

THE CORRELATION STUDY BETWEEN DEBATE MASTERY AND WRITING ABILITY OF JOGJA DEBATING FORUMS' MEMBERS IN YEAR 2012

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Abstract

The globalization eras supported by the rapid development of information technology and transportation enable people from different parts of the world living together in one place. In instance, people from Indonesia, may live in other countries for various reasons such as studying, working or traveling. Therefore English language as a tool of communication is needed by them. In teaching language, the best technique should be considered. Debate is one of techniques in teaching language.

This study tries to investigate the correlation between debate mastery and writing ability as one of language skills. It uses thirty members of Jogja Debating Forum as samples. The correlation is seen from debate score in their debate exhibition and their writing score from case building note that have been made by them thirty minutes before debate exhibition.

The correlation between these two variables can be seen as significant result. There is a significant correlation between debate mastery and writing ability of Jogja Debating Forum Members in year 2012. The correlation can be proven by the computation data that shows the correlation score. The higher the debate score of a member, the better the writing ability is.

Keywords : Debate Mastery, Writing Ability

For better or worse, by choice or force, English has 'traveled' to many parts of the world and has been used to serve various purposes. This phenomenon has created positive interactions as well as tensions between global and local forces and has had serious linguistic, ideological, socio cultural, political and pedagogical implications (Sharifian: 2009: 1). In addition, there are a lot of printed materials such as textbooks, magazine, newspapers, and also electronic media like the internet written in English. Accordingly, people who do not want to be left behind by the rapid development of science and technology begin to think of the importance of understanding English.

As English rapidly develops more complex relationships within and between communities of speakers around the world, the dialogue addressing its role as a global language needs to continue to expand. Established arguments and positions regarding politics, policies, pedagogies and practices of English as an international language, as well as its sociolinguistic and psychological complexities need to be revisited, raising new sets of questions. Also, in order to explore these issues from a truly global perspective, it is necessary to open the forum further to scholars from underrepresented regions in the world, who would be able to explore yet untouched issues. This volume is a step towards achieving these aims.

Teaching writing in a second or foreign language usually focuses on writing primarily as convention for recording speech and reinforcing grammatical and lexical features of language. Therefore, learning of writing has difficulties as does the teaching of writing. The educated child learns the rudiments of writing in his or her native language, but very few learn to express themselves clearly with logical, well-developed organization that accomplishes an intended purpose (Brown, 2004: 218).

National Universities English Debating Championship is a nationwide tournament run by the Ministry of National Education. It uses the British Parliamentary style. NUEDC started in 2007, a decade after the first IVED, the de-facto national championships. Unlike other tournaments, invitations are sent to the main office of the universities and regional competitions are held to select schools that can participate in the main round. Schools that are under the supervision of other ministries, like military academies, cannot compete in NUEDC. Since 2009, winners are eligible for state funding to compete in the closest World Universities Debating Championships.

In-class debates cultivate the active engagement of students, placing the responsibility of comprehension on the shoulders of the students. According to Hanif (2011: 1), critical thinking or debate is perhaps one of the most important arts in this world. It is the basic for improvement: identifying problems, arguing solutions, and promoting a better approach towards understanding of things, they all need arts of reasoning. Public speaking is

also an equally important art. Conflicts happen around the world, lessons not learned well by students, and societies lack trust to key figures, among the causes may be problems of communication.

Critical thinking is often a desired competency for graduates of a technology program. Organizational members have uttered concern about students' inability to think critically. Although traditional pedagogical techniques, such as lectures and examinations, center on knowledge acquisition, debates in the technology classroom can effectively facilitate critical thinking.

Nancy Tumposky (2004: 32) asserts that debates reinforce a bias toward dualism. Most debates present only two views, yet there might be multiple viable solutions or only one defensible point of view.

How can professors transform the student from a passive learner to an active learner? Typical college classroom used to be dominated by the passive learning strategy, *lecture*. In university classrooms, professors now implement active learning strategies, such as discussions, role playing, case studies, and debate. Vo and Morris (2006:315) used debate to supplement the traditional lecture by engaging the learner. Debate also allows professors to create an environment that helps students move away from just receiving knowledge into an atmosphere of active participation. Additionally, debating contemporary issues in the technology classroom can be an invaluable tool for encouraging critical thinking (Dickson, 2004:34).

Debates in science and technology classes can help the students explore topics that affect society. Proulx (2004) used debate in the classroom for analyzing, testing, and evaluating arguments. Vo & Morris (2006:317) also found that debate increased the benefits of the traditional lecture by engaging the learner in the material.

Debating Community of Ahmad Dahlan University explained that debating is about developing your communication skills. It is about assembling and organizing effective arguments, persuading and entertaining an audience, and using your voice and gestures to convince an adjudicator that your arguments outweigh your oppositions. Debating is not about personal abuse, irrational attacks or purely emotional appeals. (Guidelines for Debaters of AustraliaAsian Parliamentary, 2007:1)

Debating is a clash of arguments. For every issue, there are always different sides of a story: why people support or disagree with that certain issue. Debating seeks to explore the reasons behind each side. To make those reasons understandable and convincing, debaters should deliver their arguments with good communication skills.

People debate for a number of reasons: to convince other people that his/her opinion is better, to listen to what other people think of an issue, to find which solution is the best for a problem, etc. Since competitive debating aims to convince judges that a team's argument is superior, it gives opportunities to use analytical-critical thinking and public speaking skills to the fullest, skills which are very useful in everyday life.

But remember, debating is not a discussion. After each debate there is no compromised result as in a discussion. The point of having a debate is to speak out and listen to different kinds of opinions and at the end respecting those differences.

Competitive debating is debating using a specific format. With formats, people are regulated to speak one at a time and each side is given the same amount of time and opportunity to prove their point. (Jogja Debating Forum, 2011: 1-2)

Studying writing and speaking is essential for students to develop their language skills. Some say that writing is more important than speaking and vice versa. While some people have the opinion that written language is a reflection of spoken language, others claim that written language is worth more than spoken language since it is a more proper form (Elftorp, 2007: 8). It explains that there is a relationship between spoken and written language. Written language is a reflection of spoken language. In this case, debate as a medium for speaking language reflects the writing ability of language learners.

Additionally, Osborne (2005: 103) established that debate in the classroom is effective in helping students learn a discipline and demonstrate the ability to read and write critically. The ability to write effective arguments influences success of students in preparation for their future careers.

Dickson (2004: 34) declared that the debate process assessed the student's ability to write effectively, work in teams, and analyze arguments, all of which can improve the ability to think critically. Critical thinking that includes debate also allows for collaboration. Collaborative teams can achieve higher levels of thinking through the use of persuasive evidence. This collaboration allows individuals to retain information longer and the opportunity to engage in discussion and shared learning.

After completing this research by reviewing the related literature, conducting test, giving questionnaire to the students, then finally analyzing and interpreting the data, now it is the time for the researcher to conclude the findings of this study. The findings are summarized as follow: (1) The data that is taken from the use of British Parliamentary questionnaire shows that debate mastery of Jogja Debating Forum members' year 2012 are divided into three major groups of frequency level that are classified as high, average and low. The result of the research shows that the level of members in using British Parliamentary debate technique is dominated by average and high level. (2) The members' writing ability is in various score. There are some members get high score; some of them get average score. But according to the calculation and classification that is conducted by the researcher, it

is revealed that mostly the students' scores are in high level. (3) According to the data taken from the writing ability score, it is known that basically the level of Jogja Debating Forum members year 2012 debate are dominated by high level. And the result of writing ability is dominated by high level. It proves that it can't neglect that the significance correlation between debate mastery and writing ability is finally proven. It means that this pair of variables is proven having significant correlation between debate mastery and writing ability.

English teacher basically should realize that the continuity of using British Parliamentary debate technique is effective to develop students' writing ability. This research also has proven and supported that idea. Specifically, debate mastery influences the writing ability of the students. Since it is stated that the students who have regularly use the technique will have good writing ability, there should be additional effort to teach writing by considering the technique. Designing the appropriate learning strategies may solve the problem.

This research may be one of the considerations for the curriculum and teaching material maker to design the material dealing with this problem. Widening the scope of analysis toward the students need according to debate technique may be helpful to facilitate the students in developing their writing ability. Parents also have an important role in encouraging students' achievement. In the case of this research, the parents are required to encourage the students who are willing to have more effort in obtaining their writing. The support of the parents is really important dealing with this problem.

Finally, it can be said that learning debate technique will lead language learners to have good writing ability. They can practice their English; they will have critical thinking and quick response. The continuity of using debate technique will help them to solve their difficulties in expressing their ideas through writing.

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