Based on the table 3.1 the above argument is a cogent argument because the grounds is based on fact and the warrant is valid to support the possibility of the claim. It is in line with Martinich (2005: 20), who mentions that a good argument is one that shows a person a rational way to go from true premises to a true conclusion, as well as the subject allows.

3.5.2.2 Stage 2: Soundness Analysis

The second stage of the data analysis includes the presence of backing as an additional element which supports the validity of the warrant. The table below presents the additional elements of the transcription No.2 including backing element.

Table 3.2 The Additional Elements of Transcription No. 2
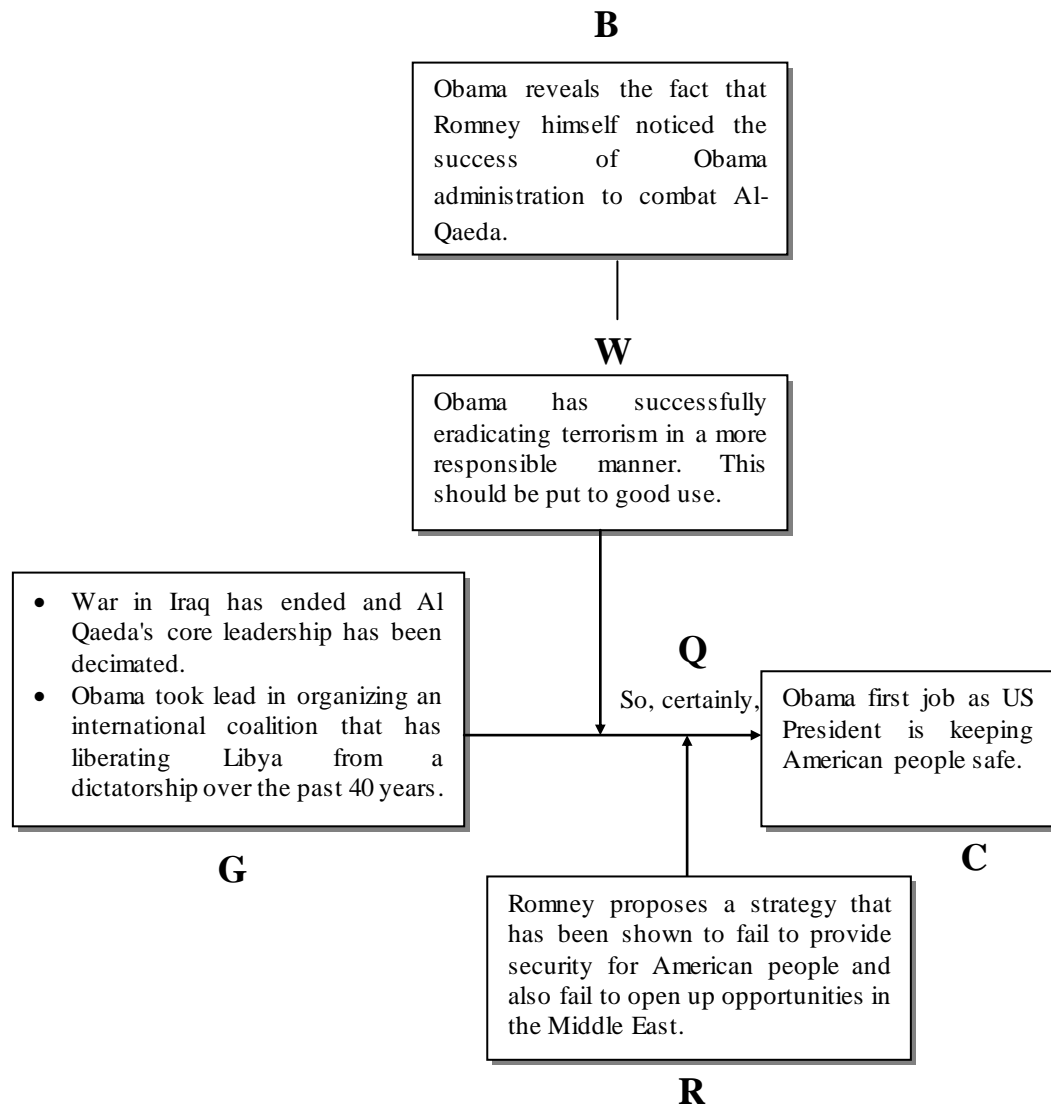
Additional Elements	Description	Analysis
Backing	Obama disclosed the fact that Romney himself noticed the success of the Obama administration to combat Al-	The backing supports the validity of the warrant.

	Qaeda.	
Rebuttal	Romney proposes a strategy that has been shown to fail to provide security for the American people and also fail to open up opportunities in the Middle East.	The rebuttal strongly supports the claim.
Qualifier	"So, certainly"	The existence rebuttal has provided a 'certainty' of its claim"

Table 3.2 presents additional elements of the transcription No.2. The first column indicates the additional elements which occur in the argument. The second column indicates the description or arguments which have been marked as the additional elements. The third column presents the analysis results of each additional element. Based on the analysis result on table 3.2 the argument is 'sound' because the backing supports the validity of the warrant.

3.5.2.3 Stage 3: Strength Level Analysis

As indicated in table 3.2, the argument has a strong qualifier ("so, certainly") because it includes the grounds that are reasonably needed (based on fact), the warrant is clearly relevant and the solidity of its backing is unchallenged (valid reasoning). Furthermore, the rebuttal strongly supports the claim by showing that Romney's strategy has been shown to fail to provide security for the American people and also fail to open up opportunities in the Middle East. Thus, it can be concluded that Obama's argument in transcription No.2 is a strong argument. The structure of Obama's strong argument can be seen in the following figure:

B

Obama reveals the fact that Romney himself noticed the success of Obama administration to combat Al-Qaeda.

W

Obama has successfully eradicating terrorism in a more responsible manner. This should be put to good use.

- War in Iraq has ended and Al Qaeda's core leadership has been decimated.
- Obama took lead in organizing an international coalition that has liberating Libya from a dictatorship over the past 40 years.

G

Q

So, certainly,

Obama first job as US President is keeping American people safe.

C

Romney proposes a strategy that has been shown to fail to provide security for American people and also fail to open up opportunities in the Middle East.

R

Figure 5 An Example of Obama's Argument structure in Transcription No2

Thus, by applying the three stages of analysis, this study is aimed to answer the questions about whose argument is stronger between Obama and Romney in the latest American presidential debate 2012.