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## AN ANALYSIS OF MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING IN DEBATE CLASSROOM INTERACTION (A Descriptive Study at One of the Private Universities in Ciamis)

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**Abstract:** This study deals with an analysis of male and female students' critical thinking in debate classroom interaction. This study aimed to find out the debate impact on male and female students' critical thinking and identify which gender tends to have more critical thinking. This study applied a descriptive qualitative research design with document analysis. The data material consists of students' comments on google classroom with 27 participants in two classes which are 12 male students and 15 female students. The data was analyzed using a critical thinking rubric by identified and converted into a percentage. The result shows that debate has an impact on students' critical thinking. Both male students and female students already can give a logical statement. The students' critical thinking has an impact at a high level. The result also indicates that male students' scores on critical thinking were lower than female students' scores. Male and female has a different percentage where the male has 159 scores (40%) while the female has 236 scores (60%). At last, the researcher provides some suggestions for the teacher who guides this activity should give the students more variations in building interaction and make the students feel comfortable in joining the online classroom. The researcher expects the next researcher who is interested in the analysis of critical thinking and classroom interaction to conduct another research in the online classroom.

**Keywords:** critical thinking, debate, classroom interaction

### INTRODUCTION

As a human need, language is an instrument to communicate and interact with one another. Brown (2004) states that during communicative language teaching, interaction is the core of communication. This concept makes it obvious that interaction is an essential thing for language teachers. Communication skills are not just speaking or listening, but also critical thinking. Interaction can increase through classroom communication. According to Pratiwi (2014, p. 1),

good classroom interaction implicates an enjoyable classroom atmosphere with friendly relationships among the participants in the learning process. It also motivates students to be effective learners.

Interaction occurs in the classroom activities between the teacher and students or vice versa. One way to build classroom interaction is through discussion and debate. The classroom discussion is a teaching model that allows students to join small and large group conversations. Pratiwi (2014, p. 4) states that debate is an outstanding way to improve critical thinking skills. The process of observing a debate is an assessment of the pros and cons of an issue, setting what the problems are, and considering alternative solutions. The debate can develop critical thinking.

Critical thinking training provided to students indicated that critical thinking skills in higher education are getting a central goal in communication. Critical thinking skills in higher education can lead students to be communicative, collaborative, creative, innovative, critical, and analytical in thinking, and able to effectively solve actual-world problems. Nurjanah et al. (2018, p. 1) state that a better critical thinking skills will not develop by themselves, students must be taught. Improving critical thinking takes a lot of time to set up and is difficult to design. Therefore, a teacher must be committed to developing decision-making through teaching critical thinking skills. Everyone has a different mindset and communication

There are many differences in communication among males and females. When females are expected to communicate as a way to get a relationship, males are expected to communicate to enhance social dominance in their interactions. According to Wood (1996), as cited in Merchant (2012, p. 17), the biggest differences between male and female communications refer to the differences given conversational purpose. It means that females use good speech. They tend to avoid swearing, speak more politely, and employ more tag questions and intensifiers (Lakoff, 1975) as cited in Merchant (2012, p. 18). Females mostly are more careful, uncertain, and polite language in their conversations, while males are more self-confident and aggressive.

Previously, research on the related topic have been conducted by several researchers (Arisandi, 2018; Handayani, 2002; Iman, 2017; Merchant, 2012; Sari et al., 2019; Walker & Kettler 2020). None of them focus on an analysis of male and female students' critical thinking in debate classroom interaction is still sparse. Therefore, the present study is aimed to find out the debate impact on male and female students' critical thinking and identify which gender tends to have more critical thinking.

## **METHOD**

Qualitative research has descriptive data which are collected in the form of words or interpretation rather than numbers (Frankel & Wallen, 2009, p. 423). Data in the form of quotes from documents, field notes, interviews, or excerpts from videotapes, audiotapes, or electronic communications function to present the findings of the study. The researcher employed a naturalistic qualitative research design, which means that the qualitative research did not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon in the classroom activities.

The researcher used a descriptive qualitative design and collected the data from observation (non-participant observer) and document analysis. The researcher employed the descriptive method which is a method of research that attempt to describe and interpret the actual objects. The descriptive method is conducted because the data analysis is presented descriptively. Thus, this study focused on the observation, including identifying and describing the student's critical thinking in classroom activities.

Frankel et al (2012, p. 10) “underline that qualitative research is concerned with developing an explanation of social phenomena”. From this statement, the researcher used the qualitative method to make the explanation of students’ critical thinking as strategies in responding to problems or a point of view and to obtain the data by simply joining the online group discussion, understanding and interpreting the data. In this study the population and sample, the researcher can be conducted the EFL college students of the University in Ciamis as the population and there are 27 students in the second grade as the sample, which are 12 students as male and 15 students as female. The study can be conducted at University in Ciamis West Java. Fraenkel et al., (2007, p. 122) state that observation is defined as a method of data collection in which the interest situation is observed and the relevant facts, actions, and behaviors are recorded.

From the discussions above, the researcher has to know the condition of activities. In this observation, the researcher was a non-participant observer. According to Creswell (2012, p. 214), a nonparticipant observer is an observer who visits a site and records notes without becoming involved in the activities of the participants. The researcher did not participate in the activity being observed but just joined the activity in the online classroom on Google Classroom. While the researcher observes the participant, the researcher also writes the important things related to this study. Then, the researcher interprets the present data. Finally, the researcher can conclude the data. In conducting the observation, the researcher checks the student’s assignments that were submitted in online group discussion; and the researcher started by selecting the students’ assignments based on their class. The next step was coding some information data regarding the research questions. After the coding process, the researcher analyze students’ critical thinking using rubric scoring and calculated the frequency of students’ scores toward male and female students, and also converted them into percentages.

The percentage of the student’s critical thinking is sought by the formula:

$$Percentage = \frac{Total\ student\ score}{Total\ max\ score} \times 100\%$$

Then, the researcher verified the level of students’ critical thinking. From calculations using the formula above, it can define the category of the level of critical thinking as can be seen I Table 1. Finally, the researcher reported the data result and concluded.

**Table 1 Level of student critical thinking**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Very High	75 – 100
High	50 – 75
Medium	25 – 50
Low	0 – 25

Another data collection that is analyzed in the present study is document. Document analysis is a structured procedure to review or evaluate printed and electronic documents (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material (Bowen, 2009). The same as other analytical methods in qualitative research, documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher’s involvement. This analysis takes emerging themes and makes them into categories used for further analysis.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The impact of the debate on male and female students' critical thinking

In explaining the findings, the researcher presented the analysis and percentage of students' critical thinking levels. This research used questions to measure the level of students' critical thinking ability in debate classroom interaction. The question given is related to the current situation. There are 5 indicators used as benchmarks for students' abilities in this research. Namely, argument, reason, evidence, organization, and conclusion. Here are the following results.

**Table 2. Score on the students' critical thinking rubric**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Argument	1	4	15%
	2	2	7%
	3	2	7%
	4	3	11%
	5	16	60%
Total		27	100%
Reason	1	6	22%
	2	6	22%
	3	4	15%
	4	3	11%
	5	8	30%
Total		27	100%
Evidence	1	9	33%
	2	3	11%
	3	3	11%
	4	5	19%
	5	7	26%
Total		27	100%
Organization	1	2	7%
	2	7	26%
	3	5	19%
	4	11	41%
	5	2	7%
Total		27	100%
Conclusion	1	12	44%
	2	7	26%
	3	1	4%
	4	2	7%
	5	5	19%
Total		27	100%

Based on the Table 2 previously, through a score of students' critical thinking by a rubric, it was found that from each indicator the students have score differently. As an indicator of argument, most of the students get a score of 5 with a percentage of 60%. It means that the students can focus on the topic and also claims the statement and in indicator of reason, the students get a score of 5 with a percentage of 30%. It means that the students can support the claim and answer the topic which should be believed. The difference with an indicator of evidence, with a percentage of 33%, most students get a score of 1 which means that lack of evidence. The student doesn't provide the fact and presents an example. Furthermore, in the indicator of organization, most of the students

get a score of 4 which means that the students writing are logical and some cohesion and coherence relating to the topic with a percentage of 41%. The last, as an indicator of conclusion, most students get a score of 1. It means that the students also leak conclusions with a percentage of 44%. The students do not present most features and do not restate or reclaim what the readers believe.

Furthermore, related to those results, the researcher summarized the result scoring of male and female students' critical thinking based on level. The following result is given in Table 3.

**Table 3. Level of male and female students' critical thinking**

Level	Male	Female	Total	Percentage (%)
Very High	2	2	4	15%
High	5	10	15	55%
Medium	4	3	7	26%
Low	1	0	1	4%
Total	12	15	27	100%

From the result previously in Table 3, the researcher converts the scoring of male and female students' critical thinking into the levels. Related to the result, male and female students' critical thinking at a high level with a percentage of 55%. It means that debate has an impact on male and female students. Meanwhile, a lot of students stated that the debate technique was very beneficial in absorbing knowledge and gave them assistance in argument analysis. Likewise, they believed that debate helped them welcome others' opinions and it developed their critical thinking skills.

### Gender Who Tends to Have More Critical Thinking

After discussing the process of analysis, the researcher presented the Table 4 which draw the result of online classroom observation as the guidance. The tables describe the percentage of male and female critical thinking.

**Table 4. Percentage of male and female critical thinking by each indicator**

Students	Indicators				
	Argument	Reason	Evidence	Organization	Conclusion
Male	38%	43%	38%	40%	39%
Female	62%	57%	62%	60%	61%
Total	100%				

From the Table 4 above, it was found that in five indicators, there are argument, reason, evidence, organization, and conclusion. In all of the indicators, the higher percentage was dominated by females rather than males. The difference in average is due to the female students' answers being better in analyzing and drawing conclusions on the critical thinking ability test than males.

This result relates to the research conducted by Mahanal (2012) which also revealed that gender affected increasing critical thinking skills as showed by the corrected mean value of female thinking abilities which was higher than males. Ricketts and Rudd (2004) also found that female critical thinking ability scores were higher than males. Female students are also judged to be better at recognizing problems, providing statements and questions, elaborating concepts, giving reasons and opinions, as well making statements.

## CONCLUSION

After analyzing, presenting, and discussing the data, the researcher finds some conclusions to answer the research questions. First, the researcher found that the students' critical thinking has a different score. The researcher converts into percentage and found that male and female students have a percentage of about 55% which can be categorized as high. It means debate in classroom interaction has an impact on students' critical thinking. On the other hand, many students stated that the debate technique was very good to achieve knowledge and help them with argument analysis. They also believed that debate keeps them welcoming others' opinions and it developed their critical thinking skills.

From the second result, it was found that there are five indicators such as argument, reason, evidence, organization, and conclusion. In all of the indicators, the higher percentage was dominated by females rather than males. The difference in average is due to the female students' answers being better in analyzing and drawing conclusions on the critical thinking ability test than males. Female students are also judged to be better at identifying problems, giving statements and questions, explaining concepts, giving reasons and opinions, as well the ability to make statements. It means, that females use good speech. They avoid swearing, speak more politely, and mostly use tag questions and intensifiers (Lakoff, 1975) as cited in Merchant (2012, p. 18). It means females overall are more expensive, tentative, and polite language in their conversations, while males are more assertive and aggressive.

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## APPENDICES

### Rubric of critical thinking

Component of Critical Thinking	point				
	1	2	3	4	5
Argument	Unclear; absent; insufficient length to ascertain maintenance	Confusing; attempted; main point unclear or shifts	Under promise, overdeliver; overpromise, underdeliver; infer; two/+ positions w/o unifying statement	Barebones; position clear; main point previewed	Position clear; generally previewed
Reasons	No support; no credible sources; unbelievable vague; confusing	Conclusion minimally supported; alternatives unmentioned; muddled concluded	Some insufficient support; alternatives prejudicially mentioned; key terms undefined	Moderat support; alternatives mentioned fairly/ some vagueness	Conclusion well supported; alternatives well recognized; clear
Evidence	No fact doesn't present most examples	Fact minimally supported	Some facts and examples support	Fact and examples more than one	Examples clear
Organization	No plan; insufficient length to ascertain maintenance	Attempted plain is noticeable	Not knowledgeable in paragraphing	Some cohesion and coherence relating to the topic; plain is clear	Most points are connected; coherent; cohesive; using various methods
Conclusion	Doesn't present most features; in suff. length	Attempts to address assignment; conclusion	Partly developed; one/> features not developed	Essentials present	Features present, but not all equal

Adapted from Ennis (2001)

