BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC QUẢN LÝ VÀ CÔNG NGHỆ HẢI PHÒNG

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH: NGÔN NGỮ ANH

Sinh viên : Nguyễn Gia Long

HẢI PHÒNG – 2025

USING DEBATES TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR ENGLISH MAJOR 2ND YEAR STUDENT AT HPU

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY

NGÀNH: NGÔN NGỮ ANH

Sinh viên   **: Nguyễn Gia Long**
Giảng viên hướng dẫn: Thạc sĩ Nguyễn Thị Hoa

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NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

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Tên đề tài: Using debates to improve communication skills for English major students at HPU.

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

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CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên   : Nguyễn Thị Hoa

Học hàm, học vị   : Thạc Sĩ

Cơ quan công tác   : Trường Đại học Quản lý và Công nghệ Hải Phòng

Nội dung hướng dẫn: Using debates to improve communication skills for English major 2nd year student at HPU

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày …… tháng …… năm 2025

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày .... tháng .... năm 2025

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN   Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên   *Giảng viên hướng dẫn*

Hải Phòng, ngày …… tháng …… năm 2025

XÁC NHẬN CỦA KHOA

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên: ....

Đơn vị công tác: *Đại học Quản lý và công nghệ Hải Phòng*

Họ và tên sinh viên: .... Chuyên ngành: ....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp: ....

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Nội dung hướng dẫn: ....

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1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp

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2. Đánh giá chất lượng của đồ án/khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu…)

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên hướng dẫn tốt nghiệp

Được bảo vệ [   ]   Không được bảo vệ [   ]   Điểm hướng dẫn [   ]

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm ......

Giảng viên hướng dẫn

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIẢNG VIÊN CHẤM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên: ....

Đơn vị công tác: ....

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Đề tài tốt nghiệp: ....

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1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chấm phản biện

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2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

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3. Ý kiến của giảng viên chấm phản biện

Được bảo vệ ☐   Không được bảo vệ ☐   Điểm hướng dẫn ☐

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Giảng viên chấm phản biện
(Ký và ghi rõ tến)

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Abstract

This study is aimed at utilizing debates as a mean for 2nd year English major in English to improve their communication skills as well as many other additions. In order to achieve such aims, the study is set to find out reality of teaching and learning English debating skills in Haiphong Management and Technology University, the difficulties encountered by 2nd year English majors in English while communicating with each other as well as when they disagree with students and teachers, and the factors influencing them in 2nd year English majors.

However, even for 2nd year English major students there are still some problems in class such as poor topic-related vocabulary, pronunciation, limited practice time at class and bad basic skills, psychological barriers, etc. It is therefore recommended that more should be done to encourage students to debate right at the university so most of these problems can be resolved.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for the study

It is widely known that English has been an international language which it has become a dominant language in many countries. Currently, about two thirds nations in the world use English as their mother tongue in variety fields of social life: political, business, cultural exchange, education and others. In Vietnam, the need and desire to acquire English has been increasing. With the purpose of finding a good job with high salary or study abroad, English learners not only master the English grammar but also hope to improve their communication ability. For such reason, it is becoming more and more necessary.

When it comes to learning English: listening, speaking, reading, writing are basic skills. Most people just focus on learning these four skills, neglecting one other very important skill in English, which is communicating skill. In fact, it is hard for those that their mother tounge isn't English to communicate freely and naturally. Almost students have difficulties in this process even though they have all the basics learned and utilized. In fact, there are many factors affecting the learners in English communications. Consequently, it is very difficult for them to master this skill. Like students from universities, I have faced many difficulties in trying to just communicate with teachers and friends. With four year experience in improving the skill and from what me observed in praticing with other classmate, it can be found that many students starts off relatively good but fall short in prolonged conversations. From my point of view, the next four English language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), English communication is one of the most important skill. Although students can do grammar exercises very well and master many new words and structures, they cannot apply them in a long English conversation effectively. Some of them said that they felt unconfident with while many others said that they felt awkward or shy when they talked too long so they could hardly express their opinions and ideas. That is the reason why I decided to do a research on How to use improve communication skill using debates for second year English major at Haiphong Management and Technology

University. I strong expect to find out common difficulties in improving this and suggest some solutions of the problem.

1.2 Aims and objectives of the study

The study is aimed at finding out the difficulties encountered by 2nd year English major in English communication skills and suggesting some solutions to the problem.

In order to achieve such aims, the following objectives are set:

• Finding out reality of how student communicate to each other with just English in Haiphong Management and Technology University.

• Finding out the difficulties encountered by 2nd year English majors in English communications.

• Finding out the factors influencing 2nd years English majors students when they are communicating is class.

• Giving solutions to the problem.

1.3 Scope of the study

There are so many diffirent material resources and reseachers that require a lot of time and effect while my personal experience is limited. Therefore, this study can only focus on the second year English major to investigate the troubles that students at this class usually encounter and then give some proposals to overcome discovered difficulties and to improve students communicating ability.

1.4 Design of the study

The study contains of four chapter:

Chapter 1: The introduction are aims, scope, and the design of the study.

Chapter 2: Overview of the study

Chapter 3: Activities to improve debates for second year English major at HPU.

Chapter 4: Recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

2.1 The nature of debating skills

2.1.1 What is debating?

Student competency in the 21st century is no longer exclusively assessed through a final traditional examination at the end of the term. Instead, a variety of oral, written, individual, group, and interactive assessment tasks are now used, asking students 'to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application' (Mueller, 2005, p. 2). Therefore in-class opportunities for debating practice should improve the students communication ability. What is debating?

The debate is a process that involves formal discussion on a particular topic. In a debate, opposing arguments are put forward to argue for opposing viewpoints. Debate occurs in public meetings, academic institutions, and can even be seen in day to day activities such as when they play videogames. It is a type of discussion, often with a moderator and an audience, in addition to the debate participants. As an English learner, you want to be able to understand and to discuss a subject. You also want to able to express your opinion and to support them. You can learn these skills by learning how to debate. Americans use the word debate to talk about discussions among people. Another use of the word debate describes formal discussion. Debaters work on a team to convince a judge that their opinion about a topic has more value than the opposite side's opinion. According to the University of the people said that: "A debate is a structured contest where you try to win by creating the most convincing argument. The debate is often times format but can occur in informal settings as well."

The debate comes from a tradition that started in Ancient Greece. They believed people needed to have certain skills in a democracy, including debating in public in support of opinion and being able to explain that opinion. A debate contest traditionally has this structure; Teams agree to debate a statement, such as "Should we go to college?" One team supports the resolution. The other one is against the

resolution. Each team gives an argument for or against the resolution. Then each team asks questions about the other team's argument. After answering the questions, each team makes more statements to support its argument. Finally, they summarize the arguments, they talk about them again, in less time.

Competitive debating uses the skills of argument to debate and discuss important issues about our beliefs, government policies, and proposals on how to improve the word or face up to problems in society. A competitive debate should be rational, focused, and structured. Debating builds a unique set of skills helping students to analyze problems, think critically, synthesize arguments, and present these ideas in a cogent convincing manner.

The National Speech and Debate Association says that students of debate research both sides of a topic. They "learn to think critically about every argument that could be made on each side."

2.1.2 Structure of a debate

There are several different structures for debate practiced in high school and college debate leagues. Most of these structures have some general features. Specifically, any debate will have two sides: a proposition side, and an opposition side. The responsibility of the proposition side is to advocate the adoption of the resolution, while the job of the opposition side is to refute the resolution.

There are multiple formats a debate can follow and this is a basic debate structure:

A topic is chosen for each debate this is called a resolution or motion. It can be a statement, policy, or idea. The motion is usually a policy that changes the current state of affairs or a statement which is either true or false.

- There are two teams of three speakers:
- ❖ The Affirmative team support the statement
- ❖ The Negative team oppose the statement
- Sometimes you will be asked to take a position in the debate but in other debates, you will be allocated your position.

- Teams are provided with time to prepare usually one hour
- Each speaker presents for a set amount of time
- Speakers alternate between the teams, usually a speaker in the Affirmative team starts, followed by a Negative speaker, then the second Affirmative speaker presents, followed by the second Negative speaker, etc. The order of the debate:

Affirmative team	*Negative team*
Affirmative leader	Negative leader
Affirmative vice leader	Negative vice leader
Affirmative member	Negative member
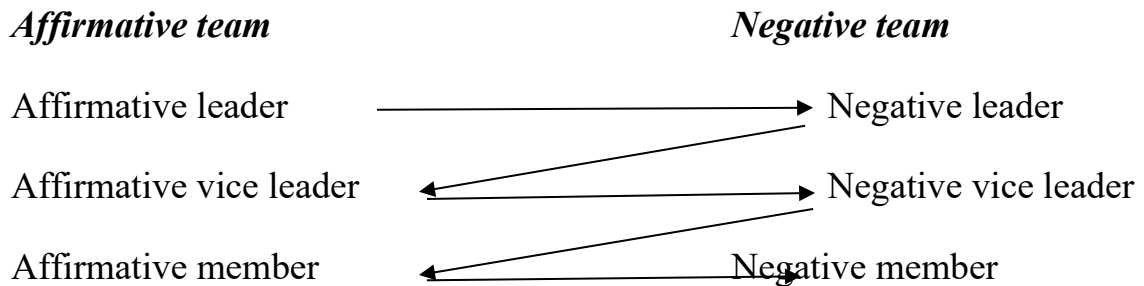
- The debate is then judged.
- There may be an audience present but they are not involved in the debate.

Once you have learned how to debate in one format you can easily switch to another.

The resolution can take many forms, depending on the format. But in most cases, the resolution is simply a statement of policy or a statement of value. Some examples include, "Be it resolved, English is very extremely necessary in the era of technology "; "Be it resolved, Should the students have a part-time job while studying?"; "Be it resolved, should students attend extra class after school?"; etc. In many debate structures, there is a requirement that a policy resolution (a resolution regarding the policies followed by some organization) represent a change from current policy, so that the opposition team will be defending the status quo.

Usually, there is also a judge present in the debate whose job is to decide the winner.

There are many different types of debate known as: Academic Debate, Public Forum; Presidential Debate; Informal Debate; MUN Debate. But Academic Debate is the most common. Academic Debate is limited to discussing social issues and developing students' attitudes and abilities. So it is widely used in school debate contests. This study will focus on Academic Debate research and how it will improve students communication skills.

Academic debate is simply defined as a debate conducted under the auspices of an educational institution aimed at providing educational opportunities for its students. The purpose of an academic debate is to allow evenly matched opponents to present balanced arguments and evidence about critical issues. The long tradition of Academic Debate started in about 481 to 411 B.C. and persisted in American schools as an educational method in college and characterized by the debate tournament. A form of informal debate, academic debate merely allows students to systematically express their opinion and support their arguments with facts or evidence. They are designed to facilitate the development of advanced debating skills, improve critical thinking, and increase students' confidence about participating in academic community discussions and dialogue.

Some of the benefits students gained from their debate experience include awareness and knowledge of social issues, development of critical thinking and communication ability, appreciation of change, and respect for academic research. The philosophy of college debate, for example, is " to learn not to win" because the most important thing is to be able to present both sides of the issue and make a critical decision on matters concerning public interest. The debate in a college environment provides students opportunities to apply their knowledge of debate principles, develop proper attitudes and skills, and experience almost real-life debates. More importantly, debating is to keep political and public issues alive in the hearts and minds of the academic community or as a mean to settle conflicts.

Below are descriptions some of the most common debate format: Team Policy Debate, Lincoln Douglas Debate, NDT Debate, CEDA Debate and Parliamentary Debate.

❖ Team Policy Debate

Team policy debate is the oldest, and still probably the most popular, the structure of debate practiced in American high schools. The proposition side is called the Affirmative (or Aff), and the opposition side is called the Negative (or Neg). Each side is a team composed of two debates so that there are four people participating in the debate (not including the judge and audience).

● Format.

A round of team policy debate consists of eight speeches. The first four speeches are called constructive speeches, because the teams are perceived as laying out their most important arguments during these speeches. The last four speeches are called rebuttals, because the teams are expected to extend and apply arguments that have already been made, rather than make new arguments.

Here is a table of the eight speeches and their time limits:

Speech	1AC	1NC	2AC	2NC	1NR	1AR	2NR	2AR
Time	8 min	8 min	8 min	8 min	4 min	4 min	4 min	4 min

(A stands for Affirmative, N for Negative, C for Constructive, R for Rebuttal.)

Two things are of interest in this structure. First, the affirmative team both begins and ends the debate. Second, the negative team has two speeches in a row: the first negative rebuttal (INR) immediately follows the second negative constructive (2NC). (Why? Well, because it's always been done that way.)

In general, the members of each team alternate giving speeches, so that the same person gives both the 1AC and the 1AR, the same person gives the 2NC and the 2NR, etc. Occasionally, the rules will allow a change in this format. For example,

affirmative teams will sometimes go "inside-outside" so that one person (usually the weaker member) gives the 1AC and the 2AR, while the other (stronger) debater gives the 2AC and the 1AR.

• Resolutions.

Resolutions in team policy debate are always of a policy nature, usually chairman policy. The affirmative team almost always defends the resolution by means of a particular example, known as a "case"; if they can show the example (case) to be true, then the general proposition is also shown to be true. For instance, the first resolution I ever encountered in team policy debate was, Should the students have a part-time job while studying?" Some typical cases teams ran under this resolution were: a part-time job help students with more experience; a part-time job also help students improve soft skills; etc.

- Style.

Team policy debate is focused on evidence gathering and organizational ability. Persuasiveness is not considered important -- or at least, not as important as showing plenty of evidence. The best teams give with evidence on their own affirmative and all the possible cases they might have to oppose. If you ever walk into a high-level team debate round, expect to see debaters talking at extremely fast speeds, using lots of jargon. There is very little discussion of values such as freedom, justice, equality, etc. This form of debate can be fun, it encourages good research and organizational skills, and it is good for getting novice debaters used to debating in front of people.

❖ Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Lincoln-Douglas (or L-D) debate began as a reaction to the excesses of team policy debate in high school. L-D is a one-on-one debate, and as in team policy debate, the proposition and opposition teams are called the Affirmative (or Aff) and the Negative (or Neg), respectively. The idea was to have a debate focused on discussing the merits of competing ethical values in a persuasive manner. The

famed debates between senatorial candidates Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas in the 1850s inspired the name and format for this style of debate.

- Style.

Evidence was considered important, but it was not the be-all-and-end-all that it is in team policy debate. The emphasis was on speaking clearly, logically, and fluently.

❖ Parliamentary Debate

Parliamentary debate is yet another form of debate that arose as a reaction against the excesses of NDT and team policy debate. The emphasis in this form of debate is on persuasiveness, logic, and wit. Unlike in other forms of debate, where the resolution is established well in advance of a tournament and is the same for every round in the tournament, in Parliamentary debate the resolution is usually not established until 10 minutes before the debate round begins, and there is a new resolution for every round of debate. Since it would be unreasonable to expect teams to research every topic they could be possibly be asked to debate, parliamentary debate requires no evidence whatsoever.

A round of a parliamentary debate consists of six speeches: four constructive speeches and two rebuttal speeches. The speeches and their times are as follows:

Several things are notable about this structure. First, as in team policy and NDT debate, the proposition (Affirmative) team specifically, the Prime Minister both begins and ends the debate. Second, again as in team policy and NDT, the Opposition team has a block of two speeches in a row (the MO followed by the LOR). Third, unlike in team policy and NDT, there are only two rebuttals instead of four. Consequently, two people in the debate (the AL and the LO) have two speeches each, while the other two (the MA and MO) have only one speech each.

There are no cross-examination periods in parliamentary debate. But there are various motions on which the debaters can rise during others' speeches. These points are: Point of Information, Point of Order, Point of Personal Privilege

- Resolutions.

In parliamentary debate, the resolution is usually in the form of a quotation or proverb provided to the debaters shortly before the round (say, about 10 minutes).

The upshot is that the Affirmative team has broad latitude to run almost any case they want. Although theoretically the Affirmative team is supposed to devise its case only after hearing the resolution, most often a team already has an idea what case it wants to give before then.

There is also no requirement that the Affirmative-run a public policy case. All that is required is that the Affirmative team must establish a topic that has two (or more) clashing sides and is debatable. Broadly speaking, there are only three types of cases that the Affirmative team cannot run:

- A tautology.

- A truism.

- A specific-knowledge case.

- Style.

Unlike CEDA, the parliamentary debate has managed to preserve its emphasis on persuasion, logic, and humor, this success is most likely a result of eschewing excessive preparation and evidence. The spontaneity and openness of the structure make parliamentary debate free-wheeling and exciting, whereas other styles of the debate can become boring because every debate round at a tournament revolves around the same topic. The downside is that in the absence of any evidentiary burden, debaters are free to spew utter nonsense, without providing any support for their assertions. All things considered, parliamentary is the most entertaining of any debate-style I've found, and also the most conducive to the development of good rhetorical skills.

- Variations.

Parliamentary debate is actually a world-wide phenomenon, but the rules differ greatly from country to country. In Canada, for instance, the structure is just as in the United States, with the following exceptions: the speeches are all one minute shorter; the two back-to-back opposition (MO and LOR) speeches are combined into one long speech delivered by the LO, and the Member of the Affirmative (MA) is called the Minister of the Crown (MC) instead. In the United Kingdom, there are actually four teams in every debate round two proposition teams and two opposition teams and each person speaks for only five minutes. in some country has a version of parliamentary debate in which there are three teams in each round, or maybe it was two teams of three people each.

2.2 Skills that can be improved through debating

2.2.1 Improve speaking

In a debate, good speaking skills will be the key to success. Because when you speak well, you will express your views, your evidence, and create your own ego, make yourself different from the majority, or oppose the opinion of the opponent. If you good speak, you will easily interact with everyone in the team and have the opportunity to win.

Debate uniquely supports speaking skill development in the following ways:

a) Organization of Thoughts While Speaking

Speaking well is not just about having something to say, but saying it in a structured way. Debates require students to:

- Open with clear introductions (e.g., stating the resolution or position)

- Present main points in logical sequence

- Use signposting ("Firstly… Secondly… In conclusion…") to guide the audience

This structure enhances coherence and improves how ideas are delivered in both academic and everyday conversations.

b) Pronunciation and Intonation

To be understood and persuasive, debaters must pronounce words clearly and use appropriate intonation to signal emphasis and emotional intent. Over time, practice and feedback during debates help students refine:

- Articulation of sounds and syllables

- Stress and intonation patterns that influence meaning

- Pacing, which is essential for clarity and listener engagement

c) Tone and Audience Engagement

Students learn to adapt their tone based on the formality of the setting, the nature of the topic, and the audience's reactions. Effective debaters adjust their speaking style to sound authoritative, passionate, calm, or assertive, depending on what the situation calls for.

d) Reduced Anxiety and Improved Delivery Under Pressure

Because debates often involve speaking in front of peers or judges and answering impromptu rebuttals, students learn to manage speaking anxiety. Over time, they:

- Gain confidence in impromptu speaking

- Speak with greater volume and clarity

- Improve eye contact, pacing, and audience awareness

These are essential qualities not only in classroom settings but also in job interviews, public forums, and professional presentations.

2.2.2 Improve listening

In the successful debate, the learner cannot develop debating skills unless he develops listening skills; he must understand what is said to him. In their pioneer research on listening Ralph G. Nichols and Leonard A Stevens found that "on the

average, we listen at approximately a 25 percent level of efficiency." If we allow our attention to wander while an opponent speaks, our reply will be ineffective and off the mark. Ad if we miss 75 percent of our opponents'arguments, we will surely lose the debate. Debaters quickly learn to listen to their opponents with sharply focused critical attention, recording their arguments precisely on a flow sheet (a specialized note-taking system used by debaters) so that their own responses are to the point adapting the phrasing of their opponents and turning the subtleties and limitations heard to their own advantage. The ability to listen critically is widely recognized as an important attribute of an educated person. Nichols and Steven found that a top executive of a large industrial plant reported "perhaps 80 percent of my work depends on mu listening to someone, or upon someone else listening to me".

Debaters must comprehend complex arguments in real time, identify logical flaws, and prepare appropriate responses—all under pressure. This intensive listening environment promotes deeper cognitive engagement and sharpens auditory processing skills.

a) Active Listening and Comprehension

In debate, students must actively listen to their opponents to understand the core of their arguments. This involves:

- Identifying key claims, supporting evidence, and assumptions

- Recognizing nuance, tone, and emotion in delivery

- Distinguishing between fact and opinion

b) Critical Listening for Rebuttal

Critical listening involves evaluating the strength, relevance, and validity of what is being said. Debaters are trained to:

- Detect logical fallacies (e.g., ad hominem, slippery slope)

- Assess the credibility of evidence presented

- Identify inconsistencies or contradictions

Through this process, students become more analytical in how they listen—not just taking in information but scrutinizing it. This level of analysis supports improved academic reading, participation in discussions, and better critical thinking overall.

c) Listening to Understand vs. Listening to Respond

One of the most valuable outcomes of debate training is shifting from listening to reply toward listening to understand. In formal debates, misrepresenting an opponent's argument leads to weak rebuttals and credibility loss. Therefore, debaters learn to:

- Summarize or paraphrase what was said to ensure accuracy

- Respond to the substance rather than simply reacting emotionally

- Show respect for opposing views while disagreeing intellectually

d) Improved Note-taking and Retention

Since debaters often need to reference multiple points made by the opposition, they become adept at listening and taking notes simultaneously. This strengthens both auditory processing and memory retention, which are valuable in classroom lectures and meetings.

e) Summary of Listening Skill Gains through Debate

Listening Skill	Developed Abilities	Practical Impact
Active Listening	Focused attention, comprehension	Improved classroom participation, teamwork
Critical Listening	Evaluation of logic, evidence, bias	Better argument response, analytical depth

Listening Skill	Developed Abilities	Practical Impact
Empathetic Listening	Understanding without immediate judgment	Improved interpersonal communication
Note-Taking During Speech	Simultaneous processing and recording of key points	Enhanced learning during lectures, seminars, and work

2.2.3 Improve reading

Like listening, a receptive skill, reading also has some relations with debating in terms of developing each other. Normally, a debating lesson begins by text in which participants should find out some information for their next debating activities. It may be information, evidence...this shows that reading supports speaking by providing necessary information. participants must have enough information, then, they can use it in debating production. Therefore, participants should be encouraged to read for not only having more information, knowledge but also improving vocabulary.

Although debate is often associated with speaking and listening, it also significantly enhances reading skills, particularly at the academic level. In preparation for debates, students are required to read, interpret, and evaluate various texts, which sharpens their critical reading, comprehension, and analytical thinking abilities. These reading tasks are often complex and cover multiple perspectives on a single issue, requiring higher-order reading strategies.

a) Purposeful Reading and Information Selection

Unlike casual reading, debate preparation involves purpose-driven reading. Students are tasked with:

- Identifying key arguments, evidence, and counterarguments

- Extracting relevant facts from large bodies of text

- Distinguishing between primary and secondary sources

This helps students develop skimming and scanning techniques to locate specific information efficiently, an essential skill for academic research and exams.

b) Critical Reading and Evaluation of Sources

Debate pushes students to go beyond surface-level understanding. They must evaluate the credibility, bias, and reliability of the texts they use. This encourages:

- Awareness of author intent, tone, and perspective

- Comparison of opposing viewpoints

- Recognition of logical inconsistencies, fallacies, or unsupported claims

As a result, students develop skills essential for writing literature reviews, evaluating scholarly articles, and engaging in evidence-based writing.

c) Vocabulary Development and Reading Comprehension

Debate exposes students to texts with diverse and sometimes technical vocabulary. To argue effectively, students must understand and use subject-specific terminology, which strengthens their:

- Reading comprehension in unfamiliar academic domains

- Retention of complex vocabulary through repeated use

- Contextual guessing skills for unknown terms

d) Increased Motivation to Read

Because debate topics often involve real-world, controversial, or relevant issues (e.g., climate change, censorship, AI ethics), students are more motivated to read deeply and widely. This intrinsic motivation promotes:

- Greater engagement with academic reading
- Willingness to explore opposing viewpoints
- Lifelong learning habits

e) Summary of Reading Skills Developed Through Debate

Reading Skill	Skills Developed	Academic/Practical Benefit
Purposeful Reading	Skimming, scanning, extracting key points	Efficient study and research abilities
Critical Reading	Evaluating bias, logic, and evidence	Stronger academic argumentation
Vocabulary and Comprehension	Understanding and applying advanced terminology	Improved academic and professional reading
Motivation to Read	Interest-driven reading habits	Greater engagement in lifelong academic learning

2.2.4 Improve writing

The relationship between debating and writing, firstly, will look at factors affecting the choice between debating or writing and how these factors affect the style and language used. The factors include being face-to-face, saving face, permanence, interactivity in for amativeness, and context-dependence in which both speaking and writing can be located, rather than occurring as polar opposites. A spoken and written on the same topic will different in language use relating to grammar, lexis, and style. Participation in debates not only improves oral communication but also significantly enhances academic writing in several key areas.

a) Strengthening Argumentation Skills

Debating trains students to build compelling, well-supported arguments—an essential feature of strong academic writing. In a debate, participants must take a

clear stance and support it with logic and evidence. This mirrors the thesis-driven approach in essays, where students must assert a position and defend it coherently. Through debating, students practice how to frame claims, develop reasoning, and present counterarguments, making their written arguments more convincing and refined.

b) Enhancing Logical Structure and Organization

Every debate follows a structured format: an introduction, a series of main points, counterarguments, and a conclusion. This format teaches students to organize their ideas systematically, a skill directly transferable to essay writing. Writers often struggle with maintaining logical flow in their paragraphs and sections. Debating helps students internalize a logical order of presentation, resulting in more coherent and readable written work.

c) Improving Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills

Debate preparation requires students to consider multiple perspectives, anticipate opposing arguments, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each. This analytical mindset enhances academic writing by encouraging depth of thought and complexity in argumentation. Instead of presenting one-sided views, students who engage in debates learn to address counterpoints thoughtfully, improving the sophistication and credibility of their writing.

d) Developing Evidence-Based Reasoning

In debates, students must support their claims with factual evidence, research, and real-world examples. This emphasis on evidence trains students to seek out credible sources and integrate them effectively into their reasoning—a key component of academic writing. They also learn how to cite evidence appropriately and interpret it critically, reducing the reliance on unsupported opinions in their written work.

e) Promoting Clarity, Conciseness, and Persuasiveness

Because debates are time-constrained, students learn to express complex ideas in clear and concise language. This habit carries over into writing, where clarity and brevity are highly valued. Instead of wordy or vague statements, student writers become more direct and impactful in their communication. Additionally, the persuasive nature of debating helps them write in a more compelling and reader-oriented way.

f) Enhancing Audience Awareness and Tone

Debaters are trained to engage their audience and tailor their language to different contexts. In writing, this translates to a heightened awareness of tone, purpose, and audience expectations. Students become better at adjusting their writing style based on the discipline, assignment type, and reader's needs—an important academic and professional skill.

2.2.5 Improvement in Public Communication and Crowd Engagement

Unlike the other skills you can learn from school or self-study this is an experience that can only be done through practical situation like when an english learner trying to speak infront of a crowd or even infront of all of their classmates it is normal to feel awkward and nervous. When this happens the the speaker's focus tends to be distrracted because everyone is looking and listening to them making them unable to mutter a fluent sentence even though they can do great during normal class therefore by implementing debate sessions this helps the students to adapt and can be more confident when communicating infront of a large number of people. Debate provides a dynamic training ground for developing these capabilities through repeated exposure, structured delivery, and real-time feedback.

a) Managing Public Speaking Anxiety

Fear of public speaking, known as glossophobia, is common among university students. Debate helps reduce this anxiety through repeated exposure to speaking

situations, beginning in small groups and expanding to larger audiences. As students become familiar with the format and expectations of public discourse, they learn techniques to manage anxiety, such as:

- Deep breathing and pacing
- Practicing opening statements to build momentum
- Visualization and positive mental framing

b) Enhancing Vocal Presence and Projection

To communicate effectively in front of a crowd, students must learn how to project their voice so that it is audible and engaging. Debate encourages proper voice control by emphasizing:

- Volume (without shouting)
- Pacing and pause for emphasis
- Clear enunciation and tone modulation

c) Building Charisma and confidence

A key part of public communication is the ability to connect with the audience, making them feel involved and receptive. Debate fosters this by requiring:

- Eye contact with multiple audience members
- Natural body language and facial expressions
- Adjusting tone and examples based on audience reactions

d) Structuring Ideas for Public Delivery

Effective public communication depends on organizing ideas in a way that listeners can follow. Debate teaches students to:

- Begin with a strong introduction and thesis statement
- Present points in a logical, easy-to-follow sequence
- Use repetition and summaries to reinforce key ideas

f) Real-World Application in Academic and Career Contexts

Debate training directly benefits students in:

- Oral presentations during university coursework

- Research conferences and public defenses

- Professional settings, such as pitches, briefings, and negotiations

2.3 Factors influencing debating

There are many factors that have influenced students' debating skills. Various researchers have investigated and found a number of factors that influenced student debating skills such as the efforts of students (Siegfried & Fels, 1979), parents' education, self-motivation, the ages of the students, learning preferences (Aripin et al., 2003). The following are 3 basic factors that affect debating skills:

2.3.1 Learning environmental

• Teacher Quality

Agyeman (1993) as cited in Etsev (2005, p. 2) has stated that a teacher

who does not have both academic and professional teaching qualifications would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of her subjects. He further stated that a teacher who is academically and professionally qualified, but works under an unfavorable working environment would be less dedicated to his work and could thus be less productive than a teacher who is unqualified but works under a favorable environment.

• Class Size

Kraft (1994, p. 98) in his study of the ideal class size and its effects on effective teaching and learning in Ghana concluded that class sizes above 40 have negative effects on students' debating skills growth. Asiedu-Akrofi (1978, p. 163) has indicated that good teaching is generally best done in classes with smaller numbers to individual attention.

• School Facilities

Chan (1996) conducted a study on the impact of the physical environment on students' success. This study classified 165 schools into one of three categories: modern learning, obsolete learning, or half modern learning environment. As one might expect, Chan found student achievements to be highest in modern learning environments and lowest in the obsolete learning environments. Chan concluded that technology and adaptabilities of modern environments better-equipped students for more concentrate.

2.3.2 Basic knowledge

• Students' Basic Skills

According to Harvey-Smith (2011, p. 8), there are some basic skills that must be mastered by students who will join the class debates. The basic skills can be summarized as SALSA (Speaking, Arguing, Listening, Synthesizing, and Arranging). He has also stated that:

"Speaking means talking loudly, fluently and without hesitation. Arguing means condensing what you have to say into a persuasive point(s). Listening means hearing and understanding the points made by others. Synthesizing means matching the points you and the others have made. Arranging means structuring your points into a persuasive speech."

Harvey-Smith (ibid) also gave some suggestions for beginning debaters. The suggestions are willing to speak in front of a class, the ability to express your opinion toward one problem by speaking, arguing practice. In addition to this, the knowledge of the topic and the rhetorical pattern of the debate are important for students to show their ability to defend their idea and at the same time to contradict the opponents' argument in a structured way (Samad, 2016; Samad & Fitriani, 2016; Samad & Adnan, 2016; Samad, 2013).

• Vocabulary ability

An obvious factor that makes a big influence on comprehension is the gap between the listener's vocabulary knowledge and the vocabulary of the message.

For example, the debate is talking about a completely different topic or belonged to another special major, and the listener does not have any knowledge about that subject or just know a little bit, the result surely is that he could not understand what are talking about or luckily partly understand of that one. Vocabularies in the debate education are definitely different from the ones of the debate of an economy and the listener does not have the block of specialized words of what he is listening to will get in trouble with the critic process.

• Phonology and grammar

According to a research of Goh (2000), 40 language students are asked to talk about the processes they used to act to the English speaking, as well as the problems they encountered. From the result of research, she found that when language students do not know how to pronounce a word, they will pronounce those words according to their native pronunciations. The pronunciation and grammar capability of the listeners decide the speed of evaluating and reacting to the information they get. With a sentence with length and complex grammar structure, the listener having low grammar ability will get in trouble with analyzing and delivering a suitable answer. And a clear thing is that if you do not pronounce a word in an exact way, you will not be able to hear what word being talked about.

• Listening ability

Debating skills cannot be developed unless we develop listening skills (Doff, 1998). Students must understand what is said to them to have a successful debate. Shumin (1997) shares the ideas of Doff (1998) by stating that when one person speaks, the other responds through attending by means of the listening process. In fact, every speaker plays the role of both a listener and a speaker. Therefore, one is certainly unable to respond if he/she cannot understand what is said.

• Students' Attitude

Kara (2009) as cited in Alzwari (2012, p. 121) has stated that positive attitudes lead to the exhibition of positive behaviors toward courses of study, with participants absorbing themselves in courses and striving to learn more. Shams (2008) conducted a study attempting to investigate students' attitudes, motivation and anxiety towards the learning of English. The findings underlined that the students had affirmative attitudes and high enthusiasm for English. This also highlighted that most Factors that Affect Students' Success in English Debates (Zulfahmi) 141 of them showed positive attitudes towards the English language and its learning which, in turn, emphasized the value of English language efficiency in their daily life.

• Teamwork skills

Fisher, Hunter and Macrosson (1997), Johnson and Johnson (1995, 1999), Parker (1990) and Harris and Harris (1996) as cited in Luca and Tarricone (2002, p. 641) have said that teamwork relies upon individuals working together in a cooperative environment to achieve common team goals through sharing knowledge and skills. The literature consistently highlights that one of the essential elements of a team is its focus toward a common goal and a clear purpose. so teamwork skills are also is an important factor influencing for debating skills.

• Background knowledge of the topic, content, and culture

Listeners' background knowledge about a passage makes a big impact on the extent of their ability to understand what has been said. For example, a person is in a debate talking about a special topic, if he doesn't have the basic knowledge about that topic, he will not be able to understand all of the contents and meanings that the speaker wants to deliver. Another example, you debate with a person come from another country and of course, that person has a habit of using local words, not popular words, you will be surely in trouble with understanding what that person is talking about to critic.

CHAPTER 3: ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE DEBATING SKILLS FOR SECOND YEAR ENGLISH MAJOR AT HPU.

3.1 English teaching and learning condition at HPU.

3.1.1 The teaching staff

The teaching staff of Haiphong Management and Technology University in general and the Foreign Language Department in particular have high professional level and high sense of responsibility. All the lectures of Foreign Language Department are not only well- qualified, responsible but also very enthusiastic. Furthermore, they have modern professional teaching style, they understand the students and they are very friendly. Talking to the students and sharing their experience help both teachers and students understand one another deeply and enhance the quality of the lectures. One more considerable point is attending of foreign lectures in English classes. Students have chance to practice with the native speakers so that they can speak English well if they know how to take those opportunities.

3.1.2 The student

Some students from 2nd year of the English Department at HPU are selected for this study. Some of the evidence is unfortunately showing that many of the students who have just finished high schools are really passive in their learning process. They appear to be used to listening to the lectures and writing down what the teachers read aloud or copying what is written on the board. Particularly, for English majors a big number of them are really reluctant in their learning English debating proven by the fact that they only focus on trying to understand words and grammar structures in the given textbook. Consequently, a number of students cannot debate English fluently. Therefore, a question raised here is what we would do now to inspire in students the interests and motivation to improve their English

debating learning. the Following are the advantages and disadvantages of the second-year English majors at HPU:

- Advantages:

- Students can receive constant help and support of the school and the lecturers in Foreign Language Department.
- They have chance to study in a modern studying environment which have been equipped with modern facilities.
- They can practice directly with the foreigners in class.

- Disadvantages:

- The students background knowledge is not uneven.
- A big number of students are lisp.
- Students focus too much on grammar and forget the importance of communication skill.
- Some of them are so shy and lack of confidence and they try to avoid debating in front of the class.

3.2 Learning and teaching English debating for the second year English major students at HPU

The students' classrooms have been equipped with projectors, camera, air - conditioners, computers with an internet connection and wireless internet connection. The teachers often use projectors to make English lessons more interesting and effective. Besides, the school library is an "electronic library system", which has been equipped with many modern high-speed computers, over 7000 books, more than 16000 electronic documents Elib and electronic documents ProQuest. This is really a big advantage for students learning. In addition, there are many activities outside classrooms held by teachers and students for fostering English debating learning and encouraging students to express their abilities. These useful activities often attract students to participate in such as: e.g: English Olympic, Debating Contest, Halloween's Day, Christmas's

Day,....in which students can both play and exchange knowledge in English so they can learn more. Furthermore, students have many opportunities to talk and study with foreigners who are teachers from different countries like England, Australia,... This is a good chance for them to improve their English debating skill. It can be said that the learning conditions at HPU are good enough and convenient for students to study English effectively.

There are some copies of the questionnaire delivered to the learners. The data are analyzed in this part of the study in the below tables and charts which show the responses for the questions in the questionnaires. Besides, the first question the questionnaires bring a result that according to students' opinion, debating skill is very difficult.
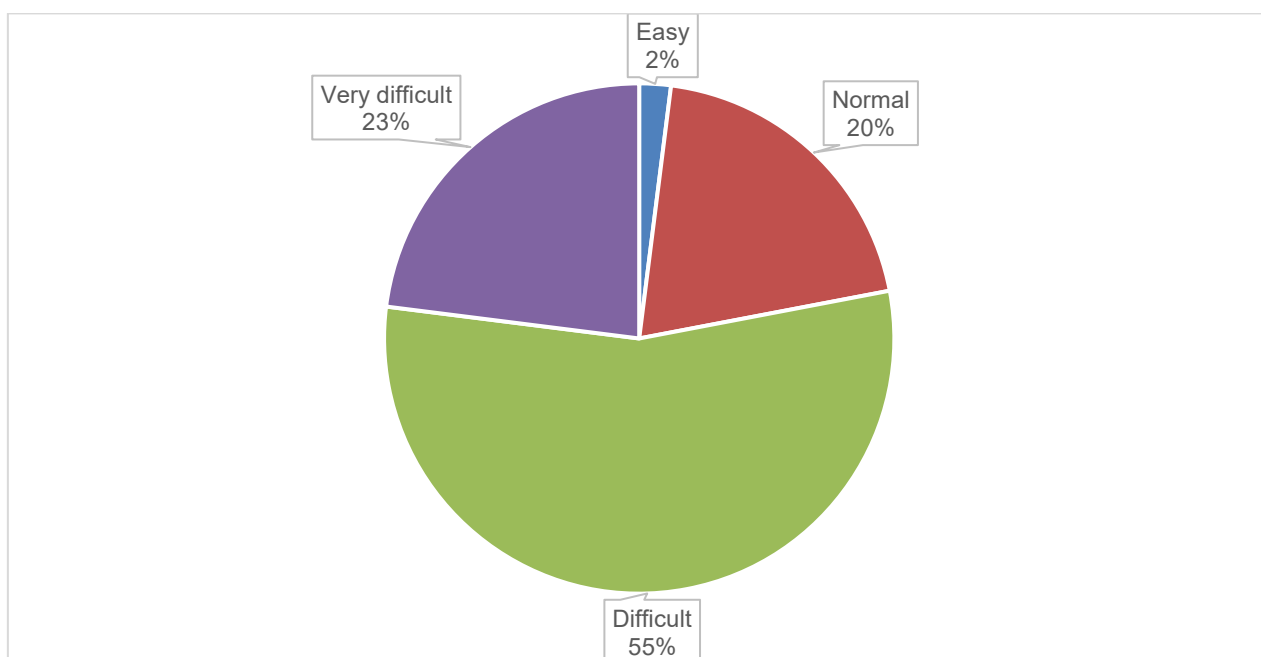
Chart 1: students' assessment of learning debating skills

It can be seen obviously in the chart that the debating is a difficult skill to learn. 55% of the learners suppose that debating is difficult. For the students, debating English and learning this skill is really a problem. Moreover, the number of learners who agree that learning the debating skill is very difficult took 23%. It is the same as the number of the learners who find learning debating normal (20%) or easy (2%). In fact, as what can be seen by the observation, the learners who

confirm that it is easy to learn listening skills are the best students and students in urban have condition of learning English in English Centers or international schools. In short, the survey proved the assumption about the difficulty of debating to English and learning it.

Whether these difficulties can make the students uninterested in it or not? This matter was clarified by the next chart which showed the learners' interest in learning the debating skill at class.
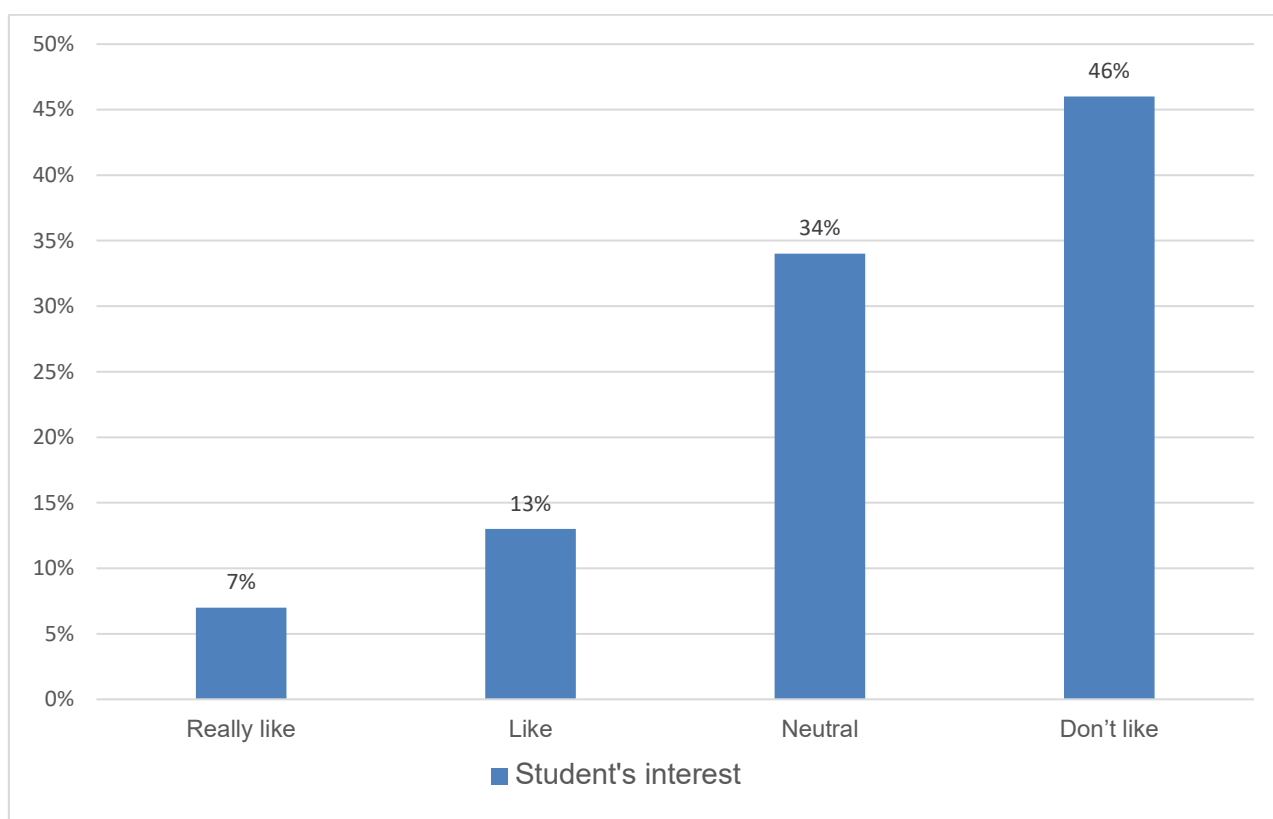

Chart 2. The students' interest in improving communication through debating

The column chart shows a surprising result which is similar to the author's subjective assumption. Normally, the difficulties bore the students. Due to difficulties of learning the debating skill, only 7% of the learners like this idea to use debate as a way to improve communication skill very much and 13% of them like it. Debating is as boring as many people thought. As it can be seen, in the English class, debating is not interesting. 46% dislikes it. 34% of the learners do not mind to be a part of this. For them, learning through debating might be neither

interesting nor boring or it depends on each lesson. In conclusion, debating English is not a favorite subject of the students and it is difficult for students.

3.2.1 The importance of debates in classes.

To research more clearly the opinion of students in English major at Haiphong Management and Technology, the third question in the questionnaire is designed to find out their assessment on the importance of debating.
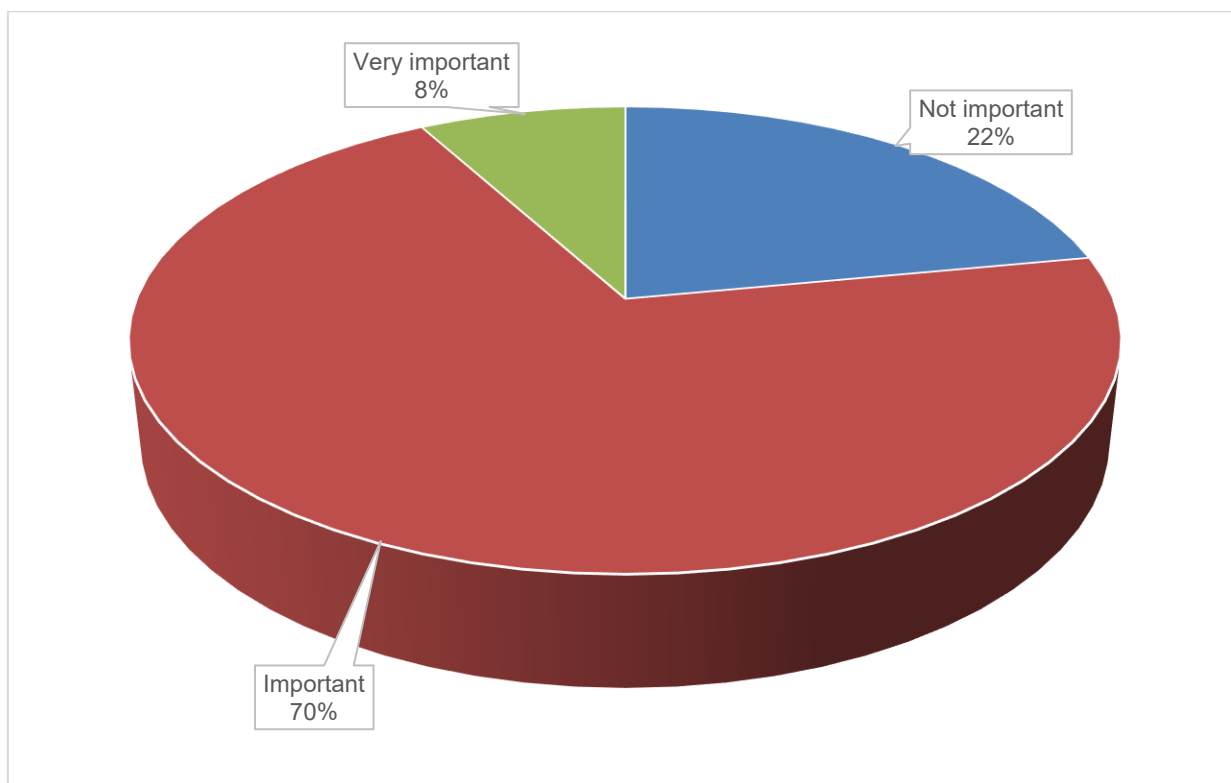

Chart 3. Students' attitudes towards the importance of English debating

It can be seen clearly from the chart 3, most of the students agree that learning debating skill is important as well as important is 70%. Meanwhile, there are only 8% of them reckon that it is not important. This chart shows that most of the English major students claim that English debating has an important role in learning English with a lot of fields in life. In conclusion, debating skill is one of the most necessary skills to communicate in the real life. In learning English, it is more and more important to learn this skill.

Improves Critical Thinking: Debating requires students to evaluate arguments, analyze evidence, and consider multiple viewpoints. This process strengthens

logical reasoning and encourages intellectual curiosity. Students develop the habit of approaching problems analytically, weighing pros and cons, and anticipating counterarguments—skills that extend beyond academics into real-life decision-making.

Enhances Communication Skills: Through repeated practice, students improve their public speaking, articulation, and ability to construct coherent, persuasive arguments. They also learn to listen actively and respond thoughtfully. Debate exercises provide authentic contexts in which students practice tone modulation, eye contact, pacing, and effective use of rhetorical devices.

Boosts Confidence: The act of speaking in front of others and defending one's views can significantly boost students' self-esteem and confidence, which often translates to better performance in other academic and social settings. Even introverted students, when given adequate support, often flourish in debate settings, discovering a voice they hadn't used before.

Promotes Active Learning: Debates shift the focus from passive reception of information to active engagement. Students research, collaborate, and participate in meaningful discourse, which deepens their understanding of subject matter. By preparing arguments, students take ownership of their learning and become more invested in the material.

Encourages Respect for Diverse Opinions: Engaging with peers on controversial or complex issues helps students appreciate different perspectives and develop respect for others, fostering a more inclusive classroom environment. It teaches that disagreement can be respectful and constructive rather than hostile or divisive.

Prepares for Real-World Challenges: Debates simulate real-life situations where clear thinking, quick responses, and persuasive communication are essential. Whether in future careers, community leadership, or civic life, these

skills are invaluable. Students also gain practice in working under pressure, a common real-world requirement.

Supports Language Development: In language classes, especially English as a second language (ESL) environments, debates improve vocabulary, fluency, and grammar through structured speaking opportunities. Debates push students to think in the target language in real time, enhancing fluency and linguistic agility.

Fosters Research Skills: Preparing for debates requires students to gather and evaluate information from various sources, honing their research literacy and information discernment. In a digital age rife with misinformation, this critical skill helps students distinguish credible sources from unreliable ones.

Encourages Ethical Reasoning: Many debate topics involve moral or ethical dimensions, such as animal testing, climate change responsibility, or the regulation of artificial intelligence. Debating these topics teaches students to think beyond facts and figures, considering human values, equity, and consequences.

Builds Collaboration and Leadership: Debate preparation often happens in teams, requiring students to delegate responsibilities, negotiate roles, and support one another. These dynamics help develop leadership and interpersonal communication skills, including empathy and conflict resolution.

3.2.2 Challenges that can occur when using debates as a method to improve communication skill.

One of the most prevalent challenges is the anxiety associated with public speaking. Many students and professionals experience gloss phobia, which can deter participation and lead to underperformance. Without adequate support, such as gradual exposure or public speaking workshops, this fear may overshadow the learning benefits of debating.

In group debates, there is a risk of dominant individuals overshadowing quieter participants. This imbalance can skew learning outcomes and discourage engagement from less assertive individuals. Implementing structured speaking

turns, peer assessments, and rotating roles can mitigate this issue and promote equitable participation.

Some critics argue that the skills acquired in debate may not always transfer to real-world communication. This issue can be addressed by combining debate with reflective practices and real-life application scenarios, such as role-plays or community discussions.

To have more details about the students' real situation in learning English debating skill, the fourth question of the questionnaire is designed. The result is shown on the chart below.
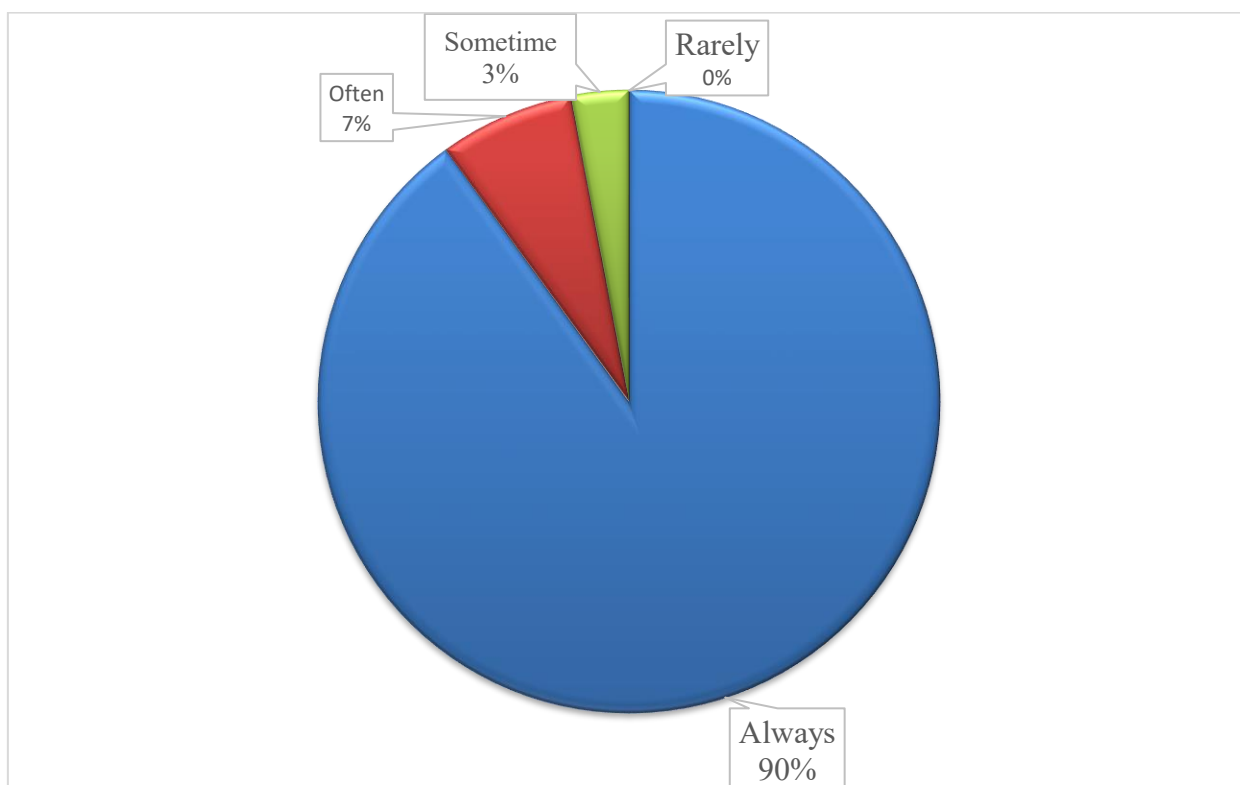
Chart 4. The frequency of students having problems in learning English debating skills

Statistics provide in Chart 4 shows the frequency of students' having problem when learning debating skill. According to the collected data, 7% students who are very often and 90% of them always have trouble when debating; in addition, 3% sometimes make this and 0% rarely. To sum up, students always have problems in debating English and this is a thing that students need repairing.

The problems that are commonly be seen when students are having debates wether they are in class or even when they are in their daily life are:

- **Overemphasis on Winning**: In a debate, the primary goal is often to "win" the argument. This competitive aspect can overshadow the true purpose of communication—mutual understanding and the exchange of ideas. When participants are focused solely on defeating their opponents, they may use aggressive tactics or ignore valid points, which can lead to poor listening habits, a lack of empathy, and an unwillingness to genuinely engage with differing viewpoints.

- **Emotional Intensity**: Debates, especially on controversial or personal topics, can become emotionally charged. This intensity can result in emotional outbursts, personal attacks, or defensive reactions. Rather than practicing calm, composed communication, participants may become combative or shut down, hindering their ability to practice patience, self-regulation, and respectful disagreement.

- **Unequal Participation**: In group debates, dominant speakers may take over the conversation while more introverted or less confident participants struggle to find their voice. This imbalance limits opportunities for all members to practice communication equally and can discourage quieter individuals from engaging, ultimately stalling their skill development.

- **Reinforcement of Bad Habits**: Without guidance or feedback, participants might develop unproductive habits during debates, such as interrupting others, relying on rhetorical tricks, or using sarcasm and ridicule. These habits can be mistaken for strong debating skills but actually undermine respectful, effective communication.

3.2.3 Causes of difficulties in English debating.

❖ The difficulties are often encountered by students when English-debating.

To find the techniques to improve debating skill for students in Haiphong Management and Technology University, the researcher wants to find out the reasons which make you difficult to learn English debating. The fifth question in the questionnaires is designed for researching this thing. Some factors are often be encountered:

• Context
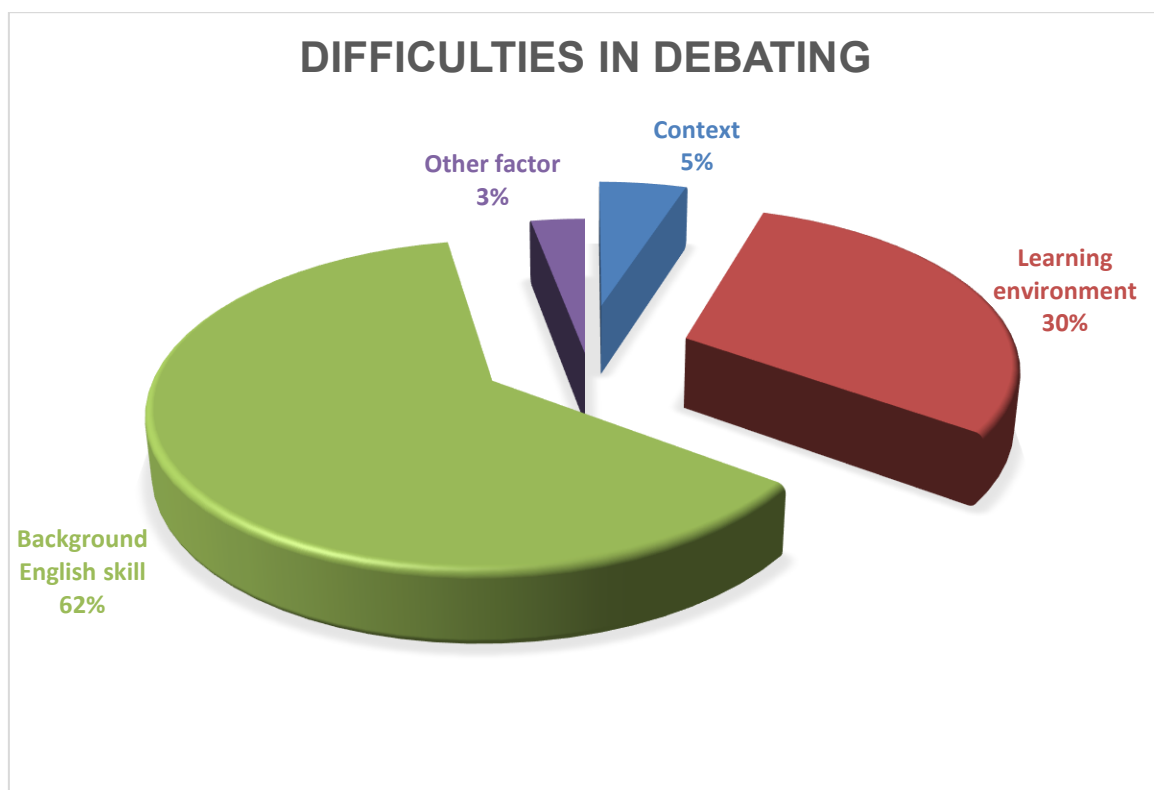
• Learning environment

• Background English skills

DIFFICULTIES IN DEBATING

Chart 5. Difficulties in students' debating

The chart shows that the context is not a big problem. Only 5% of the learners think it made them difficult to debate. There is 30% chose the environment. The most number of the students (62%) find that the main reason for the difficulties in debating is the bad basic skills in English. Except those factors, 3% of the learners also point some other factors affecting their debating are teaching methods, and their background knowledge. In short, most of students agree that

the difficult of students often have in English debating skills is that they don't have much time to practice.

3.2.4 The factors affecting the interest in English debating.

To find out the factors have influence on the interested in English debating, the factors that the questionnaire has mentioned about it. Four factors that influence in debate, students give their opinion in this thing.

• Interesting topics
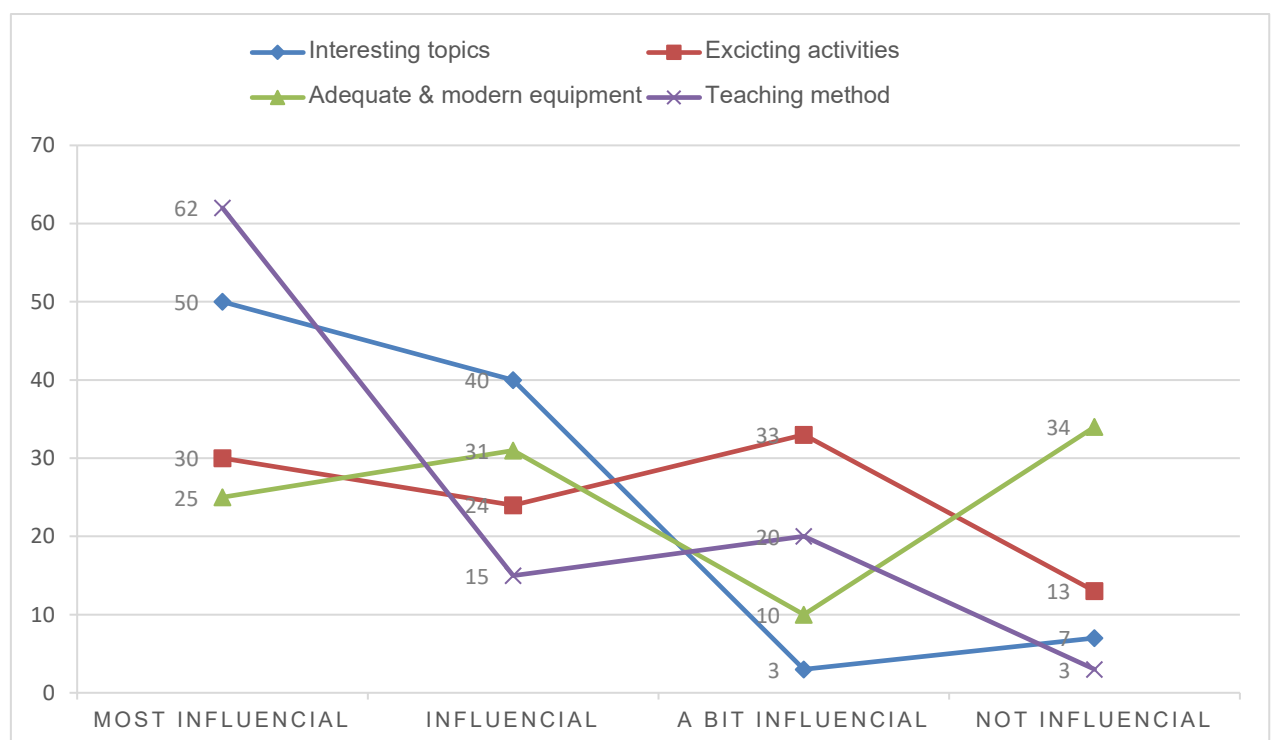
• Exciting activities

• Adequate and modern equipment

• Good teaching methods

Chart 6. Factors motivating students' to debate

It is easy to see from the above chart that the most influential factor to the students motivation is the good teaching methods. 62% of the students affirm that. 15% of them think they are influential. So teaching method is the first element that all the teachers should notice in teaching any skills, not only for the debating. The next factor that many students find interested is the debating topics. 50% of the learners

define the exciting topics motivate them a lot to learn better. Furthermore, 40% suppose that they are influential. A small number (7%) of the students think topics do not effect. In the meanwhile, 30% of the students rank the activities the most influential factor, and 24% agree they are influential. However, 33% insist that activities had a bit influence. Also, 13% say the activities have no effects their debating. The least influential factor of four is the equipment. Adequate and modern equipment are assessed that it does not have any effect on the learners' learning to debate by 34% of the learners. It is a fact that they do not need any modern equipment just to debate.

Language Proficiency: Students with higher levels of English proficiency often feel more comfortable participating in debates. Those who struggle with grammar, vocabulary, or fluency may experience anxiety or avoid participation, seeing debate as intimidating rather than enjoyable. Supportive scaffolding, vocabulary lists, and simplified language activities can bridge this gap.

Topic Relevance: The extent to which debate topics resonate with students' interests and experiences significantly impacts their engagement. Topics that are timely, relatable, or reflect students' personal passions (e.g., video games, social media, school policies) generate more enthusiasm. Giving students the opportunity to propose or vote on topics increases their investment.

Teaching Style and Facilitation: Teachers who use inclusive, encouraging, and student-centered strategies tend to foster greater interest. Structured activities, clear instructions, and constructive feedback enhance participation and reduce confusion. An enthusiastic and flexible teacher can model the value and enjoyment of debating.

Peer Dynamics and Group Relationships: The social atmosphere of the class influences willingness to engage. Positive peer relationships encourage risk-taking and collaboration, while cliques or bullying can suppress student voices. Establishing respectful norms and rotating groupings promotes equity.

Availability of Support Resources: Access to debate guidelines, vocabulary lists, templates, and practice materials can make the activity feel more accessible. Students are more likely to engage when they feel adequately prepared. Providing exemplars and rehearsal opportunities can build preparedness and reduce anxiety.

Technological Integration: The use of digital platforms and multimedia tools can increase interest, especially among tech-savvy students. Formats like video debates, online forums, or interactive apps may appeal to students who prefer nontraditional methods. Gamified debate formats or hybrid digital-oral assessments can further broaden engagement.

Assessment Pressure: If debates are heavily graded or tied to high-stakes evaluation, students may feel pressure rather than curiosity. Balancing assessment with formative, low-stakes practice sessions can reduce stress and sustain long-term interest. Providing choices in format and delivery also supports diverse learner needs.

3.2.5 Activities for improving English debate at HPU

3.2.5.1 The activities students like most in debating English class.

The next question in the questionnaire for students is about the activities students like most in debating English class. There are some activities frequently occurring in debating English class with types of exercises:

- Organize small scale debates
- Role-play
- Videogames
- Answering the comprehension questions

Assessment	Organize small scale debates	Role-play	Videogames	Answering the comprehension questions
Most favorite	29%	19%	40%	18%
Favorite	27%	37%	21%	11%
Normal	25%	35%	30%	22%
Uninterested	19%	9%	9%	49%

From the table, it can be seen that the most favorite debating activities were about videogames (40%) and organize small scale debates (29%). Most students (49%) feel uninterested in answering the comprehension questions. Besides, only 18% of the learners found answering comprehension questions are the most favorite activity. And only 11% of them like answering the comprehension questions. Meanwhile, role-play is supposed a normal activity. 35% of the learners think it normal and 37% of them liked it. Then, debating activities affect the students' interest in learning this skill a lot. According to the collected information of the interview, when asked "What kinds of activities in class do you like most?". Two students of them like playing games which relate to topic, and choose the correct answer. The other student share: "I am interested in playing games and role-play. It is a useful way to improve confidence". In conclusion, the activities in debating English class play an important in learning and teaching English. It will bring students and teachers much interest.

Popular Student Activities in English Debate Classes In addition to recognizing the challenges of debate-based learning, it's also essential to consider the elements that students find most engaging and enjoyable. Identifying popular activities can help instructors design more appealing and effective debate experiences. Based

on feedback from students and educators, the following activities consistently rank among the most favored in English debate classes:

Impromptu Debates: Many students enjoy the spontaneity and challenge of impromptu debates, where they must quickly organize their thoughts and present arguments with minimal preparation. This format encourages creativity, quick thinking, and confidence. Teachers often use everyday topics such as "Should homework be banned?" or "Is social media harmful to teenagers?" to keep the atmosphere light yet intellectually stimulating.

Role-Reversal Debates: In this activity, students are assigned to argue against their own beliefs or take on personas (e.g., historical figures, fictional characters). This fosters empathy, critical analysis, and a deeper understanding of multiple perspectives. For instance, a student may argue from the perspective of a climate change skeptic, which encourages them to understand the logic behind opposing views before forming rebuttals.

Team Debates: Collaborative team debates allow students to work together, plan strategies, and distribute speaking roles. This activity promotes teamwork and reduces individual pressure while fostering mutual support. Students often report that preparing with peers reduces anxiety and increases the quality of their performance.

Themed Debates: Debates centered around popular culture, current events, or student-chosen topics tend to generate high engagement. Allowing students to vote on topics ensures relevance and personal investment in the debate. Examples include debates on the influence of TikTok on education or the ethics of AI.

Video Game Debates: Debates about video games—whether on their educational value, impact on behavior, gender representation, or the debate over violent content—are particularly popular among students. These topics resonate with their personal interests and allow them to engage deeply with issues they are passionate about. For example, students may debate topics like "Do video games

improve cognitive skills?" or "Should violent video games be banned for minors?" These debates often draw high participation, foster emotional investment, and create opportunities for critical engagement with media literacy and ethical reasoning. Facilitating debates between different classes, grade levels, or even schools provides a sense of real-world engagement. It fosters a competitive yet collaborative spirit and allows students to see how their skills apply beyond their immediate classroom environment.

Below is an example debating lesson in class:

- Objectives: Students can learn the way to express their opinions of for or against something. Specially, it is the way to encourage students" critical thinking with logical evidences to convince the listeners.
- Procedures:
- Teacher gives a situation and divides class into small group then let each draw lots to choose which group is for or against.
- Teacher lets students discuss it to find as many evidences as possible to persuade others.
- After finishing, teacher calls the representative of each group to start the debate. The members of group listen and have questions for other group.
- Example given: Unit 3: A trip to the countryside
- Teacher shows the situation: Someone says that living in the countryside is more comfortable than in the big city. Do you agree or not? Why?
- Each group discusses to find evidences to protect their opinions
- Teacher can give students some clues for debate:
- ➤ Living environment
- ➤ Means of transport
- ➤ Job opportunity
- ➤ Entertainment
- ➤ People

o After students finish their debate, teacher gives comments and summarizes the main ideas.

3.2.5.2 The activities students should do before and while debating in class.

In the debating class, how they improve their communication skill. There are some activities that students should do:

- Before debating, students should be pre-taught some related new words, at the same time, they have to predict the content of the topic by the activities that the teacher gives.
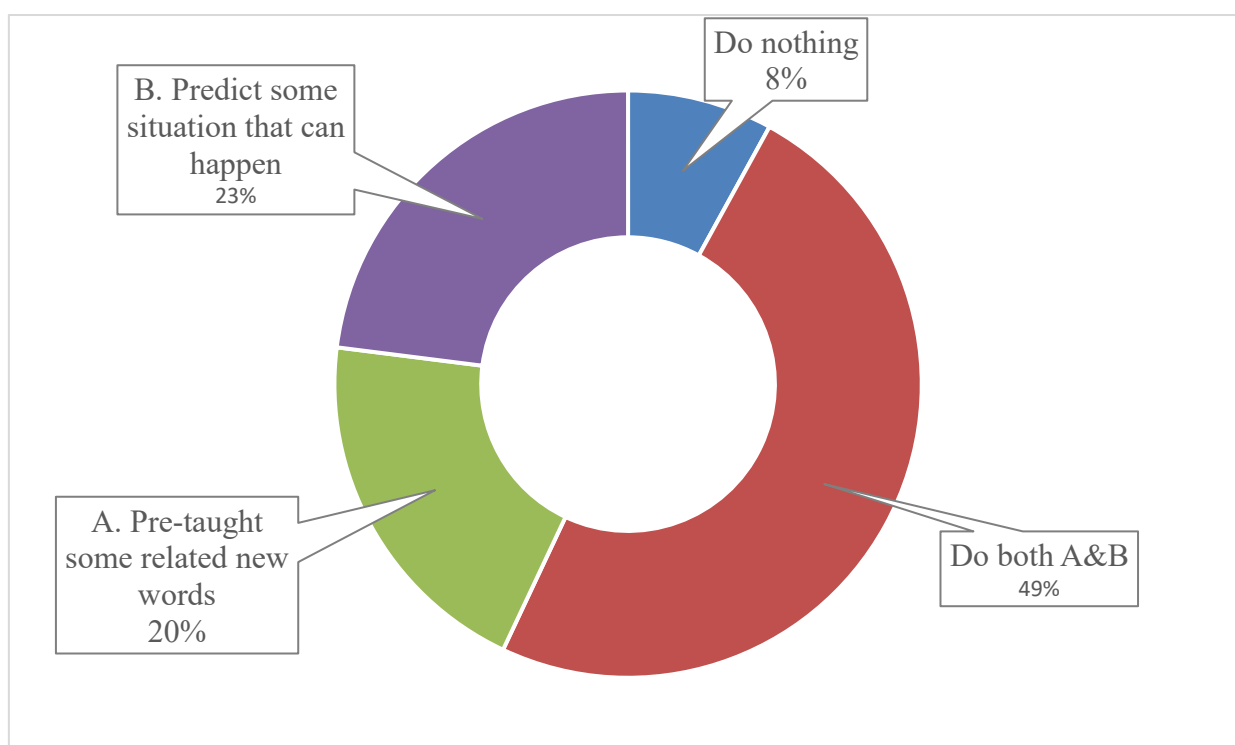- After debating, students should make a conclusion and focus on the fix mistakes, which was given by the teacher.

Chart 7: What student's do before debating

The chart shows that most students (49%) in debating classes are taught the new words relating to the topic and they often predict the contents of the situation base on the activities given by the teacher. But some of them only learn the new words (20%) and the other learners (23%) guess the situation before they start debating.

Just have 8% students do not do anything. In conclusion, students should prepare things that relate to the topic before debating.

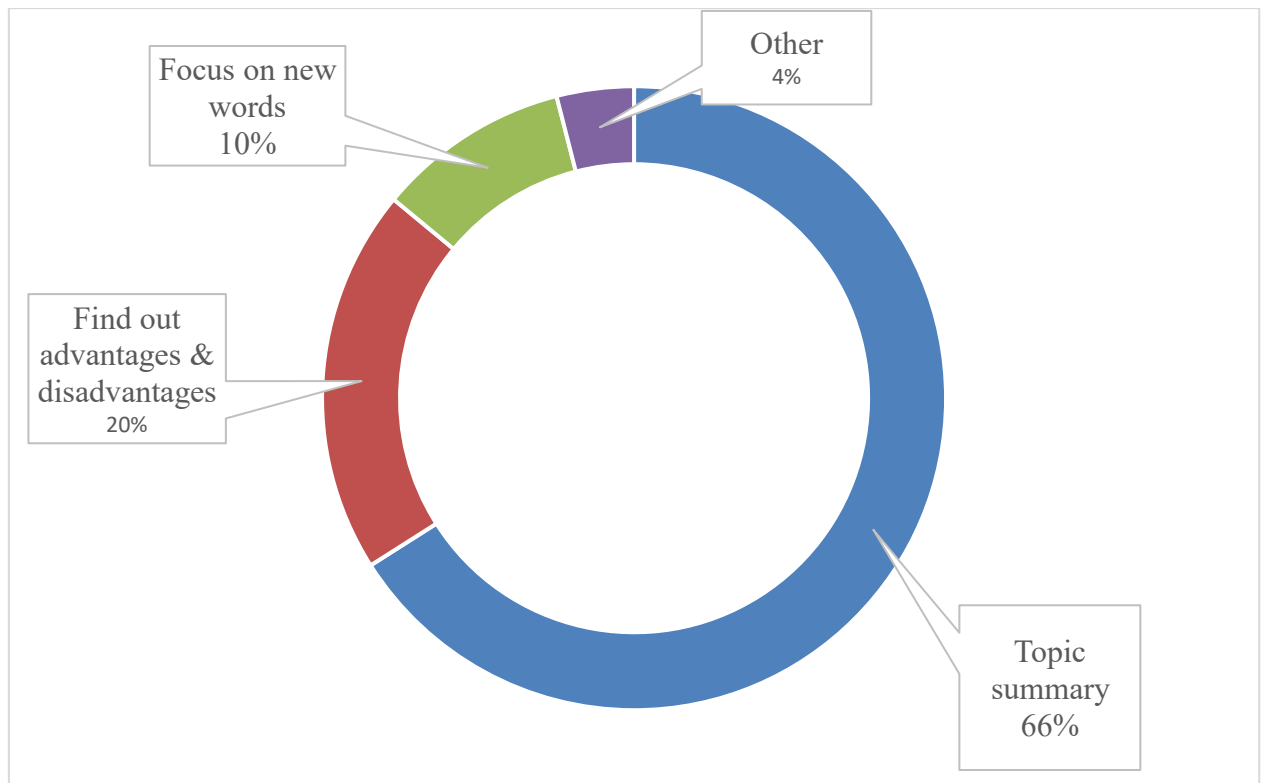So after debating, what students should do? The next chart will show this question:

Chart 8: What student's do after a debate

The chart shows that the majority of the learners (66%) know to summarize the topics after debating. It is a positive activity which helps students a lot in training the debating skill both in the English class as well as other real life situations. 10% of them often try to learn the new words after finishing debating. The other 20% of them only find out advantages and disadvantages. These results reflect the method of teaching and learning the debating skill. In conclusion, English debating skill is a difficult subject and what students do before and after debating is important.

But there are also other suggestions that can are essential for consolidating learning, reinforcing communication skills, and fostering personal growth:

Reflective Journals: Students should write about their experience, noting what they learned, what went well, and what challenges they encountered. This reflection promotes self-awareness and helps identify areas for improvement.

Group Debriefing Sessions: Holding a class discussion after the debate allows participants to share insights, discuss different perspectives, and clarify misunderstandings. It helps students process the experience collectively and learn from each other.

Teacher Feedback: Teachers should provide personalized, formative feedback focusing on strengths, areas for growth, and specific language or reasoning improvements. This feedback guides students in their future performance.

Rebuttal Refinement: Students should revisit their arguments and rebuttals to strengthen their reasoning. This could involve rewriting or scripting more effective responses based on what they learned.

Presentation Skills Practice: Based on feedback, students can practice specific elements of their public speaking—such as voice modulation, pacing, or eye contact—to further polish their delivery.

3.3 Discussion

Generally, it is very clear from above the data analysis that students have plenty of difficulties in debating. Most of the students in university say that English debating is difficult (55% of students) and very difficult (23% of students).

According to the students in HP, there are some main reasons (Poor topic-related vocabulary, pronunciation, limited practice time at class and bad basic skill) affecting students a lot while they have an English debate. In addition, the most activities that students want to do in class are debate (40%) and choosing the correct answers (19%). Most of the students also agree that there are some activities to improve English debating skill, such as: before debating, students should be pre-taught some related new words and predict the content of the topics by the activities that the teacher gives; after debating, students should summarize

about the topics and learn the new words with these activites they can improve not only day to day communication but also learn how a debate works.

After conducting the survey, it goes without saying that, debating is chosen to be a crucial skill by the students; however, students still are passive and not self-conscious in debating practice that cannot create the good habit of debating English. Moreover, in the process of learning debating English, English majors at HPU face up with lots of difficulties including psychological barriers, lack of environment, pronunciation, grammar, and the lack of motivation. Therefore, most of the students regarded some teachers' techniques as the best encouragement to motivate them to speak English in the class. The findings above give some suggested activities in order to increase the communication skill. In which, playing warm-up games, writing an outline or providing related vocabularies are some activities that students expect for pre-debating to have a good preparation for debating lessons; meanwhile, for while -debating activities, students prefer taking part in some activities such as group discussion, role-play, presentation and magazine design as well. Writing a report and interviewing are favorite activities that are chosen by students.

In conclusion, in order to get the maximum benefits of the offered technique, some recommendations are proposed to the students in Haiphong Management and Technology University.

CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUCLUSION

This chapter will deal with a summary of the major findings, recommendation, limitations of the study and some suggestions for further studies.

4.1 Summary of the study.

To reach the goal of this study, the study was divided into four chapters with their own purpose. The first chapter briefly covers the theories related to the study. The second chapter presented the theoretical basis of learning English debating. The third chapter presented the research methodology of the approach to debating in HPU through questionnaires and interviews and helps the author find the answers to four research questions stated in the introduction. The last chapter is some recommendations and suggestions to improve communication skill through English debating at Haiphong management and technology university.

Being one of Haiphong Management and Technology University final year English majors, from facing a lot of difficulties in communicating, together with the deep awareness about the importance of communication skills; the researchers decided to carry out the study with the hope of finding some obstacles that students experience in debating process as well as suggesting some solutions to improve their communication through debating. The study includes four main parts. Part I is the introduction of the research. It introduces to the readers the basic information why this thesis is fulfilled, how it is conducted, and what is conducted for. Part II is the development of the thesis including four chapters. The first chapter provides readers an overview of the theoretical background on which this study bases on. They include the definition of debating, the structure of a debate, the type of debates, etc. Part III introduces the activities to improve debating as well as communication for second year English major at Haiphong Management and Technology University in the thesis. It is action research with the definitions and processes. Basing on the literature, questionnaires were

designed for 2nd year majors and teachers of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, and using a quantities method to analyze the data, findings were found and represented in chapter three.

Accordingly, students' obstacles in the debating process are lacking basic English skills, possessing stress and nervousness, learning in an unfavorable environment, and lacking general knowledge. The last part is the discussion and recommendations for the obstacles found above to help learners to overcome these difficulties. There are suggestions for students consisting of improving basic English skills and pronunciation, broadening social and cultural knowledge, creating a good learning environment, building confidence in debating, materials should be authentic, combined with various accents, and using both top-down and bottom-up processing skills. The summary of the previous parts and chapters. It is also the part the concluding marks are drawn out and suggestions for further researches are presented.

4.2 Recommendation of the study.

The previous part shows that the second-year students of English in Haiphong Management and Technology University have in countered a lot of difficulties in learning to debate in English. Hence, This chapter suggests some ways to minimize the students' difficulties in the debate.

4.2.1 Recommendation for students

∗ **Improving vocabulary and pronunciation**

There are some following ways to improve vocabulary and pronunciation:

- Learn words in topic so that students can remember words more easily because they are in the logical system.
- Do variety of vocabulary exercises regularly
- Read stories, novels, newspapers or magazines in English
- Actively participate in environments where there is much word usage, use the new words in the real life

- Implement body language while speaking English.
- Listen to authentic spoken texts and repeat word or sentence heard with right stress and intonation.

∗ **Improving basic debating skills**

Students should search and find out the research materials from different sources from the Internet, televisions, radios, websites, etc, and research to the varying type of debate. So that they can get familiar with their different structure, rule.

Here are some useful, and interesting books and audio books that can help in some ways to make discussions and debates to be more fun:

Horus Rising (Dan Abnett)

The Master of Mandkind (Aaron Dembski-Bowden)

Wolfsbane (Guy Haley)

A Song of Ice and Fire (George R. R. Martin)

The Witcher series (Andrzej Sapkowski)

∗ **Broadening social and cultural knowledge**

Without having enough knowledge of society and culture in debating, students will face problems of interpretation in the "understanding" step. Thus, it is necessary to widen this kind of knowledge in some ways. The suggestions are searching for information on the internet, watching TV and listening to the radio regularly, asking and learning from the professional people, learning from books, newspapers, magazines, from friends or maybe even videogames and from real life. Especially, talking to foreigners is really a good way to improve the social as well as cultural knowledge. Students not only can hear the speakers' voices but also can know more about the countries through real people. It is interesting if students can go abroad or go traveling. Because of the saying "Traveling widens your knowledge".

* **Creating a good learning environment**

The learning environment for debating skills, which is a vital key affecting the quality of both learning and teaching debating skills. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the findings of this study show that the students are not satisfied with the recent learning environment. Students suppose that the debating classes are still so noisy. Consequently, the students find it hard and challenging to concentrate while debating. It is, therefore, essential to upgrade the classroom so that all students have a good chance to study debating skills in such a motivating environment for improving their debating skills.

To create a good learning environment, students should:

- Find a quiet place to debate in order to concentrate better during the debating comprehension process.
- Have good physical conditions for learning: air-conditions, a comfortable chair, etc.
- Make a friendly and pleasant atmosphere

* **Building confidence in the debating process**

As mentioned above, linguistic factors are the main reasons for students' nervousness and stress during the debating process so it is necessary to build students' confidence in a first way dealing with linguistic problems. The students should study; have good knowledge about the phonetics and phonology, pronunciation, grammar, etc. Try to apply, practice, and get used to using them in real life. The second is preparing relevant knowledge carefully before debating. Make sure that, before joining a debate, you should understand very clearly, what you are expected to do, carry out the planned activities confident that you are doing the right thing. The third is having ambiguity tolerance. Do not worry if you do not express every word. It is very important that you learn to accept that a debating task can often be completed even when you change some of the words has the same meaning.

4.2.2 Recommendation for the teachers

- Materials should be authentic

Authentic material allows the students to hear a much more real act of debate with all the interactional features which are normally not found in scripted materials. It gives them a true representation of real spontaneous speech with its hesitations, false starts, and "mistakes", which will make them more able to cope with "real life" speech when they meet outside the learning situation. If the students have the opportunity to study a range of authentic texts, they will sample many different voices with varying accents, both social and regional. They will express things in a variety of ways. Students need to experience as wide a selection of debating situations as possible. Teachers should not wait until their students become advanced learners to begin using authentic materials, although at first texts will have to be selected carefully and tasks kept simple so that students are not demotivated by being confronted with texts and activities, which they cannot handle. The use of authentic materials, such as workplace training videos, audiotapes of actual workplace exchanges, and TV and radio broadcasts, increases transferability to debate outside of the classroom context.

- Materials should be combined with various accents

Debating materials should be combined from different sources to ensure that they are interesting and appropriate enough for all levels of the students.

- Developing both top-down and bottom-up processing skills

As mentioned above, top-down oriented activities encourage learners to discuss what they already know about the topic. So that they will carry out the planned activities confident that, they are doing the right thing and they will succeed with whatever debating tasks they are asked to do. Moreover, bottom-up practice activities give confidence inaccurate comprehension of the components of the language (sound, words, intonation, grammatical structures).

- Do not force them to debate

Nobody wants to do something by forcing someone. If you want to do something, you can do your best. On the contrary, you can not be aware of what you did or are doing. So, should we wait until students are ready? Yes! If he or she does not want to debate, let them not to debate, but it does not mean that you ignore them! It means to encourage them.

4.3 Limitation of the study.

Although the study has certain strong points such as collection methods, survey questionnaires for students, due to limited time, lack of sources, the researcher's ability, and other unexpected factors, it is obvious that the study has got a number of short-comings. First of all, due to the limited time, experience to some extent, the researcher could not conduct other methods such as classroom observation which can make the obtained results more reliable. Secondly, due to the limitation of the scope of the study, the researcher only focuses on the students at Haiphong Management and Technology which account for a small number of students in HP. Therefore, the result of the study can't be generalized. Besides, the researcher could not cover all the aspects of difficulties. In addition, the techniques suggested in this research are selected from different reliable but limited sources. In spite of the mentioned limitations, I hope that this exploratory research will contribute to the better situation for communication skills through English debating in HP.

4.4 Suggestions for the further study.

Because of the limitation, this study could not cover all of the aspects of the study. Besides, the study only focuses on difficulties for students in HP in order to help them improve their communication skill through debating. Moreover, for further studies, to get better results, the researcher should invite more participants and the data collection method. Together with using survey questionnaires and interviews, observation is also necessary to get more persuasive conclusions. All in all, despite the study, it can avoid the limitation, the research has been completed under the guidance of the supervisor and self-effort. Any comments and criticism will be highly appreciated for better further study.

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