

Performance Level of Debate in the English Language Proficiency Module of Students

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Abstract: Debate is one of the components of the English Language Proficiency of the modules of students in developing their skills in speaking. The study examines the performance level of debate in the English Language Proficiency (ELP) module level of students.

The study employs the quantitative methods of research as this design answers the data in analysing the study on the level of debate and performance of the students in their English Language Proficiency module.

The subjects of the study are the students of Gulf College in the Sultanate of Oman who are officially registered in the English Language Proficiency, Level 3 Block 2 for the academic year 2019-2020. One hundred sixty (160) is utilized in the study. All respondents are utilized as samples in the study.

Results show that communication skills and evidence of information of the students are poor in which the performance level in debate of students are low, however; the area of language proficiency, critical thinking, and teamwork reveal good in which the performance level in debate of students are moderate.

Keywords: English Language Proficiency, Performance Level of Debate, Communication Skills, Language Proficiency, Critical Thinking, Evidence of Information, and Teamwork.

Introduction

Debate is one of the components of the English Language Proficiency in Level 3 Block 2 in the Faculty of Business Management and Studies. It develops their skills in speaking through the task given to them. It is an argument of an issue in which the student selects topic at their own choice. Students analyse the topic and present by group in debate style. Categories or criteria are given as a basis for their oral argumentation. Sustainable topics are given based on the knowledge and interest of the students in which the purpose of the said debate is to develop their speaking skills, comprehension, interpretation, current trends, challenges, opportunities and current directions (Ghadimi, Wang, and Lim, 2019), with the aim of convincing both sides to agree on the topic for argumentation. Competency and development of debate framework are taught for sustainable learning among the students. Implementation of skills and knowledge of debate are analysed for better enhancement of the skills of students in terms of debate to promote skills in speaking among them. This understands the strategies for educational knowledge and development of students in their debate tasks. Debate tasks among the students are identified based on their capacity and capability for transformation in

their skills in speaking as they present their point of views in their debate. Debate is critically evaluated for their summative and informative feedback in their module (Dlouhá, and Pospíšilová, 2018). It has been studied (Madrueno-Aguilar, 2017) that techniques in debate measure the knowledge of students' ability to defend and to discuss issue on the argumentation.

Debate in the English Language Proficiency deals on the communication skills of the students. They are being trained to communicate effectively on the details of their topics. Topics are research based. Performance of the students in this situation is identified whether the communication process is clear and understandable. The conversation is being measured on their speech ability, tone of voice whether the power of speaking is convincing and the smooth flow of the communication process is also reflected on the debate or argumentation. Motor skills are also developed in this scenario which is relevant to the analysis of their argumentation that defines the features of their knowledge and capacity in the debate. Realising the ability of their skills in their communication like the usage of proper words appropriate to the topic of argumentation (Hargie, 2018).

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On the other hand, debate in the English Language Proficiency develops the language ability of the students in general. It describes the debate and implementation of the module activities in the English Language Proficiency of student in the Faculty of Business and Management Studies to which students are enhanced in their English proficiency and in speaking skills. Strategies on their debates are taught to equip students on the proper debate inside the classroom. Hence, this can give a better impact on the collaborative skills improvement of the students in their debate (Amiri, Jahedi, and Othman, 2017). This includes grammar, correct usage, structure, pronunciation, word vocabulary related to the topic for effective and efficient argumentation. The argumentation is to defend the topic based on the position of the students and focused on the principles of attaining the goal in the debate to expound their position (Lewiński, 2018).

Similarly, critical thinking must be developed in debate to give a better analysis on the issue to be argued. It is the ability to rationalize clearly what the issue is all about. It is the ability to reflect and to engage the argumentation to fully understand the ideas relevant to the topic. Think critically to identify, evaluate and construct proposition on the argumentation that connects words for a better rebuttal that can even systematically solve the issue. Giving full emphasis on the relevance of important ideas to give better impact in the debate and justify critically one's values, beliefs and reflections. Student can improve significantly when critical thinking and analyzing the issue properly that can contribute to a better impact on the issue for debate. This is a technique in debate in addition to fluency in speaking (Iman, 2017). Organize the content, analyze clearly the topic, deliver the points with strong conviction, picture the topic for a better discussion especially during the rebuttal. This has been proven by (Fuad, Zubaidah, Mahanal, andSuarsini, 2017) in which they identified the improvement of the critical thinking skills of their students in identifying three (3) different models of learning like combining mind map and science inquiry, model of inquiry in science and model of convention and found the different critical thinking and different models of learning of students.

Nevertheless, evidence of information must be given emphasis in the debate were all necessary information is gathered in newspapers, magazines, books, journals and internet. Citing proof of evidences will give solid impact to the debate. A well-defined evidence and information allows the students to think perspective and aspects in the debate. It helps to strategically speak and to encourage students to have confidence in the argumentation because of facts

gathered that has been proven and tested on the issue of argumentation. Learning to provide evidences can create a better argumentation among the students. Fictions, stories and hearsays are not solid evidence during the rebuttal. Evidence of information is a technique to solve issues in the debate or argumentation. It captures the attention of the opponents during the debate. It preempts the inhibition of the opponent on the issue for rebuttal. Evidence is the will to act that suppress the issue to be resolved in the debate (Gaspelin, and Luck, 2018).

Lastly, teamwork works for a better result of the debate since it is a group effort. Equal distribution of tasks must be addressed so that every member of the group will work for their assigned tasks. The success of the debate depends on the effort of the group members. It is called effective teamwork which is sometimes difficult to achieve especially when the members of the group are not cooperative in the tasks given. Teamwork calibrates skills of the students in their debate. The best tool and instrument for the success of the debate are the members of the group which play an important role in their debate (Brock, McAliney, Ma, and Sen, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

1. What is the performance level of debate in the English Language Proficiency (ELP) module of students in the area of
 - 1.1 Communication skills,
 - 1.2 Language proficiency,
 - 1.3 Critical thinking,
 - 1.4 Evidence of information, and
 - 1.5 Teamwork?

Research Design

The study employs the quantitative methods of research as this design answers the data in analysing the study on the level of debate and performance of the students in their English Language Proficiency module. It is the basis of a systematic collection of data in justifying the approach and analysis of the research under study (Nardi, 2018).

Research Subject

The subjects of the study are the students of Gulf College in the Sultanate of Oman who are officially registered in the English Language Proficiency, Level 3 Block 2 for the academic year 2019-2020. One Hundred Sixty (160) is utilized in the study. All respondents are utilized as samples in the study.

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Research Instrument

The following scale is used in measuring the performance level in debate of students.

1. Performance level in debate in terms of communication skills

Scale	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Excellent	Performance level in debate in terms of communication skills is very high
3.40-4.19	Very Good	Performance level in debate in terms of communication skills is high
2.60-3.39	Good	Performance level in debate in terms of communication skills is moderate
1.80-2.59	Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of communication skills is low
1.00-1.79	Very Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of communication skills is very low

2. Performance level in debate in terms of language proficiency

Scale	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Excellent	Performance level in debate in terms of language proficiency is very high
3.40-4.19	Very Good	Performance level in debate in terms of language proficiency is high
2.60-3.39	Good	Performance level in debate in terms of language proficiency is moderate
1.80-2.59	Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of language proficiency is low
1.00-1.79	Very Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of language proficiency is very low

3. Performance level in debate in terms of critical thinking

Scale	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Excellent	Performance level in debate in terms of critical thinking is very high
3.40-4.19	Very Good	Performance level in debate in terms of critical thinking is high
2.60-3.39	Good	Performance level in debate in terms of critical thinking is moderate
1.80-2.59	Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of critical thinking is low
1.00-1.79	Very Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of critical thinking is very low

4. Performance level in debate in terms of evidence of information

Scale	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Excellent	Performance level in debate in terms of evidence of information is very high
3.40-4.19	Very Good	Performance level in debate in terms of evidence of information is high
2.60-3.39	Good	Performance level in debate in terms of

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1.80-2.59	Poor	evidence of information is moderate
		Performance level in debate in terms of evidence of information is low
1.00-1.79	Very Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of evidence of information is very low

5. Performance level in debate in terms of teamwork

Scale	Descriptive Level	Descriptive Interpretation
4.20-5.00	Excellent	Performance level in debate in terms of teamwork is very high
3.40-4.19	Very Good	Performance level in debate in terms of teamwork is high
2.60-3.39	Good	Performance level in debate in terms of teamwork is moderate
1.80-2.59	Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of teamwork is low
1.00-1.79	Very Poor	Performance level in debate in terms of teamwork is very low

Results

Table 1.0: Performance skills of Students in ELP debate

Performance Skills	Communication Skills		Language Proficiency		Critical Thinking		Evidence of Information		Teamwork	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Very poor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poor	90	56	1	1	2	1	125	78	35	22
Good	70	44	114	71	120	75	35	22	123	77
Very Good	0	0	45	28	38	24	0	0	2	1
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	160	100	160	100	160	100	160	100	160	100

Table 1.0 shows the performance skills of students in their ELP debate. Communication skills is poor with a frequency of 90 or 56% among the respondents, language proficiency is good with a frequency of 114 or 71% among the respondents, critical thinking is good with a frequency of

120 or 75% among the respondents, evidence of information is poor with a frequency of 125 or 78% among the respondents, and teamwork is good with a frequency of 123 or 77% among the respondents.

Table 2.0: Results of the weighted mean and the verbal interpretation of the performance on the debate skills of the students

Indicators	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Standard Deviation
1. Communication skills	2.44	Poor	0.174
2. Language proficiency	3.28	Good	0.202
3. Critical thinking	3.23	Good	0.200
4. Evidence of Information	2.22	Poor	0.166
5. Teamwork	2.79	Good	0.186
Average Weighted Mean	2.79	Good	

Legend: 4.20-5.00 - Excellent
 3.40-4.19 - Very Good
 2.60-3.39 - Good
 1.80-2.59 - Poor
 1.00-1.79 - Very Poor

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Table 2.0 shows the result of the performance level in debate among the students. Communication skills result is poor (WM=2.44) which means that performance level in

debate of students is low, language proficiency is good (WM=3.28) which means that performance level in debate of students is moderate, critical thinking is good (WM=3.23) which means that performance level in debate of students is moderate, evidence of information is poor (WM=2.22) which means that performance level in debate of students is low, and teamwork is good (WM=2.79) which means that performance level in debate of students is moderate. The overall average weighted mean is 2.79 is good which shows that students performance in their ELP debate is moderate.

Discussion

Debate is one of the skills in the English Language Proficiency that needs to be developed by the students, however; results show on their performance that there is a need to improve the learning techniques and style in enhancing debate capacity of the students. Sustainability on the improvement of the debate skills of the students experience them to follow the format and structure based on their assessment. Techniques must be given emphasis for them to apply (Gelmon, Holland, and Spring, 2018).

Nevertheless, on the debate skills of the students in terms of communication, the results show poor, which means that performance level of students in debate skills are low. The purpose is to enhance techniques on debate among the students for them to learn and to improve particularly on their speaking skills to argue with their opponents. This is a part of their skills. This can be done inside the classroom as a part of their assessment. Different parts are given as a part of their assessment. Criteria are explained prior to their debate to prepare for their argument and to improve their skills in speaking (Fauzan, 2016). However, students still need to practice more often to improve their communication skills. English for them is foreign and it is not a second language among the students. Sometimes, they are running out of words, they have words to say in mind but unfamiliar on the proper usage. They have difficulties in saying the words because they are not use to it. The topic is given a week before the final battle but still they cannot make it. They even rehearse and practice the debate before the final argumentation. They can express their opinion, idea, and thoughts, however, the structure, content and organization of their speaking needs improvement. Classroom setting in their improve communication skills play a positively learning process among the students. They can explore their language by asking help from their classmates and from their module tutor. Through constant practice in speaking they can develop fluency in their communication process. Performances in their communication skills must be identified and must be discovered for better output in their

debate and skills in their communication process (Hargie, 2018).

In contrast, the result on the debate skills in terms of language proficiency reveals good, which means that students' performance level of their debate is moderate. They can express themselves in English but need to focus more on the proficiency on what they say, like proper use of words, structure of the sentences, proper diction and proper pronunciation. Students have to be motivated to develop their language proficiency in English because it is an international language where it is useful in their future and in their career. Once students are motivated properly to learn English, their proficiency in the language will improve also. One of the instruments in learning is through debate because their speaking skills are being developed and through this process they can develop their language proficiency. This is a factor for them to improve their language proficiency and enhance them in their learning process (Suryasa, Prayoga, and Werdistira, 2017). It constitutes the learning process and comprehension of the students in their English language prior to their proficiency. Different factors are given emphasis before understanding the idea of becoming proficient in the English language. Explaining to the students the ability to learn can contribute to their proficiency in English like correct vocabulary to use in their English language and awareness of the proficiency in their language pedagogy (Wang, and Treffers-Daller, 2017).

On the other hand, critical thinking of the level of debate of the students shows good, which means that their level of performance in their debate is moderate. Students have the critical knowledge on the topic given to them, however; their exposure to say a word must be given priority since English is the medium of language in the debate. This must be prioritised through critical thinking. This must be the goal of every student to have a better output on their debate. Understanding the concept of thinking can direct and focus them on their argumentation in debate based on the topic given. The norm of thinking can lead the students to a better understanding of their topic and delivers according to their implication of the topic. This leads the students to the ability of their success in their debate or argumentation and appropriately guides them to the right thing of their debate (Hitchcock, 2018). The critical thinking development of students must be the priority and concern of the educational institution especially the module lecturers since this is one way of developing the intellectual knowledge of the students and the ability for a student to know in their English Language Proficiency module that helps them to think systematically and explicit the manner drawn towards an idea to the topic given. The strategy and technique must be applied step by step in any context. Critical thinking can help prepare them in their argumentation or debate. Perform and evaluate properly the debate in a right order and sequence. It helps to clarify things in order, organise and gather relevant knowledge,

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idea, thoughts, and information that can validate the reliability of information gathered, analyse the information and can draw a better perspective to the topic. It helps them to express logically to their performance in the debate for future improvement (Rear, 2017).

Additionally, evidence of information in their debate shows poor, which means performance level of students in their debate is low. This is lacking among the students. They have difficulties in looking for evidences to support details on their debate. They are not knowledgeable in referencing, searching in the magazines, books, internet appropriately for their topic. It is interested to note that evidence-based in debate will give a solid support to the topic on the argumentation. It increases the knowledge and information of data in the topic for debate or argumentation. This is the most appropriate evidence that appeal during the debate or argumentation process. Although the pattern is framed-out, it must be supported by evidences for better argumentation. Acknowledge the debate within limits, however it must be compatible and intellectually based evidence information (Newman, 2017). On the other hand, understanding the rationality of the topic can identify properly the evidence of their opinion in the argumentation whether positive or negative depends on their side. The ideology of the evidence based information show the real tasks of the argumentation process, however; avoid complex evidence of information. Simple and direct evidence is important to reflect on the subject or topic. The aim is to identify the subject to be argued and focus on the dimension of the topic to intensify proper decorum in the debate or argumentation. Evidence base of information defines critically the principles of the debate and argumentation (Strassheim, 2017).

Similarly, the result of teamwork in their debate shows good, which means that performance level of students in their debate is moderate. This shows that teamwork must still be given emphasis. Equal distribution of tasks must be done with the members of the group. Group effort or teamwork must be encouraged so that everybody will be benefitted. Teamwork shows unity among the members of the group. Debate is a group presentation. They need to discuss properly the tasks given to them. Teamwork is needed in all aspects of work and itineraries in life. An extensive knowledge of teamwork produces a better work output and outcome. It is a solid basis in initiating a task in a group work and recognition of individual will be the recognition of the group. One is for all and all is for one. Teamwork and unity is the name of the game. Understand the relevance of the team efforts and dynamics. A supportive teamwork organization result to an effective work in the group and in the working environment. It flourishes the mechanics of the work and ensures a better performance and minimizes errors from the tasks of the group. Effective teamwork will lead to a better communication, adaptability and coordination. Without

proper coordination, adaptability and communication the result will be failure. The group must manage teamwork and cooperation in an effective and efficient function of group effort in addressing the tasks for further improvement (Salas, Reyes, and McDaniel, 2018). Teamwork is easy to follow and observe when they have the desire to do it. However, it is difficult to explain to describe or to follow. There must be collaboration to achieve the work goals or tasks. Teamwork is the key to effective satisfaction in the group tasks (Driskell, Salas, and Driskell, 2018).

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The communication skills of students reveal poor in which performance level in debate of students is low.
2. Language proficiency students reveals good in which performance level in debate of students is moderate.
3. Critical thinking of students shows good in which performance level in debate of students is moderate.
4. Evidence of information of students shows poor in which performance level in debate of students is low.
5. Teamwork of students reveals good in which performance level in debate of students is moderate.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the findings, the following recommendations are drawn:

1. Since communication skills of students are poor, therefore, proper guidance must be given emphasis to students by motivating them to practice and practice their communication skills because constant speaking will make them perfect in their communication skills.
2. There is a need to continue to improve their language proficiency through reading in English, watching English movies, newspapers and televisions. Practice to speak from time to time to obtain language proficiency among them.
3. Students must be encouraged to develop their critical thinking because this will lead them to a better output in their task.
4. Students must know the techniques in getting evidence of information that can help them improve their knowledge on the topic given to them.
5. Students must know the value of teamwork, unity, cooperation in achieving the task given to them because unity and teamwork will lead them to a better success in their endeavor in life.

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