

Qualitative Findings on the Impact of Debate Techniques on English Language Speaking Competence

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Abstract. Debate techniques are widely recognized for their potential to enhance students' speaking skills and critical thinking abilities. This study aims to investigate the impact of debate techniques on English language speaking competence among students. Conducted at an English language learning center in Medan, this qualitative research employs classroom action research methods over a one-month period. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis. The findings indicate significant improvements in students' speaking skills, including increased confidence, fluency, and ability to construct and defend arguments. The debate techniques fostered an engaging learning environment, promoting active student participation and critical thinking. The results show that, across three cycles of debate-based instruction, students' average speaking scores increased notably, and all participants achieved the required competency levels by the final cycle. This study concludes that incorporating debate into language learning curricula can significantly enhance speaking competence. The research contributes to educational science by providing evidence that debate techniques are an effective pedagogical tool for improving oral communication skills in English, thereby supporting their integration into language education programs.

Key words: debate techniques, english speaking, competence, qualitative research, language learning

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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary educational landscape, effective communication skills, particularly in English, are essential for students (Moulin-Stožek, 2020). English proficiency, especially in speaking, is a key component of academic success and a vital skill for navigating global interactions and career opportunities (Kheirouri & Alizadeh, 2020). The pedagogical methods have been employed to enhance students' speaking abilities, with debate techniques emerging as a promising approach (Venkatesan, 2020). Debate, as an educational tool, encourages students to articulate their thoughts, engage in critical thinking, and develop strong argumentation skills (Cann et al., 2021). Despite the recognized potential of debate techniques, significant gaps remain in understanding their impact on English speaking competence across different educational settings (Desvallées et al., 2022).

Specific impacts of debate techniques on the speaking competence of non-native English speakers are not well understood. The increases in confidence, fluency, and students' ability to engage in structured argumentation through debate. However, these studies often focused on native English speakers or specific educational contexts, leaving a gap in research on the broader applicability of debate techniques across diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The gap underscores the need for comprehensive studies exploring the effectiveness of debate in enhancing English speaking skills among non-native speakers, particularly in regions where English is taught as a foreign language.

Addressing the gap is crucial for several reasons. Enhancing English speaking competence is vital for students in non-English-speaking countries, as it can improve their academic performance and future career prospects. Understanding how debate techniques affect speaking skills can provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers in designing effective language teaching strategies. Furthermore, the research can enrich the field of education by offering insights into the cross-cultural application of debate as an effective pedagogical tool.

The importance of the research is further highlighted by the specific challenges faced in English language education. In many non-English-speaking regions, students often struggle with limited opportunities to practice speaking English, leading to low confidence and proficiency levels. Traditional language teaching methods may not adequately address these challenges, necessitating innovative approaches that actively engage students and provide ample practice opportunities. Debate techniques

offer a potential solution by creating an interactive and dynamic learning environment where students can practice speaking, listen to various perspectives, and develop their argumentation skills.

Ganguli et al., (2023); Smith & Brown, (2021) showed that debate could increase students' confidence and speaking skills in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Similarly, Ironsi, (2023); Taylor & Robinson, (2020) found that classroom debates significantly enhanced students' critical thinking and mastery of course content. Aubanel & Schwartz, (2020); Lee & Kim, (2022) focused on the role of debate in improving EFL students' speaking competence and confidence. Evanega et al., (2022); Martinez & Perez, (2019) reported that classroom debates are an effective strategy for developing speaking skills among English language learners. Despite these positive findings, research specifically examining the impact of debate on the speaking competence of non-native English speakers in diverse cultural settings remains limited.

To address the research gap, the study investigated the impact of debate techniques on English speaking competence among students in Medan, Indonesia. The study employed a qualitative descriptive method to provide an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of debate techniques over a one-month period. The study involved observations, interviews, and document analysis to gather comprehensive data on students' speaking performance and engagement.

The primary objective of the research was to determine whether debate techniques significantly improve English speaking competence among non-native speakers. By examining students' progress over several cycles of debate instruction, we aimed to identify specific areas of improvement and the overall impact on their speaking skills. Additionally, the study sought to provide practical insights for educators and policymakers on the benefits and implementation of debate techniques in language education.

The anticipated benefits of the research extend to both the scientific community and society. For the scientific community, the study contributes valuable data on the effectiveness of debate techniques in enhancing language proficiency, filling a critical gap in the existing literature. It also offers a methodological framework for future research on similar topics. For society, the findings can inform educational practices, leading to improved language instruction and better educational outcomes for students. Enhanced English speaking skills can empower students, opening up opportunities for higher education, global communication, and professional success.

Moreover, the relevance and necessity of the research are highlighted by current trends in educational research. A review of recent studies on debate and language learning reveals a consistent trend in investigating the benefits of debate for various cognitive and communicative skills. However, these studies often emphasize native English contexts or specific debate formats, leaving room for further exploration in diverse cultural and linguistic environments. The research trend underscores the need for continued investigation into the multifaceted impacts of debate techniques, ensuring that the topic remains an active and evolving area of study.

The study aimed to bridge the gap in understanding the impact of debate techniques on English speaking competence among non-native speakers. By providing qualitative insights and practical recommendations, the research not only advances scientific knowledge but also has the potential to transform educational practices, ultimately benefiting students and society at large. Exploring debate as a tool for language enhancement is an ongoing endeavor, and this study represents a crucial step in uncovering its full potential and applicability across different educational contexts. The research question for the study is how do debate techniques impact the English speaking competence of non-native English-speaking students?

METHODS

The objective of the study was to determine the impact of debate techniques on the English speaking competence of non-native English-speaking students. The study used a qualitative descriptive approach to provide an in-depth analysis over a one-month period. The study at an English language learning center in Medan, Indonesia, with 18 students enrolled in the English course at the center. The study introduced debate techniques to the students, then organized the students into small groups and provided debate topics relevant to the curriculum. Then gave guidelines and rules for conducting debates, ensuring each student had the opportunity to participate and express their views.

The study used structured observation sheets to record the students' performance, focusing on specific criteria such as confidence, fluency, and the ability to construct and defend arguments. The observations gather qualitative data on the students' speaking competence. The study conducted interviews with the students. The interviews aimed to capture students' perceptions and experiences with the debate activities. The study used semi-structured interview guides to ensure consistency allowing flexibility for the students to express students' thoughts freely.

The study analyzed relevant documents. The documents included students' written reflections, feedback forms, and recorded debate sessions. The study transcribed and coded the data, identifying recurring data and patterns that indicated improvements or challenges in the students' speaking skills. Throughout the study, followed ethical guidelines. The study obtained consent from all participants and ensured confidentiality. The study maintained a neutral and supportive environment, encouraging honest and open feedback from the students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study aimed to determine the impact of debate techniques on the English speaking competence of non-native English-speaking students. Over a one-month period, the study conducted observations, interviews, and document analysis to gather comprehensive data on students' speaking performance and engagement. The findings indicate significant improvements in students' speaking skills, including increased confidence, fluency, and ability to construct and defend arguments.

Improvements in Speaking Competence

Students demonstrated notable progress in students speaking competence across three cycles of debate-based instruction. Initial observations revealed that many students struggled with confidence and fluency. However, by the end of the study, all students showed marked improvements in these areas. The average speaking scores increased significantly, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Average Speaking Scores Across Three Cycles

Cycle	Confidence (%)	Fluency (%)	Argument Construction (%)
1	60	55	50
2	75	70	68
3	90	85	80

The data indicate that students' confidence levels increased from 60% in the first cycle to 90% in the third cycle. Similarly, fluency improved from 55% to 85%, and the ability to construct and defend arguments rose from 50% to 80%. These improvements suggest that debate techniques effectively enhance various aspects of speaking competence.

Increased Participation and Engagement

The implementation of debate techniques also led to higher levels of student participation and engagement. During the initial debates, students were hesitant and less active in discussions. However, the students became more familiar with the format and expectations, the participation increased significantly. Figure 1 illustrates the rise in student participation over the three cycles.



Figure 1. Student Participation in Debates

The figure shows a steady increase in the number of students actively participating in debates, with participation rates rising from 60% in the first cycle to 95% in the third cycle. The heightened engagement reflects the positive impact of debate techniques in creating an interactive and dynamic learning environment.

Qualitative Feedback from Students

Interviews with students provided qualitative insights into their experiences with debate activities. The students reported that the debates helped them overcome students' fear of speaking in public and boosted their confidence. The students appreciated the opportunity to express their opinions and engage in structured arguments. Some of the recurring themes from the interviews are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Recurring Themes from Student Interviews

Theme	Frequency
Increased Confidence	High
Improved Fluency	High
Enhanced Critical Thinking	Medium
Better Argumentation Skills	High
Enjoyment of Debates	Medium

The interviews revealed that most students experienced increased confidence and fluency. The students reported enhanced critical thinking and argumentation skills. Additionally, the students found the debate activities enjoyable, which further motivated their participation.

Document Analysis

The analysis of relevant documents, including students' written reflections and feedback forms, supported the findings from observations and interviews. Students' reflections indicated a positive perception of the debate activities. The students frequently mentioned improvements in the students' speaking skills and greater comfort in participating in discussions. Feedback forms showed that students valued the interactive nature of debates and appreciated the opportunity to practice students English in a supportive environment.

Case Study: A Student's Journey

One notable example is the case of Student A, who initially displayed significant anxiety and reluctance to speak. In the first cycle, Student A's confidence and fluency scores were among the lowest

in the class. However, by the third cycle, Student A showed remarkable improvement. The students' confidence score rose from 40% to 85%, and their fluency improved from 45% to 80%. The transformation highlights the potential of debate techniques to support students in overcoming students speaking challenges.



Figure 2. Student A's Progress in Confidence and Fluency

Analysis of Recorded Debates

The recorded debate sessions provided further evidence of the positive impact of debate techniques. Analysis of these recordings showed that students became more adept at constructing coherent arguments and responding to counterarguments. The debates also encouraged spontaneous speaking, as students had to think on their feet and react to their peers' points.

Overall Impact on Speaking Competence

The findings from this study indicate that debate techniques significantly improve English speaking competence among non-native English-speaking students. The increase in confidence, fluency, and argumentation skills suggests that debates provide a comprehensive approach to enhancing speaking abilities. By fostering an engaging and interactive learning environment, debate techniques help students develop the skills necessary for effective communication.

Discussion

The study demonstrate that debate techniques significantly improve the English speaking competence of non-native English-speaking students. The findings revealed marked progress in confidence, fluency, and argument construction across three cycles of debate-based instruction. The outcomes fill the identified research gap by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of debate techniques in diverse cultural and linguistic settings. Smith and Brown (2021) indicated that debates could boost students' confidence and speaking skills in an EFL context. Similarly, Taylor and Robinson (2020) found that classroom debates enhanced students' critical thinking and content mastery. However, the study extends these findings by focusing on non-native English speakers in Indonesia, thus addressing the gap related to the broader applicability of debate techniques (Amoah & Yeboah, 2021; Ogbogu & Hardcastle, 2021; Redondo-Sama et al., 2021).

The significant improvements observed in students' confidence, fluency, and argumentation skills suggest that debates provide a holistic approach to developing speaking competence. Confidence levels increased from 60% in the first cycle to 90% in the third cycle, reflecting the effectiveness of debates in reducing speaking anxiety and building self-assurance. The aligns noted increased student confidence through regular participation in debates (Lee & Kim, 2022). Another critical aspect of speaking

competence improved from 55% to 85%. The substantial increase indicates that debate techniques encourage continuous speaking practice, allowing students to become more comfortable and fluent in expressing their ideas. The finding supports the notion that regular engagement in structured speaking activities, such as debates, can significantly enhance language fluency (Martinez & Perez, 2019).

The ability to construct and defend arguments saw an improvement from 50% to 80%. This demonstrates that debates not only improve verbal fluency but also enhance critical thinking and logical reasoning skills. Students learned to formulate coherent arguments and respond effectively to counterarguments, which are essential components of effective communication. The outcome resonates with de Vos et al., (2020); Patra et al., (2020); Rojabi et al., (2022) findings on the critical thinking benefits of debate activities. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a non-native English-speaking context, providing new insights into the applicability of debate techniques across different cultural and educational settings. The native speakers or specific educational environments, leaving a gap in understanding how debates impact non-native speakers in regions where English is taught as a foreign language. This study fills that gap by demonstrating the effectiveness of debate techniques in an Indonesian context (Canagarajah, 2020; Pham et al., 2020; Rathcke et al., 2021; Shrimpton et al., 2021).

The research highlights the adaptability of debate techniques to various curricular needs. By selecting relevant debate topics and providing structured guidelines, educators can tailor debate activities to suit the specific linguistic and cognitive levels of their students. Adaptability makes debate a versatile tool in language education, capable of addressing diverse learning objectives and outcomes. Enhanced speaking competence empowers students, providing them with the skills needed for effective communication in both academic and professional contexts. Improved fluency and confidence in speaking English can open up opportunities for higher education, global communication, and career advancement. This aligns with the broader educational goal of preparing students for success in a globalized world (de la Fuente-Mella et al., 2022; Leivada et al., 2021; Soler, 2020).

The studies indicate that debate techniques led to higher levels of student participation and engagement. The significant increase in active participation is crucial for language acquisition and the development of speaking skills. The rise in participation rates from 60% in the first cycle to 95% in the third cycle demonstrates the effectiveness of debates in fostering an interactive and engaging learning environment. Higher participation rates suggest that students felt more comfortable and motivated to take part in the debates. This aligns with the notion that interactive activities, such as debates, can reduce anxiety and create a more inclusive atmosphere where students are encouraged to express their thoughts. Active student engagement is associated with improved language outcomes and higher levels of motivation (Taylor & Robinson, 2020).

The increased engagement can also be attributed to the structured nature of debates, which provides clear guidelines and roles for students. The structure helps students know what to expect and how to prepare, reducing uncertainty and fear. Additionally, debates inherently require students to listen, think critically, and respond, which keeps them actively involved throughout the process. The findings support the idea that well-structured activities can enhance student participation and create a more dynamic classroom environment (Lee & Kim, 2022). The qualitative feedback from students indicated that they found debates enjoyable and stimulating. The positive perception likely contributed to their willingness to participate more actively. Enjoyment in learning activities is a critical factor that can enhance student engagement and retention of information. When students enjoy an activity, they are more likely to invest effort and participate fully, leading to better learning outcomes (Croce et al., 2022; Penley et al., 2022; Schaefer, 2022).

The increased participation and engagement observed in this study also have broader implications for language education. Traditional language teaching methods often fail to engage students fully, especially in speaking activities where anxiety and lack of confidence can be significant barriers. By incorporating debates, educators can create a more interactive and supportive environment that encourages all students to participate actively. The study's findings highlight the importance of creating a safe and supportive classroom atmosphere. Students reported feeling more confident and willing to speak up during debates, suggesting that the environment fostered by the debate format helped them overcome their fears. Consistent with the role of a positive learning environment in reducing speaking anxiety and promoting engagement (Martinez & Perez, 2019).

The qualitative feedback from students provided rich insights into their experiences and perceptions of the debate activities. The feedback is crucial for understanding the nuanced ways in which debate

techniques impact speaking competence and overall learning experience. The students reported that participating in debates significantly boosted their confidence in speaking English. The students felt more comfortable speaking in front of others and less anxious about making mistakes. The increased confidence likely contributed to the observed improvements in fluency, as students were more willing to practice and take risks with their language use. The finding aligns with existing research that highlights the role of increased confidence in enhancing language proficiency (Smith & Brown, 2021). Students noted that the repetitive nature of debates helped them become more fluent. By engaging in multiple debate sessions, they had ample opportunities to practice speaking, which gradually improved their fluency. This supports the idea that frequent practice and active use of language in meaningful contexts are essential for developing fluency (Lee & Kim, 2022).

Another recurring student in the feedback was the enhancement of critical thinking and argumentation skills. Students appreciated the opportunity to engage in structured arguments, which required them to think critically and respond thoughtfully to their peers. The students felt that debates helped them develop better reasoning and logic, which are crucial for constructing coherent arguments. The finding shown debates to be effective in promoting critical thinking and analytical skills. The ability to argue a point logically and respond to counterarguments is not only beneficial for language learning but also for overall cognitive development (Taylor & Robinson, 2020).

The students mentioned that they enjoyed the debating activities and found them more engaging than traditional language lessons. The enjoyment translated into higher levels of motivation to participate and improve. The positive emotional response to debates likely contributed to the increased engagement and participation rates observed in the study. Enjoyment in learning activities is a key factor in motivating students to participate actively and persist in their efforts. When students find an activity enjoyable, they are more likely to put in the effort needed to succeed, leading to better learning outcomes. This aligns with the role of enjoyment in enhancing student motivation and engagement (Martinez & Perez, 2019).

While the feedback was overwhelmingly positive, some students did mention challenges they faced during the debates. The students felt that the competitive nature of debates sometimes created pressure and anxiety. Others mentioned that they struggled with the rapid pace of discussions, which made it difficult for them to keep up. The challenges highlight the need for careful implementation of debate activities to ensure that all students can benefit. Providing additional support and scaffolding, such as giving students more time to prepare and practice, can help mitigate these challenges. It is also important to foster a supportive and non-threatening environment where students feel safe to express their ideas without fear of judgment (Croce et al., 2022; García-Peñalvo, 2022; Lai & Tu, 2020).

The qualitative feedback from students provides valuable insights for educators looking to implement debate techniques in their language classrooms. First, it underscores the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment where all students feel comfortable participating. Educators should focus on building students' confidence and providing ample opportunities for practice. Second, the feedback highlights the need to balance the competitive aspects of debates with a supportive approach that encourages all students to participate. Educators can achieve this by emphasizing the collaborative nature of debates and providing constructive feedback. Third, the enjoyment and motivation reported by students suggest that debates can be a highly effective way to engage students in language learning. By incorporating debates into the curriculum, educators can create a more dynamic and interactive learning experience that fosters both language proficiency and critical thinking skills (Civita et al., 2023; Hasson et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022).

At the beginning of the study, Student A struggled with several aspects of speaking competence. During the first debate cycle, their confidence score was just 40%, and their fluency was 45%. These low scores were indicative of a high level of speaking anxiety and limited practice in spontaneous speaking situations. Student A often hesitated, spoke in fragmented sentences, and showed visible signs of nervousness, such as avoiding eye contact and fidgeting. As the study progressed, the structured nature of the debate sessions and the supportive environment provided by the instructors played a crucial role in helping Student A overcome their initial challenges. The clear guidelines and consistent format of the debates helped reduce uncertainty and provided a framework within which Student A could gradually build confidence (Mikołajczak et al., 2022; Thakur, 2022; Varela-Losada et al., 2022).

In the second cycle, Student A's confidence improved to 60%, and their fluency increased to 65%. This improvement was facilitated by consistent practice and the opportunity to engage in debates without

the pressure of immediate perfection. The incremental progress highlighted the importance of regular practice and structured support in developing speaking skills.

By the third cycle, Student A had made remarkable progress. Their confidence score rose to 85%, and their fluency reached 80%. This significant improvement was a testament to the effectiveness of the debate techniques in enhancing speaking competence. The regular engagement in debates helped Student A become more comfortable with speaking English, reducing their anxiety and increasing their willingness to participate.

The transformation in Student A's performance was evident not only in their scores but also in their behavior during debates. By the final cycle, Student A actively participated, presented well-structured arguments, and responded confidently to counterarguments. This change was a clear indication of increased self-assurance and improved speaking competence (Mikołajczak et al., 2022; Thakur, 2022; Varela-Losada et al., 2022).

Several factors contributed to Student A's improvement. First, the structured format of the debates provided a predictable and supportive environment, which helped reduce anxiety. Knowing what to expect and having clear guidelines allowed Student A to prepare effectively and participate with greater confidence. Second, the consistent feedback from peers and instructors played a significant role. Constructive feedback helped Student A identify areas for improvement and provided encouragement to keep practicing. The positive reinforcement from peers also boosted their confidence, making them more willing to engage in subsequent debates. Third, the gradual increase in the complexity of debate topics helped Student A build their skills incrementally. Starting with simpler topics and progressing to more complex ones allowed them to develop their argumentation and speaking skills step by step. This approach helped them gain confidence in their abilities and tackle more challenging topics with greater ease (Aguilera et al., 2021; Crocamo et al., 2021; Danzon-Chambaud, 2021; Gille et al., 2022).

Another notable aspect of Student A's journey was the improvement in their non-verbal communication skills. Initially, their body language indicated high levels of nervousness, with minimal eye contact and frequent fidgeting (Boucher et al., 2021; Fino et al., 2022; Rahman & Singh, 2021). However, by the final cycle, Student A exhibited more confident body language, including better eye contact, expressive gestures, and a more relaxed posture. Improved non-verbal communication enhanced the effectiveness of their verbal messages and made their arguments more compelling. This development underscores the comprehensive impact of debate techniques on various dimensions of speaking competence, including both verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

The case study of Student A offers valuable insights for educators. It highlights the potential of debate techniques to support students who struggle with speaking anxiety and lack of confidence. By providing a structured and supportive environment, educators can help students gradually build their speaking competence. Regular practice and incremental progress are key factors in overcoming speaking challenges. Educators should incorporate consistent debate activities into the curriculum to provide students with continuous opportunities to practice and improve. Additionally, providing constructive feedback and positive reinforcement can significantly boost students' confidence and motivation. The case study also emphasizes the importance of addressing non-verbal communication skills. Educators should encourage students to be mindful of their body language and provide guidance on how to use non-verbal cues effectively during debates. This holistic approach can enhance overall communication competence and make students more effective speakers (Almahfali & Avery, 2023; Pauli et al., 2023; Rozgonjuk et al., 2021; Tan et al., 2021).

One of the most significant findings from the recorded debates was the improvement in students' ability to construct and articulate arguments. Initially, many students struggled with formulating coherent arguments and responding to counterarguments. However, as they participated in more debate sessions, their skills in these areas improved markedly. This aligns with the findings of Taylor and Robinson (2020), who noted that debates enhance students' ability to think critically and construct logical arguments. The recordings revealed that students became more adept at organizing their thoughts and presenting their ideas in a structured manner. This improvement was particularly evident in the later debate sessions, where students were able to present well-reasoned arguments and effectively counter opposing views. This skill is crucial not only for language proficiency but also for developing critical thinking and reasoning abilities (Dunn & McCray, 2020; Durazzi et al., 2021; Hummel et al., 2021; Lo, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021).

The recorded sessions also showed significant improvements in students' spontaneous speaking skills (Debnath et al., 2023; Luoto, 2021; Madrid-Morales, 2021; ORCHARD et al., 2020; Zhai & Wibowo, 2023). In the early stages of the study, students often hesitated and struggled to respond quickly during debates. However, as they gained more experience, their responses became more immediate and confident. This ability to think on their feet and respond spontaneously is a key component of effective communication, especially in real-life situations where scripted responses are not possible. The increased spontaneity observed in the recordings suggests that debate techniques help students develop the necessary skills to communicate effectively in unscripted scenarios. This finding supports the notion that regular practice in spontaneous speaking through debates can lead to substantial improvements in overall language fluency (Lee & Kim, 2022).

Another notable observation from the recorded debates was the increased use of advanced vocabulary and grammatical structures (Arora et al., 2020; Cromhout et al., 2022; Demmen et al., 2022; Massey et al., 2020; Savage et al., 2020; Waithaka et al., 2022). Initially, students tended to use basic language and simple sentence structures. However, as the study progressed, they began incorporating more complex vocabulary and grammatical forms into their speech. This advancement indicates that debates not only improve fluency but also enrich students' language repertoire. Students' ability to use advanced language features in debates reflects their growing confidence and competence in English. This improvement is consistent with the findings of Martinez and Perez (2019), who reported that debate activities enhance students' linguistic abilities by providing opportunities to practice and refine their language skills in meaningful contexts.

The recorded sessions highlighted the role of peer interaction and feedback in enhancing students' speaking competence. During debates, students frequently engaged with their peers, offering constructive feedback and building on each other's ideas. This collaborative dynamic created a supportive environment where students felt encouraged to participate and improve. Peer feedback played a significant role in helping students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement (Canny et al., 2023; Davies et al., 2020; Karipidis et al., 2021; Nguyen, 2023; Ruiz-Dolz et al., 2021). The recordings showed that students were receptive to feedback from their peers and used it to refine their arguments and improve their performance in subsequent debates. This finding underscores the importance of peer interaction in language learning and aligns with research suggesting that collaborative activities can significantly enhance learning outcomes (Smith & Brown, 2021).

The recorded debates also provided insights into students' non-verbal communication skills, such as body language, eye contact, and gestures. Initially, many students exhibited signs of nervousness, such as avoiding eye contact and using limited gestures. However, as they gained confidence through repeated practice, their non-verbal communication improved noticeably. Improved non-verbal communication is an important aspect of speaking competence, as it enhances the clarity and impact of verbal messages (Babae et al., 2023; De Prada Pérez, 2020; Gao et al., 2022; Hino, 2020; Klichowski et al., 2020; Kouam et al., 2023). The recordings showed that students became more expressive and confident in their non-verbal cues, which contributed to more effective and engaging communication. This improvement highlights the comprehensive impact of debate techniques on various dimensions of speaking competence.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to determine the impact of debate techniques on the English speaking competence of non-native English-speaking students, and the findings revealed significant improvements in confidence, fluency, critical thinking, argumentation skills, and non-verbal communication. By engaging in structured debate activities over a one-month period, students demonstrated marked progress in their ability to speak confidently and fluently, construct coherent arguments, and use advanced vocabulary and grammar. These results suggest that integrating debate techniques into language curricula can effectively enhance various dimensions of speaking competence. The research contributed to the scientific understanding of debate as a pedagogical tool, particularly in diverse cultural and linguistic contexts, and provided practical insights for educators aiming to foster an interactive and supportive learning environment. Moving forward, these findings imply that further exploration and implementation of debate techniques in language education could significantly benefit students' communication skills and overall academic success.

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