

DEBATE TECHNOLOGY IN IMPROVING PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS

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This article explores the role of debate technology in improving public speaking skills among students. Public speaking is an essential competence in academic, professional, and social life, as it helps individuals express ideas clearly, confidently, and persuasively before an audience. However, many learners experience difficulties such as stage fear, lack of confidence, weak argumentation, and poor speech organization. The article examines debate as an effective educational technology that develops communication abilities through structured discussion, critical thinking, and active participation. Debate activities encourage students to defend opinions, present logical arguments, respond to opposing views, and speak fluently under time pressure. The study also highlights how regular debate practice improves pronunciation, vocabulary usage, confidence, teamwork, and audience awareness. Special attention is given to the teacher's role in organizing debate sessions and creating a supportive speaking environment. The findings suggest that debate technology is a practical and motivating method for enhancing public speaking competence and preparing students for real-life communication challenges.

Keywords: public speaking, debate technology, communication skills, confidence, critical thinking, argumentation, speaking fluency, presentation skills, teamwork, persuasive speech.

Public speaking is one of the most important skills in modern education and professional communication. It refers to the ability of an individual to deliver information, ideas, and arguments clearly and effectively to an audience. In today's globalized world, communication competence has become a key requirement for academic success, career development, and social interaction. Students who are able to express their thoughts confidently in front of others are more likely to succeed in both educational and professional environments.

Despite its importance, public speaking is considered one of the most challenging skills for many students. A significant number of learners experience fear, anxiety, and lack of confidence when speaking in front of an audience. This phenomenon is often referred to as public speaking anxiety or stage fright. Students may forget ideas, misuse vocabulary, or rely on filler words due to nervousness. These problems reduce the quality of their speech and limit their ability to communicate effectively.

One of the major causes of poor public speaking performance is the lack of structured speaking practice in traditional classrooms. In many educational settings, speaking activities are limited to reading texts aloud or answering simple questions. Such activities do not fully develop students' ability to think critically, organize ideas, or defend opinions in real-time communication. As a result, learners often struggle when they are required to speak freely in front of others. In recent years, modern teaching technologies have been introduced to improve speaking skills. One of the most effective methods among them is debate technology. Debate is a structured form of discussion in which participants present arguments for or against a specific topic. It requires students to analyze information, build logical arguments, respond to counterarguments, and

communicate ideas persuasively. Unlike simple speaking exercises, debates create a dynamic and interactive environment that closely reflects real-life communication situations.

Debate technology plays a crucial role in developing public speaking skills because it combines several important components of communication. First, it improves fluency by encouraging students to speak continuously within a limited time. Second, it enhances critical thinking by requiring learners to analyze both sides of an issue. Third, it develops confidence, as students repeatedly practice speaking in front of peers. Fourth, it strengthens vocabulary and grammar usage in meaningful contexts. Finally, it improves teamwork, as students often work in groups to prepare arguments.

Another important advantage of debate technology is its ability to reduce speaking anxiety. When students participate in debates regularly, they become more familiar with public speaking situations. Repeated exposure helps them overcome fear and develop emotional control. Over time, students begin to focus more on content rather than fear of mistakes. This gradual adaptation process significantly improves their speaking performance.

Debates also encourage active learning. Instead of passively receiving information from the teacher, students become active participants in the learning process. They research topics, prepare arguments, and engage in discussions. This active involvement increases motivation and makes learning more meaningful. Students are more likely to remember information when they actively use it in communication.

In addition, debate technology helps students develop persuasive speaking skills. In real-life communication, it is not enough to simply present information; speakers must also convince their audience. Debates teach students how to structure arguments logically, use evidence effectively, and respond to opposing viewpoints. These skills are essential for academic presentations, job interviews, and professional discussions. The role of the teacher in implementing debate technology is also very important. Teachers must select appropriate topics, organize groups, and guide students throughout the process. They should create a supportive environment where students feel comfortable expressing their opinions without fear of criticism. Teachers also provide feedback on pronunciation, grammar, argument quality, and presentation style. Constructive feedback helps students improve continuously.

Furthermore, the use of debate technology aligns with modern communicative language teaching approaches. These approaches emphasize interaction, real communication, and student-centered learning. In this framework, the teacher acts as a facilitator rather than a lecturer, while students take responsibility for their own learning. Debate activities perfectly support this approach by encouraging collaboration and independent thinking.

It is also important to note that debate technology can be adapted to different levels of learners. For beginners, simple topics and structured formats can be used. For intermediate and advanced students, more complex and controversial topics can be introduced. This flexibility makes debate a suitable method for various educational contexts.

In conclusion, public speaking is a vital skill that requires continuous practice and effective teaching methods. Traditional methods alone are not sufficient to develop confident and fluent speakers. Therefore, innovative approaches such as debate technology are necessary. By combining communication practice, critical thinking, and interactive learning, debates provide an effective environment for improving students' public speaking abilities. The implementation of debate technology in improving students' public speaking skills produced significant positive

results. Based on classroom observations, recordings, and teacher evaluations, noticeable improvements were recorded in students' fluency, confidence, vocabulary usage, argumentation skills, and overall communication competence.

Before the introduction of debate activities, most students demonstrated hesitation during speaking tasks. They frequently used filler words, paused excessively, and struggled to organize ideas logically. However, after several sessions of structured debates, students showed clear progress in their ability to speak more fluently and confidently.

The results indicate that debate technology is not only an effective teaching method but also a motivational learning tool that actively engages students in communication practice.

Student Engagement and Motivation

Another positive outcome was increased student engagement. Traditional speaking activities often failed to fully motivate students. However, debates created a competitive and interactive environment.

Students showed higher interest in preparing arguments and participating in discussions. Group work and teamwork also increased motivation.

Students reported that debates were more enjoyable compared to traditional speaking exercises.

Role of Peer Interaction

Peer interaction played a significant role in improving speaking skills. Students learned from each other's mistakes and strengths. Observing peers helped them understand different speaking styles and strategies. Peer feedback also contributed to improvement. Students became more aware of their own weaknesses through comments from classmates. This collaborative learning environment strengthened communication skills more effectively than individual practice alone.

The findings clearly demonstrate that debate technology is an effective method for improving public speaking skills. It combines linguistic, cognitive, and psychological development in one learning process.

Compared to traditional speaking exercises, debates provide more authentic communication practice. They simulate real-life situations where individuals must defend ideas, respond quickly, and speak confidently.

The improvement in fluency, confidence, vocabulary, and critical thinking confirms that debate-based learning is highly beneficial for language learners.

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of debate technology in improving students' public speaking skills. Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that debate is a powerful and effective pedagogical tool for developing communication competence.

Firstly, debate activities significantly improve speaking fluency. Students learn to express ideas more smoothly and reduce unnecessary hesitation. Secondly, debate practice increases confidence by providing repeated opportunities to speak in front of others. Thirdly, it enhances argumentation skills by teaching students how to organize and defend ideas logically.

The study also shows that the success of debate-based learning depends on the teacher's role, classroom environment, and consistent practice. Supportive feedback and gradual exposure to speaking tasks are essential for student development.

However, some challenges such as anxiety, time limitations, and uneven participation should be considered when implementing this method. Debate technology is an effective approach for

enhancing public speaking skills among students. It not only improves language proficiency but also prepares learners for real-life communication situations. With continuous practice and proper guidance, students can become more confident, fluent, and persuasive speakers in both academic and professional contexts.

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