

BOOSTING STUDENTS' INTEREST IN ENGLISH SPEAKING LEARNING: DEBATING AND ASSESSING ISSUES

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ABSTRACT

In the context of globalization, English speaking proficiency has become a crucial skill for academic and professional success. However, many students still demonstrate low interest and engagement in speaking activities due to the lack of interactive and student-centered learning strategies. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment in enhancing students' interest in learning English speaking skills. The novelty of this research lies in the integration of a formal international debate system with collaborative peer-based evaluation to foster both cognitive and affective engagement. Employing a quantitative descriptive design, the study involved 45 third-semester students of the English Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare. Data were collected through a 32-item Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed to measure students' interest across three dimensions: desire, necessity, and happiness. The findings reveal a high level of student interest, with an overall mean score of 88.68, categorized as "strongly interested." Among the dimensions, urgency (89.47) and desire (93.68) emerged as dominant factors, indicating that students perceived the learning activities as both essential and highly engaging. Additionally, students reported positive emotional responses, including increased confidence and enjoyment in speaking activities. This study contributes to English language teaching by demonstrating that the integration of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment creates a dynamic, interactive, and collaborative learning environment that significantly enhances students' motivation and speaking engagement. It is recommended that these strategies be more widely implemented to improve both affective and communicative competencies in EFL classrooms

Keywords: *British Parliamentary Debate, Peer Assessment, Speaking Ability, Students Interest.*

INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English is one of the essential competencies that students must master in this era of globalization (Rao, P. S, 2022). Not only does it function as an international communication tool, the ability to speak English is also the key to success in the academic and professional world. Speaking skill plays an important role in communication (Khan, R. M., & Khan, M. S, 2023). Speaking skill is needed not only in our daily language but also we need it to use it using an international language (Crisianita & Mandasari, 2022). In this globalized world, this is the most crucial way for them to build ties with certain foreigners. However, students' interest in learning English speaking skills is often less than optimal

because teaching methods are less interesting and interactive. The incessant inclination to focus on and retain particular activities is known as interest (Haryono, 2021). Interest in learning is a person's desire to be able to participate in learning activities (Patall et al., 2022). Students' engagement with learning activities will be influenced by their areas of interest. Interest in the educational process serves as a motivator for students to engage in learning activities (Hidi & Renninger, 2023). The interest is the most important factor to learning (Xiao & Zhang, 2016). Retention of information is increased by high interest. Students who are engaged with the subject matter will find it easier to retain and apply what they have learned (Wigfield & Eccles, 2024). This implies that when speaking, it will be simpler for them to recall the terms, phrases, and expressions required for clear communication. However, Azmidar et al., (2017) says students' interest is one of the internal factors that influence students' learning achievement. Interest known as a condition or situation was related to individual wishes or necessities (Harackiewicz & Priniski, 2023). It is also define as the preference in someone's soul together with happiness. Interest does not appear by spontaneous, but it is turn up because of participation, experience, and habit when studying or working.

One approach that can increase students' interest and speaking ability is through the implementation of British Parliamentary debates and peer assessment. British Parliamentary Debate is a popular debate format in various educational institutions around the world (Takahashi & Al-Subhi, 2024). This format not only engages students in critical and analytical discussions, but also encourages them to think quickly and articulate their arguments clearly and persuasively (Jerome & Al-Mahrooqi, 2022). Involvement in this debate is expected to increase students' confidence in public speaking and expand their vocabulary and understanding of various topics (Green & Mitchell, 2023). In addition, the British Parliamentary Debating is selected as the official international debate system due to its benefits, which include enhancing critical thinking skills (Nanlohy, 2020).

Aside from that, peer assessment is a technique where students provide each other performance feedback (Topping, 2021). By use of peer assessment, students participate actively in the teaching and learning process as well as becoming knowledge recipients. Students' critical evaluation abilities and comprehension of

speaking skill quality criteria can both be strengthened by this strategy. Yusna (2019) states that peer evaluation is one method of assessment that can be used to meet the needs of the students. A peer's appraisal of a classmate's performance in an activity is known as peer assessment. To recapitulate, peer assessment is a great technique to be used in the classroom to help students reach their own achievement. Self (2017) claims peer assessment alternatively is an assessment conducted by a student to measure other student's work. The kind of his assessment may build a positive learning environment which makes the students learn in a collaborative activity. Working in cooperation can encourage the students to be more interactive to share what they know. Tighe-mooney (2016) adds in simple terms, peer assessment refers to students assessing their peers' work and providing grades or feedback. There are a range of terms to describe the process, such as, peer tutoring, peer instruction, peer assisted learning, and so on.

Peer assessment is an assessment done by equal-status students based on the criteria that have been agreed to stimulate the learners' knowledge in teaching learning process (Panadero et al., 2025). It is used to improve learning as an effective way to motivate students by involving them in the evaluation process, which has drawn attention in recent years from a number of international universities. Peer assessment also encourages peers to assist each other in mastering the topic of learning (Wu & Schunn, 2024). This is relevant to the use of peer assessment in speaking skills. Additionally, this exercise helps the students evaluate not just their own performance but also that of their peers or other speakers (Fauzan, 2016).

The integration of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment is expected to foster a more dynamic, interactive, and collaborative learning environment. Through this approach, students are encouraged to actively engage with diverse perspectives, receive constructive feedback, and develop greater motivation to enhance their speaking proficiency. Consequently, this study seeks to examine the extent to which the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment influences students' interest and their proficiency in spoken English.

The novelty of this research lies in the combined application of British Parliamentary Debate as a structured, internationally recognized debating format and peer assessment as a collaborative evaluative strategy within the context of EFL speaking instruction. While previous studies have tended to examine these approaches separately, this study integrates both methods to simultaneously address cognitive, social, and affective dimensions of learning. In addition, this research emphasizes not only speaking performance but also students' interest as a key affective factor, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of how innovative pedagogical practices can enhance engagement and communication skills in the EFL classroom.

METHOD

This study seeks to implement the British Parliamentary debate format in conjunction with peer assessment as a pedagogical intervention to address challenges in teaching speaking and to enhance students' interest in the learning process (Mitchell & Green, 2024). Although this study uses a quantitative descriptive approach to measure students' interest, a qualitative perspective is also important to better understand students' experiences during the learning activities.

The rationale for using a qualitative approach is to explore how students feel, respond, and engage in the learning process. It helps explain why British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment can increase students' motivation, confidence, and participation in speaking activities, which cannot be fully captured through numbers alone.

The population of this research was the third semester of English Department students at Muhammadiyah University of Parepare. There are two classes, namely III. A and III.B. So, the total number of the population were 45 students. The experimental class and control class were selected from the population using the cluster random sampling technique in this study. The tools of this research are questionnaire and speaking scoring rubric. The questionnaire used a Likert scale.

This research aims to investigate specific aspects of students' interest in speaking instruction facilitated by the British Parliamentary debate format and peer assessment, focusing on students' intrinsic motivation, classroom engagement, and speaking confidence. Specifically, these aspects are evaluated through three

dimensions: Wishes (Desire) to measure motivation and eagerness to participate; Necessities (Importance and Urgency) to assess their perception of the debate method's value ; and Happiness to examine affective engagement, including joyful learning through critical thinking and confidence building. The questionnaire consists of 32 items and those were constructed in Bahasa Indonesia. To calculate the data, the researcher interpreted it based on the range of categories for students' interest. Subsequently, the researcher classified the students' speaking scores based on a band scale by utilizing the P2RST framework of Latifa et al. (2015).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine the extent to which the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment influences students' interest in learning English speaking skills. The findings were presented based on the questionnaire results obtained from the experimental class.

The data indicate that students demonstrate a high level of interest in learning speaking through the implemented strategies. The mean score of students' interest reached 88.68, which is categorized as strongly interested. This result suggests that the integration of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment successfully enhances students' engagement in the learning process.

Based on the three dimensions of interest, the findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Wishes (Desire)

The desire dimension achieved the highest mean score (93.68), indicating that students show strong willingness and enthusiasm to participate in speaking activities using debate and peer assessment.

2. Necessities (Importance and Urgency)

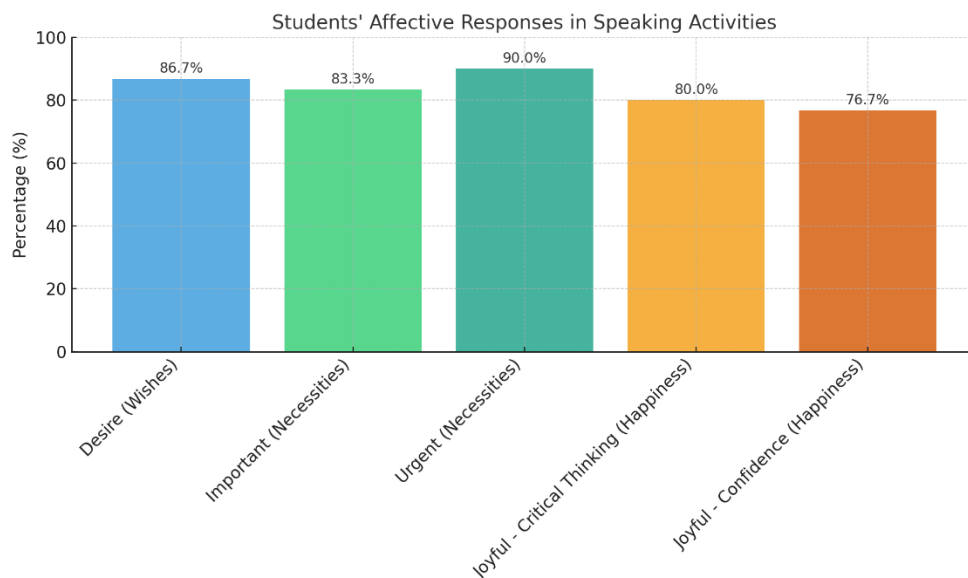
The importance indicator scored 84.21, while urgency reached 89.47. These results show that students perceive the learning activities as both meaningful and necessary for improving their speaking skills.

3. Happiness (Joyful Learning Experience)

The happiness dimension obtained a mean score of 87.36, reflecting that students feel enjoyment, increased confidence, and positive emotional engagement during the learning process.

In general, all indicators demonstrate that students respond positively to the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment in speaking instruction.

There were 32 numbers of questionnaires had been distributed to the III.A of English Department as the experimental group to find out their interest in learning speaking through the implementation of British Parliamentary and Peer Assessment. The students answered individually based on their opinions after following the treatments. The result of the questionnaires indicated that the students were interested in learning, it was proved by the data which categorizes as follow:



The bar chart provides a detailed representation of students' affective responses to the learning activity, categorizing them into three distinct domains: Wishes (Desire), Necessities (Important and Urgent), and Happiness (Joyful Learning through Critical Thinking and Confidence Building). Each of these domains reflects a different aspect of how students emotionally engage with the activity, with varying degrees of importance, urgency, and personal fulfillment.

In the "Urgent (Necessities)" category, the data reveals the highest percentage at 90.0%, indicating that students overwhelmingly perceive the learning activity as a pressing and essential need. This result suggests that the majority of

students view the activity not just as beneficial, but as crucial to their academic development. The strong response in this category underscores the urgency with which students regard the activity, implying that they feel it is necessary for their progress and that it addresses immediate academic needs.

Following this, the "Desire (Wishes)" category achieved a percentage of 86.7%, demonstrating that students have a high level of interest and enthusiasm toward the learning activity. This shows that while the activity is perceived as urgent, it is also highly desirable to the students. They are not only motivated to participate, but they also recognize the inherent value in the activity, indicating a deep engagement with the learning process. The "Important (Necessities)" category, which scored 83.3%, suggests that students consider the activity to be significant and relevant to their academic and personal development, further reinforcing the idea that they acknowledge its value, even if the activity is not perceived as an immediate or urgent necessity.

The "Happiness" domain, which focuses on the emotional outcomes of the learning activity, provides further insight into students' affective engagement. The "Joyful - Critical Thinking" category scored 80.0%, showing that students experience a sense of joy through the development of their critical thinking skills. This highlights the intellectual satisfaction students derive from engaging in a learning process that challenges them to think critically and analytically. Meanwhile, the "Joyful - Confidence" category, with a score of 76.7%, indicates that students also derive happiness from the increased self-confidence they experience during the activity. This suggests that the activity not only stimulates intellectual growth but also supports personal development by helping students build greater self-assurance.

Taken together, these findings imply that students are deeply engaged both intellectually and emotionally in the learning activity. The high percentage of responses in the "Urgent" and "Desire" categories indicates that students view the activity as both essential and highly appealing, highlighting its perceived relevance and importance. The positive responses in the "Happiness" domain further suggest that students not only find the activity academically rewarding but also emotionally fulfilling, particularly in terms of developing critical thinking skills and building

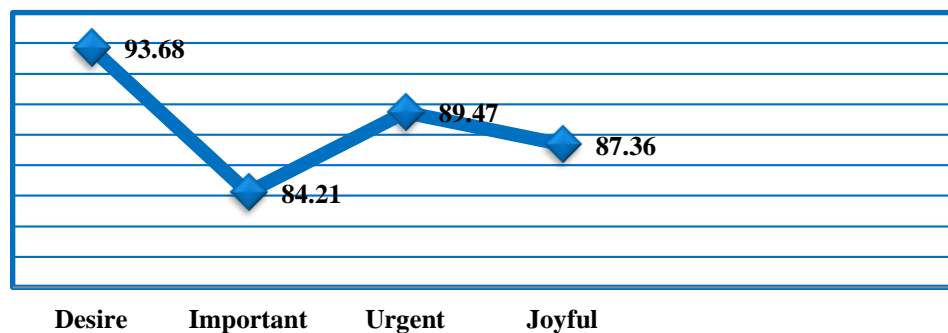
confidence. These results point to the overall effectiveness of the learning activity in fostering both cognitive and emotional growth, making it a valuable component of students' academic experiences.

The percentage of questionnaire indicator in implementation British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment can be shown in the table below:

Table 1. The mean score of questionnaire indicator

No.	Dimension	Indicator	Mean Score
1	Wishes	Desire	93.68
2	Necessities	Important	84.21
		Urgent	89.47
3	Happy	Joyful	87.36
Total			88.68

The table 1 shows the percentage of questionnaire indicator. The students' percentage of interest was 88.68%, it was interpreted into score criteria as strongly interested. In order to make it clear, the score percentage of the students' interest toward the components of interest in learning speaking can be seen in the figure presented below: **The Percentage of Questionnaire Indicator**



Based on the data obtained, it was found that students exhibited strong affective engagement in the learning process, particularly in terms of desire, perceived importance and urgency, as well as joy. All components of the British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment contributed significantly to enhancing

students' interest in the teaching and learning process, especially in the development of speaking skills.

To investigate students' levels of interest, the researcher administered a questionnaire at the end of the treatment. The questionnaire consisted of 32 statements designed to explore the extent to which students were interested in the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment in speaking instruction. All items were directly related to students' experiences in the experimental class, which was facilitated using these two instructional strategies.

Students' interest was categorized into three affective domains: wishes (desire), necessities (importance and urgency), and happiness (joyful learning experience). Each domain is discussed as follows:

a. Students' Wishes (Desire)

The findings revealed that all students expressed a strong desire to participate in speaking activities through the British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment. This suggests that the strategies employed were effective in increasing students' intrinsic motivation. Interest, as an internal factor, is widely acknowledged to influence academic achievement. According to Khasanah et al., (2017), interest is a condition closely associated with personal desire or intention to engage in a particular activity. Thus, the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment fostered a learning environment that aligned with students' individual wishes, thereby stimulating their enthusiasm for learning speaking.

b. Students' Perception of Necessities (Importance and Urgency)

The data further indicated that students perceived the learning activity as both important and urgent for their development in speaking. The use of the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment encouraged a sense of relevance and immediacy, reinforcing students' belief that these activities were essential to mastering spoken English. Xiao & Zhang (2016) argue that interest plays a more influential role in learning performance than beliefs about effort or innate ability. In this study, students' recognition of the importance and urgency of the learning activity directly contributed to their increased engagement and interest.

c. Students' Happiness (Joyful Learning)

In terms of emotional experience, students reported a high level of joy when participating in the learning activities, with the average percentage of joyful responses reaching 87.36%. This indicates that students not only found the learning meaningful but also enjoyable. Azmidar et al. (2017) note that individual interest can serve as a strong predictor of academic achievement. Furthermore, Krapp (2015) describes interest as the immediate outcome of a positive and stimulating learning environment, characterized by high emotional involvement. The joyful experiences observed in this study demonstrate that the implementation of British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment not only support cognitive outcomes but also foster emotional satisfaction.

The findings reveal that the integration of British Parliamentary Debate and peer assessment significantly enhances students' interest in learning speaking. The high score in the desire dimension suggests that these strategies successfully stimulate students' intrinsic motivation. This supports the idea that interactive and student-centered activities can increase learners' willingness to participate in language learning.

Furthermore, the high scores in the necessity dimension indicate that students recognize the importance and relevance of the learning activities. The debate format encourages critical thinking and spontaneous speaking, while peer assessment promotes active involvement and responsibility in the learning process. As a result, students perceive these strategies as essential for improving their speaking ability.

In terms of happiness, the findings show that students experience enjoyment and increased confidence. The collaborative nature of peer assessment and the dynamic atmosphere of debate contribute to a more supportive learning environment. This emotional engagement is important because positive learning experiences can strengthen students' interest and sustain their participation.

These findings confirm that combining British Parliamentary Debate with peer assessment not only improves speaking practice but also addresses affective factors such as motivation, confidence, and enjoyment. Therefore, this approach can be considered an effective pedagogical strategy in EFL classrooms.

CONCLUSION

The findings demonstrate that students exhibited strong interest in learning speaking through the integration of British Parliamentary Debate and Peer Assessment. Specifically, the questionnaire data revealed high levels of Wishes (Desire), Necessities (perceived importance and urgency), and Happiness (joyful learning through critical thinking and confidence building), with an overall interest indicator of 88.68%. This affective engagement underscores the effectiveness of this pedagogical approach in fostering students' motivation and enthusiasm for speaking practice. These results extend prior research by confirming that British Parliamentary Debate combined with Peer Assessment significantly enhances students' interest dimensions in speaking instruction.

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