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# IMPLICATION OF DEBATE AND DISCUSSIONS FOR EFL LEARNERS AT SECONDARY SCHOOL

**Abstract**: Debate activities can be used to enhance students speaking skills in the following ways: Improving Collaborative Skills through Brainstorming: Brainstorming was important for the participants to activate their prior knowledge or schema, share and see the connection of their ideas and form a personal link between themselves and the content subjects. Participants were also able to focus their attention on different aspects of the information. Raising the Awareness of Different Roles of Debate Speakers: Mock debate, the trial session, played a significant role to raise the participants' awareness of roles each speaker had to play.

Key words: Debate, discussion, mock debate, collaborative skill, brainstorming, role play debates.

Language: English

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#### Introduction

Problem-solving debates: This type typically involves eight students. Four students are assigned to each team. One student from each side presents a position based on historical and philosophical arguments. The next two students take the position on why changes are or are not justified. The third set of students proposes a plan that would carry-out their position. The final two students summarize the position of their team and provide a closing argument.

There are a lot of advantages for using debate as follows:

- Debate encourages class participation among those students that typically do not talk in class. Most importantly, debate offers an opportunity for students to move beyond the acquisition of basic knowledge in a subject matter and progresses into the types of higher order critical thinking skills that good debate requires..
- Debaters must analyze, synthesize and evaluate the knowledge they have acquired in order to propose, oppose and make competing choices. Debate can help people develop their investigation and analysis skills.

People can benefit from learning how to be leader who needs to analyze a problem, win others' agreement under pressure, and persuade others to act. Debate helps develop critical thinking skills:

- People learn how to be open-minded to questions and issues. They are forced to consider the opposition's viewpoints, and anticipate position.
- Debate helps develop effective speaking skills. Debaters need not only speak in front of different audiences and judges, but also apply the best principles of public speaking to select, arrange, and present their materials. They can become flexible and comfortable to speaking. It helps develop organization skills. Debaters need to arrange arguments clearly and convincingly, so that the ideas can be easy to follow and hard to forget. It helps develop teamwork skills, debate is a competitive activity, but it relies on cooperation as well as it is an efficient way. Linguists found that students in a large scale survey of 70 universities rated improved communication skills as debate's most substantial benefit. These findings



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show the importance of collaborative communication during the debate and the more involved students are during the debate the more they will gain from the learning process. The delivery of debates is intrinsically linked to collaborative learning skills and critical thinking. The process of expressing thoughts and different "for and against" perspectives in a debate structure encourages interaction amongst peers. Students also need to communicate the perspectives of others However, those opposed to the use of debates believe that the argumentative element of debate structure can create a confrontational environment. In contrast, others found few students who reported any distress or anxiety associated with the competitiveness linked to the debate structure. They believe the delivery of evidence in debates is intrinsically linked to collaborative learning skills. Collaborative learning in this manner can enhance skills such as explaining, reasoning, stimulating thinking and asking questions . Moreover, Johnson believe that students can also more frequently develop skills in generating new ideas and solutions and can transfer learnt content, applying it more readily to different situations. This form of collaborative learning through dialogue can promote students' active learning and high-order thinking presenting this evidence ensures full class participation beyond those who are seen as the usual contributors. A strategy to ensure full participation is to start the debate with a group who have researched the specific subject and then open the floor for all students to evaluate the debate and the evidence presented. In contrast, Temple found that participation was limited to those in the debate team. He found that students did not consider listening to other debate teams to be active Instead, Temple advocated the and engaging. fishbowl debate, where all students are divided into two groups and take part in every debate, or alternatively have a third group that is the audience. By having students discuss and organize their points of view for one side of an argument they are able to discover new information and put knowledge into action. The success behind using debates in the classroom is not in winning and losing but rather how well team prepared for and delivered their arguments Students are more likely to be authentic when they debate a subject to which they can relate. Educators must have a plan in place if the debate gets "hot" and students argue instead of debate. Debate can also be used to explore issues in an area such as social studies, economics or history. For example, one could have a debate on whether or not human aggression is innate or learned. Whether or not a debate topic is related to a particular curriculum, debate has a lot to offer participants.

## Discussion

Lesson 3. The theme: State versus private education"

Type of debate: The problem solving debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. ( Speak about diverse effects of private education comparing with other countries)
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Students gave opinion about advantageous and disadvantageous sides of this theme.

The **strengths** of this implementation of this technique, they are used to speak spontaneously pupils can portray their notion and sentiments precisely, as well as they exchange their diverse kind of perceptions, the most favourable side of this is to get to know to cooperate with each other respectively. They learned from each other to listen and respect, give right to speak to each other as well as they were conducted to state personal involvement and worldwide view comprehensively.

The **weaknesses** of this lesson is not all pupils could participate in this debate technique because of incapability of depicting their ideas since they are afraid of this on public during the lesson, that is why there is no inclination to become associated with this discussion. During this lesson, this technique couldn't entice every pupil's attention to the point.

The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is the implementation and expression of learned phrases and new items of pupils during the lessons in their own to this lesson.

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is to be accustomed not to able to participate in order to express their opinions about diverse characteristics of advertising because of personal aspect of diffident, as well as unconfident, fearfulness of pupils during the lesson.

Lesson 4. (full version is attached in the appendix)

The theme: Political parties

Type of debate: The four-corner debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. (Think about the role of political parties in our society)
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Pupils gave opinion about the important role of parties .

The **strength** of this debate technique is to speak more fluently, can listen as well as catch up with each other perception. Partly, many pupils lost their fear to speak on public, the strength appeared to express their ideas since they were made to speak repeatedly.

The **weaknesses** of this technique in this lesson is when stating their ideas they had difficulty in follow



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grammar rules and structure, since they were accustomed to make speech spontaneously.

The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is pupils learned new informative facts about political parties as well as acquired sufficient knowledge about it.

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is not to able to make some backward pupils, they remain untouched of the new informative facts and news, development of their knowledge.

Lesson 5. (full version is attached in the appendix)

The theme: "Mass media"

Type of debate: Meeting house debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. (Speak about the importance of mass media in examples with different aspects)
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Pupils gave opinion about importance and diverse effects of this theme.

The **strength** of this debate technique is to speak more fluently, can listen as well as catch up with each other ideas. Most pupils lost their fear to speak on public, the strength appeared to express their ideas since they were made to speak repeatedly.

The **weaknesses** of this technique in this lesson is when stating their ideas they had difficulty in follow grammar rules and structure, since they were used to making speech spontaneously.

The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is implementation of pupils' learned new informative facts about mass media and chance of making opening argument.

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is not to able to make some backward pupils ,they remain untouched of the new informative facts and news , development of their knowledge.

Lesson 6. (full version is attached in the appendix)

The theme: Listen to the radio

Type of debate: Think pair-share debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. (Speak about the difference between radio and TV in order to get information, which one is beneficial?)
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Students expressed their perceptions about differences comparing each other.

The **strength** of this debate technique is to speak more fluently, can listen as well as catch up with each other perception. Pupils learned to collaborate with their pair, could make correct each others' mistakes respectively as well as got to know new information.

The **weaknesses** of this technique in this lesson is In some small groups when stating their ideas from two pupils only one was active, the other was passive The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is the implementation of positive and negative adjectives in their speech.

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is not to able to make some backward pupils, they remain untouched of the new informative facts and news, development of their knowledge.

Lesson 7. (full version is attached in the appendix)

The theme: Can we save trees?"

Type of debate: Problem solving debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. ( Think about which one is beneficial to cut trees or save them to preserve environment )
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Pupils exchanged ideas about different sides of this theme.

The **strength** of this debate technique is to speak more fluently, can listen as well as catch up with each other opinions . Pupils could solve an issue with exact examples

The **weaknesses** of this technique in this lesson is when stating their ideas they had difficulty in pronouncing some words

The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is implementation of some grammatical structure, like degrees of adjectives.

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is not to able to make some backward pupils, they remain untouched of the new informative facts and news, development of their knowledge.

Lesson 8. (full version is attached in the appendix)

The theme: "Energy from the earth" Type of debate: Pyramid debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. ( What are the causes of global warming )
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Pupils stated their different opinion about this theme.

The **strength** of this debate technique is to speak more precisely, can listen as well as catch up with each other perception. They could work with whole class



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respectively, and individually stated their opinion without fear.

The **weaknesses** of this technique in this lesson is when stating their ideas they had difficulty in clarifying their opinion freely.

The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is implementation of new phrases relating global warming

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is not to able to make some backward pupils, they remain untouched of the new informative facts and news, development of their knowledge.

Lesson 9. (full version is attached in the appendix)

The theme: Film stars

Type of debate: Think pair-share debate

The procedure.

- 1. Instructions were given to the pupils about how to express and clarify their clear notions and ideas. (Think about difference between cinema and theatre, which one is beneficial for our society?)
  - 2. Then they were divided into two groups
- 3. Pupils exchange different viewpoints about distinctive features of cinema and theatre..

The **strength** of this debate technique is to feel free themselves, as well as they stated their opinion precisely, worked together and exchanged their opinion

The **weaknesses** of this technique in this lesson is in some small groups when stating their ideas from two pupils only one was active, the other was passive.

The **opportunity** of this technique in this lesson is pupils learned new informative facts about political parties as well as acquired sufficient knowledge about it.

The **threat** of this technique in this lesson is not to able to make some backward pupils, they remain untouched of the new informative facts and news, development of their knowledge.

Moreover, at the beginning of the lesson, many pupils were backward to express their opinions but when it comes to the end of the lessons at the result of the some aspiration, pupils had inclination to speak and tried to find and search from diverse sources in order to exchange new facts. They were very active to become involved in making speech without fear of making mistake. They get to know to respect each other listen, tried to speak more. They learned to make speech in any topics, they had notions and willing to clarify.

Debates also engage students through self reflection and encourage them to learn from their peers. They prepare students to be more comfortable engaging in dialogue related to their beliefs as well as their areas of study. In improving oral proficiency of EFL learners so as to learn second language the technique of debate and discussion plays a crucial role comprehensively in spite of the some deficiencies.

These techniques not only improve their oral fluency but also their personal confidence in order to debates reinforce the mutual make speech, collaboration among learners in every aspect of branch as well as it causes to make improvement of knowledge relating to diverse topics . The use of debate in educational system is growing as both a curricular and extra-curricular activity largely because of its educational value. The most obvious benefit is the opportunities students have to develop and practice oral skills. These skills are extremely important to academic and personal development, vet few curriculum materials are available to support the teacher in fostering them. What makes debate especially valuable for fostering development of oral skills is that it is not only structured, but also interactive. Debate requires that participants listen, think and respond. It is not enough for the debater to simply memorize and perform a speech. Instead, debaters must listen to their opponents, engage in a questioning process and incorporate this information into their own presentations. It is also an excellent way to develop critical thinking skills. The process of researching a debate is one of examining the pros and cons of an issue, determining what the problems are and considering alternative solutions. The research and presentation of a debate is clearly a team effort, and participation in activities like debate explicitly develops the skills needed to work in teams.

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