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Debates as a Strategy to Improve Speaking Skills in seventh grade students at Genesis Christian
School during third quarter of 2024

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Abstract

This study examines the use of debates as a pedagogical strategy to improve the oral expression skills of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School during the third trimester of 2024. The primary objective of this research is to assess the effectiveness of debates in developing students' oral competence and their deficiencies in speaking skills through structured debate sessions. To achieve this, a quantitative approach was adopted, utilizing student observations, assessments, debates as intermediate activities, and a final debate as a post-test to measure progress in terms of fluency, coherence, and confidence in oral expression. The results indicate that, although students initially demonstrated an intermediate or basic level of English, significant progress was observed during the debate sessions in their ability to organize and articulate ideas more clearly and coherently. Additionally, advanced students played a key role in supporting their peers, which facilitated group dynamics and collaborative learning. By the end of the study, students demonstrated increased confidence and fluency in their contributions, and active participation in the debates contributed to the development of critical thinking and the ability to respond logically and quickly. In conclusion, this study confirms that debates are an effective pedagogical tool for improving oral communication skills, enhancing not only linguistic competence but also promoting collaborative learning and cognitive development.

Resumen

La investigación examina el uso de los debates como estrategia pedagógica para mejorar las habilidades de expresión oral de los estudiantes de séptimo grado en Genesis Christian School durante el tercer trimestre de 2024. El objetivo principal de este estudio es evaluar la efectividad de los debates en el desarrollo de la competencia oral de los estudiantes, abordando sus deficiencias en habilidades de expresión oral mediante sesiones estructuradas de debate. Para ello, se adoptó un enfoque cuantitativo, utilizando observaciones a los estudiantes, evaluaciones, debates como actividades intermedias y un debate final como post test, con el fin de medir los avances en términos de fluidez, coherencia y confianza en la expresión oral. Los resultados obtenidos indican que, aunque los estudiantes presentaban un nivel intermedio o básico de inglés al inicio de la intervención, durante las sesiones de debate se observó un progreso significativo en su capacidad para organizar y articular ideas de manera más clara y estructurada. Además, los estudiantes avanzados desempeñaron un papel fundamental al apoyar a sus compañeros, lo que favoreció la dinámica grupal y el aprendizaje colaborativo. Al finalizar la investigación, los estudiantes demostraron mayor confianza y fluidez en sus intervenciones, y la participación activa en los debates contribuyó al desarrollo del pensamiento crítico y la capacidad para responder de forma lógica y rápida. En conclusión, este estudio confirma que los debates son una herramienta pedagógica efectiva para mejorar las habilidades de comunicación oral, no solo incrementando la competencia lingüística, sino también promoviendo el aprendizaje colaborativo y el desarrollo cognitivo de los estudiantes.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER I	16
Introductory Framework.....	16
1.1 Problem Statement.....	16
1.2 Objectives of the Investigation.....	18
1.2.1 General Objective.....	18
1.2.2 Specific Objectives.....	18
1.3 Justification of the Study.....	19
1.4 Antecedents.....	21
1.5 Scope.....	24
 CHAPTER II	 25
Theoretical Framework.....	25
2.1 Literature Review	25
2.1.1 Section’s Introduction.....	25
2.1.2 Theory #1: The Audio-Lingual Method.....	27
2.1.3 Theory #2: The Participatory Approach.....	29
2.1.4 Theory #3: Community Language Learning.....	31
2.1.5 Theory #4: Task-Based Approach.....	32
2.1.6 Theory #5: Communicative Language Teaching.....	34
2.2 Important Definitions.....	36
2.2.1 Debate.....	36
2.2.1.2 History.....	38
2.2.1.3 Participants.....	39
2.2.2 Speaking related to debates	39

	12
CHAPTER III.....	42
Methodological Framework	42
3.1 Research Approach.....	42
3.2 Research Design	43
3.3 Information Sources	44
3.4 Analysis Categories	45
3.4.1 Fluency.....	45
3.4.2 Pronunciation.....	46
3.4.3 Feedback.....	46
3.4.4 Monitoring.....	46
3.5 Data Collection Instruments.....	47
3.5.1 Student Observation.....	47
3.5.2 Pre-test.....	48
3.5.3 Activities in Between.....	48
3.5.4 Post-test.....	49
3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis.....	50
CHAPTER IV	51
Data Analysis.....	51
4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results.....	51
4.1.1 Student Observation.....	52
4.1.2 Pre-test	59
4.1.3 Activities in between.....	65
4.1.3.1 First Debate.....	68
4.1.3.2 Second Debate.....	72

4.1.4 Post-test.....	78
CHAPTER V.....	84
Conclusions and Recommendations.....	84
5.1 Purpose of the Conclusions	84
5.2 Conclusions	84
5.2.1 To determine the speaking proficiency of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School.....	85
5.2.2 To apply debates as a strategy to improve the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School	86
5.2.3 To analyze the use of debates as a strategy to improve the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School... ..	87
5.3 Restatement of the Research Question	88
5.4 Recommendations	89
References.....	92

Table of Tables

Table 1: Pre-test scoring table.....	60
Table 2: Table of scores graded with each student 7A.....	61
Table 3: Table of scores graded with each student 7B.....	62
Table 4: Table of scores graded by each team on the post-test.....	81

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Student Observation - English proficiency.....	53
Figure 2: Student Observation – Listening Comprehension.....	55
Figure 3: Student Observation - Confidence in Speaking.....	57
Figure 4: Final Scores of the pre-test	64
Figure 5: Classroom set up for the debates.....	67
Figure 6: Mispronounced words feedback.....	72
Figure 7: Mispronounced words feedback.....	75
Figure 8: Analysis of the student's performance during the first debate.....	77
Figure 9: Analysis of the student's performance during the second debate.....	78

Chapter I

Introductory Framework

There is a significant misalignment taking its toll on education, specifically with secondary students who have been learning English for seven years and still do not know how to speak the target language. This gap between native speakers and English students makes learners unmotivated to receive English classes at high school because, at the end of the school year, they do not accomplish the target level of English. This problem was easy to identify due to the rapid appearance of collateral damage, which means that many students graduate without having the required level of English. This research is particularly important because it wants to delay as much as possible the misaligning between English students in secondary and native speakers, making students motivated to take English classes. In this research, the reason English language learners who have spent years learning but still do not know how to speak English will be identified, a solution in the form of debates will be proposed, and the results this potential solution may bring, will be discussed.

1.1 Problem Statement

In Costa Rica, education is imparted for six years in primary school, five in academic high school, or six in technical secondary if students decide to. According to this data, the entire process of middle education is around eleven years. Students are required to take English language classes during those years; however, at the end of middle education, learners are not able to speak English as well as they should. In this scenario, English learning significantly on students' willingness to learn. Nevertheless, cultural factors work against this, as Costa Rica is not a country where people typically study independently. The population has been taught by teachers, tutors, or other responsible individuals, but self-directed learning is uncommon. In this

context, students require assistance in motivation and guidance to enhance their proficiency in English speaking.

As observed, part of the student's needs involves having a teacher who is constantly engaged with each one of them. Speaking skills include engagement with the learning process from both teachers and students. The teacher's involvement in this area is to find manners to improve English language speaking skills, helping students feel supported in the learning process and improving oral proficiency resulting in a well-prepared oral area. After reading about the issues, Shahnaz, et al. (2024) states that teachers should provide speaking activities so that students can develop their speaking skills. It also emphasizes that speaking requires reading, writing, and listening skills to better approach speaking, by understanding and aligning with the entire learning process to communicate. Unfortunately, this area is not covered as much as it should be.

On the contrary, the student's engagement entails comprehending the materials provided by the teacher. To effectively utilize the teacher as a valuable educational, seek clarification as needed. This ensures a thorough understanding and application of acquired knowledge into practice. Typically, students often limit their efforts to attending classes and paying close attention. However, they often face difficulties when it comes to expressing what they have learned. According to Shahnaz, et al. (2024) explain that students do not practice English outside of class for many reasons, such as negative comments, fear of making a mistake, inadequate vocabulary, and more. The students are presenting fear of appearing that they do not know English, and they do not feel comfortable to speak. This means, that once classes conclude and students return home, the materials received are frequently forgotten, as they were not practiced before class. This lack of practice continues the issue, resulting in insufficient development of English oral skills.

Consequently, a disparity arises between native speakers and English learners. Students and teachers strive to maintain a coherent learning process; however, certain factors contribute to students consistently achieving minimum scores due to inadequate development of English-speaking skills at Genesis Christian School. The issue this research aims to address is that students often forget the material without putting it into practice. Therefore, the research question is, what is the outcome of using debates as a strategy to improve speaking skills in seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School during the third quarter of 2024?

1.2 Objectives of the Investigation

1.2.1 General Objective

To analyze the use of Debates as a Strategy to Improve Speaking Skills in seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School during the third quarter of 2024

1.2.2 Specific Objectives.

To determine the speaking proficiency of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School

2. To apply debates as a strategy to improve the speaking skill of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School

3. To evaluate the use of debates as a strategy to improve the speaking skill of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School

1.3 Justification of the Study

The seventh-grade students necessitate support programs aimed at enhancing their English language speaking skills. The misalignment prevalent between native speakers and English learners will not diminish autonomously; therefore, educators must strategize to align students with the requisite proficiency levels for their respective grades. Accordingly, debates emerge as a pivotal plan prepared to facilitate both teachers and students. This initiative is designed with the objective of augmenting students' English language proficiency, prioritizing their advancement in both knowledge acquisition and speaking abilities, and this focuses on students' progress in knowledge and speaking skills.

The challenge of students not achieving high scores in English at the end of the school year is not restricted to Costa Rican or limited to a specific sector; it requires a more expansive solution. Considering Cuong (2019) who states, "Although spending at least three years of learning English language education, many Vietnamese high-school leavers are still not proficient in this language" (p. 49) Debates offer a promising solution to address this issue at Genesis Christian School. Academic studies discuss this problem earnestly, as it significantly impacts many students. Several reasons contribute to its occurrence. According to recent research, the primary issue stems from motivation, a challenge prevalent not only in Costa Rica but also despite the efforts of numerous teachers striving to mitigate it.

At Genesis Christian School, students developed strong speaking skills and engage in conversations with an elevated level of proficiency English from an early age. However, a noticeable deficiency exists among students who do not engage in practice at home and depend exclusively on classroom instruction, resulting in significant challenges in their speaking abilities in this language. The objective is to enhance oral skills through debates, reducing deficiencies

and ensuring students achieve marked improvement in proficiency, especially in speaking, alongside writing and reading skills, to successfully progress through the school year.

Implementing debates at Genesis Christian School will help seventh-grade students feel acknowledged, supported, and motivated. When a student is considered for an improvement, automatically starts feeling motivated, because he knows that somebody is giving them attention. By providing students with a safe and structured environment outside of class to enhance their English proficiency, they will become more comfortable speaking. This initiative aims to cultivate strong language skills, fostering confidence among seventh graders. As a result, it promises mutual benefits for the students, teachers, and the entire high school community.

This research aims to provide future generations of English teachers with a tool to address the disadvantages found in this institution, as well as in many others. Debates on topics they want to talk about offer students the opportunity to develop their speaking skills in English and provide a safe space for personal growth, including their suggested topic to motivate students during debate sessions. As Shahnaz, et al. (2024) suggest implementing topics in the debates that students are familiar with or interested in encourages them to engage and feel motivated to speak in the target language. These topics are relevant to them and allow them to contribute effectively to the conversation. Through this approach, teachers can gradually reduce the language barrier and contribute to overall improvement in student performance. This program aims to enhance the English abilities of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School, focusing particularly on their oral proficiency in the target language.

1.4 Antecedents

In this section, readers will find five national and international theses focusing on enhancing speaking skills among English language students. These theses are closely aligned with the current research topic, offering substantial support, and contributing significant insights. They emphasize the relevance and importance of this research effort by consolidating pertinent knowledge in the field.

The first thesis consulted is from Cuong, H (2019), with the topic "Motivation in Learning English Language: A Case Study at Vietnam National University, Hanoi", Huy Coung a student at The University of Szeged, Hungary, authored this thesis. This research aims to determine the factors that influence the students' motivation to learn English. Specific Objectives include finding out the language difficulties that the students encountered during the learning process and providing some recommendations for improving the students' motivation to learn English. Qualitative methods, employing observation, interviews, and focus groups with professionals, were utilized in this study. This thesis underscores the crucial importance of student motivation, highlighting its role in sustaining academic perseverance and enhancing performance in homework, and learning outcomes. The relevance of this emphasis is particularly pertinent to the present study, which aims to boost student's proficiency in English speaking skills through enhanced motivation towards learning a foreign language.

The second thesis consulted is from Bariza (2021), with the topic "Investigating the Role of the "Cake Application" in Enhancing English Foreign Language Learners' Speaking Skill", Rihani Bariza a student of first-year student of English at Biskra University, authored this thesis. This research aims to explore the "Cake application" and its advantages in enhancing the speaking skills of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Specific Objectives include

integrating the Cake application into students' classes to improve speaking proficiency, assessing students' engagement with the application, and offering effective tools to facilitate English language practice.

Qualitative methods, employing observation, interviews, and focus groups with professionals, were utilized in this study. This thesis emphasizes the adoption of new techniques to enable students to study English as a target language and enhance their proficiency in it. The approach emphasizes techniques that concentrate on student learning and the significance of each component within the entire process. This is relevant to recent research on debates, which centers on student-focused methodologies.

The third thesis consulted is from Madrigal, D. (2017), with the topic "Strategies to Teach and Improve Pronunciation in Students of Seventh Grade at Centro Educativo Cristiano Reformado during the Second Quarter of 2017". Luis Daniel Madrigal Elizondo, a student at the University International de las Americas in the School of Educational and Foreign Languages, authored this thesis. The main objective of this study is to analyze the impact of comparing the pronunciation of specific English and Spanish consonants on improving the pronunciation skills of seventh-grade students at Centro Educativo Cristiano Reformado in the second quarter of 2017. Specific goals include identifying common pronunciation errors made by these students with English consonants like /θ, ð, ʒ, dʒ, ʃ, tʃ/, comparing these consonants with their Spanish counterparts, and implementing various techniques and activities to enhance the pronunciation of challenging consonants for Spanish-speaking students. Madrigal's Research aims not only to facilitate effective communication among students but also to encourage accurate pronunciation through their English language studies. This aligns effortlessly with the thesis under discussion,

as a debate program endeavors to enhance oral proficiency, thereby directly contributing to improved pronunciation skills with exercises that promote it.

The fourth thesis consulted is from Artavia, S (2022), with the topic “Application of the Role-Play Technique for Improving English Speaking Fluency in Realistic Scenarios of Interest to 9th-grade Students at Colegio De Santa Ana. Steven Artavia Salas, a student at the University International de las Americas in the School of Educational and Foreign Languages, authored this thesis. This research aims to apply role-play techniques to enhance English speaking fluency among 9th-grade students at Colegio De Santa Ana. Specific objectives include analyzing the impact of role-play speaking fluency, identifying pertinent themes for students' engagement, and examining how realistic scenarios in role-play enhance student participation in the learning process.

The qualitative method was employed where students' and teachers' attitudes and opinions were described and analyzed. This thesis emphasizes that strategies are implemented purposefully to address areas of improvement in English pronunciation through activities that engage students in speaking practice. This research complements debates by focusing on enhancing the same skills through student creativity while providing them with opportunities to think in English, like the thought processes required during debates.

The fifth thesis consulted is from Guerrero (2022), with the topic “The Use of Debate as a Teaching Strategy to Improve Speaking and Communication Skills in Students of Fifth Grade at Sunshine South School during the Second Quarter of 2022”. Maria Fernanda Guerrero Cordero, a student at University International de las Americas in the School of Educational and Foreign Languages, authored this thesis. The research aims to analyze the use of debate as a teaching

strategy it enhances speaking and communication skills among fifth-grade students at Sunshine South School during the second quarter of 2022. Specific goals include finding challenges in English speaking that impact communication, implementing debate activities to improve student participation in speaking tasks and evaluating students' speaking and communication ability through classroom debates.

This thesis uses qualitative methods employed using observation, interviews, and focus groups with educational professionals as research instruments. The present study contributes valuable insights into the application process of the strategy. This thesis includes a detailed explanation of the evaluation procedures, and the steps started by Guerrero. It underscores the significance of implementing debates as a strategy for improving speaking skills.

1.5 Scope

This study aims to address the deficiency in speaking skills among secondary students by proposing strategies for implementation in debate sessions. The primary goal is to promote oral ability and enhance students' confidence in speaking by the end of the academic year through these strategies. The research focuses exclusively on the debate sessions for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School, deviating from traditional classroom methods, the debate sessions will establish a solid foundation for seventh-grade students who lack opportunities to enhance their language skills, consequently addressing this gap. It adopts a quantitative approach utilizing interviews, evaluations, and surveys to assess the effectiveness of the strategy. The goal is for students to achieve proficiency in spoken English at the required level while increasing their motivation and knowledge of the target language.

Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Section's Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how educators evaluate students' speaking skills and the effectiveness of different approaches to enhance their progress. The techniques will be based on debates, which constitute the primary activity under investigation and what the activity will work in research, following Emily-Grot, Ana-Jaraba, & Maria-Ramón. (2024) assert that students must present themselves effectively in academic, professional, and personal contexts. Therefore, teachers must prepare them to use methods that promote exposure to diverse scenarios for understanding and learning (p. 443). Debates also require assessment to ensure that teachers are effectively fulfilling their responsibilities and to identify areas where improvements to the debating tool may be necessary, according to Andrew-Cohen. (1994), the teacher is responsible for observing students during debates to assess their learning progress, establishing debate objectives, and devising strategies for further improvement. (p.53).

The methods were developed for classroom use based on the teacher's assessment of their effectiveness and alignment with students' varying needs across different activities chosen accordingly. Gabriela-Chavarría (2017) asserts that debate has long been a strategic tool within the academic sphere, promoting critical analysis among participants. (p. 46). This is pertinent to the English discussions at Genesis Christian School in seventh grade due to the student's existing knowledge and the effective instructional techniques adapted to their needs. In other words, the researcher is exploring new methodologies aiming to improve student learning. Celal-Akdeniz (2016) affirms that in current times, teachers are increasingly focused on ensuring students

genuinely achieve learning outcomes. This is made feasible through innovative approaches to teaching methods (p. 6). as debates are.

Debates need the cultivation of critical thinking among students, encouraging them to adopt an analytical stance to evaluate and respond from their perspectives. This process awakens their innate critical thinking abilities, enhances their oral proficiency, and fosters the development of analytical skills. US Government (2009) Students exposed to these methodologies cultivate a proactive mindset characterized by problem analysis and environmental awareness, enabling them to actively seek solutions. These methods effectively foster the development of critical thinking skills among students. (p. 17). This prior information proves directly beneficial for debates at Genesis Christian School. Debates enhance students' oral skills, effectively utilize class time for relevant topics, and contribute to comprehensive progress among seventh-grade students.

The methodologies discussed are crucial for debates in seventh-grade education as they provide structured frameworks and approaches that enhance various aspects of student learning and participation. The Audio-Lingual Method, for instance, emphasizes repeated practice in listening and speaking, which is fundamental for developing oral proficiency and language fluency among students. This method ensures that students are not only exposed to correct language patterns but also encouraged to actively use them in meaningful contexts, such as debates.

The Participatory Approach promotes active student engagement and collaboration, fostering critical thinking skills and the ability to articulate well-supported arguments. By encouraging students to take ownership of their learning and contribute actively to discussions, this approach enhances their confidence and communication abilities during debates. Then, the

Task-Based Approach integrates language learning with practical tasks and activities, making learning more relevant and engaging for students. By structuring debates around tasks that require problem-solving and real-world application of language skills, this approach prepares students to apply their knowledge in authentic contexts and enhances their overall language proficiency. Finally, the Communicative Language Teaching approach focuses on developing students' communicative competence by emphasizing meaningful interaction and communication in debates. This approach ensures that debates are not just about language correctness but also about conveying ideas effectively, understanding different perspectives, and engaging in productive dialogue.

Incorporating these methodologies into debates for seventh-grade students at your school enriches their educational experience by providing them with diverse learning opportunities, and fostering critical skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and effective communication. These methodologies not only support academic growth but also prepare students to become confident, articulate, and engaged learners who are equipped to navigate complex challenges both in and beyond the classroom.

2.1.2 Theory #1: The Audio-Lingual Method

According to Klaus-Harmer (2007), Audio-lingual is regarded as effective for addressing students' errors. Its primary aim is to cultivate correct language usage among learners by utilizing positive reinforcement from teachers (p. 64). This approach enables teachers to correct students' errors through repetition and the active utilization of listening and speaking skills, thereby promoting simultaneous improvement in these areas. Active repetition is crucial for skill enhancement in teaching, particularly in the context of learning English as a foreign language. This method involves students orally rehearsing words, both in listening and speaking. By

actively listening and then speaking, students internalize correct pronunciation patterns and integrate these words into their vocabulary. This process facilitates the establishment of neural pathways associated with accurately pronounced words, thereby enhancing language acquisition.

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001) state that this approach emphasizes its efficacy in enabling individuals to achieve a balanced combination of comprehending fundamental grammar principles and acquiring conversational proficiency. (p. 59). This method aligns with the current thesis by facilitating students in establishing coherence between writing effectively structured sentences and articulating them verbally in the proposed debates. In debates, the audio-lingual method is suitable because students continuously listen to their English-speaking teacher, thereby developing a mental repository of language words. When students present their ideas and engage in discussion on the topic, they will employ vocabulary they have heard and correctly pronounced.

The Audio-Lingual Method is important for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School because it enhances their ability to comprehend and speak English as a second language. This pedagogical approach emphasizes active repetition and intensive practice of linguistic patterns and grammatical structures, which are crucial for developing fluency and accuracy in speech. By exposing students continuously to spoken English by their teachers, the Audio-Lingual Method helps build a mental repository of words and expressions in their minds, thereby improving their capacity to communicate effectively and precisely. Moreover, this method boosts students' confidence by providing a clear and structured framework for learning and practicing the language, preparing them to actively participate in debates and other real-life communication situations inside and outside the classroom.

By incorporating the Audio-Lingual Method into debates, Genesis Christian School aims to platform students' language learning experiences effectively. This approach also supports the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar through contextualized practice, ensuring that students can apply language skills dynamically in real-world communication scenarios. Moreover, the Audio-Lingual Method aligns with the school's educational goals by promoting disciplined language practice and systematic learning. It encourages students to master language structures and conventions, fostering a strong foundation for effective communication in both oral and written contexts. This method also supports differentiated instruction by providing structured opportunities for students to improve their language proficiency at their own pace and level.

2.1.3 Theory #2: The Participatory Approach

The participatory approach (TPA) facilitates students' integration of English language skills with real-world context, thereby enhancing their proficiency in speaking. This approach promotes engagement through decision-making, discussions, and active participation, encouraging students to connect English with contemporary societal issues. According to Nikki-Slocum (2003), the participatory approach influences social life significantly, underscoring the importance of clearly defined objectives that integrate personal and societal engagement. (p. 18).

The collaboration between the method and debates lies in their ability to promote decision-making in real-life contexts, immersing students closely in the English language, considered Jo-Rowlands. (2003), the book highlights two key principles: nurturing positive thinking in students' everyday circumstances and enhancing their understanding of the individuals they encounter (p. 228). These principles directly benefit debates by generating discussion topics that engage students in pertinent issues, facilitating dialogue and improving their speaking skills.

The Participatory Approach is crucial for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School because it promotes active engagement and collaborative learning. This pedagogical method encourages students to take ownership of their learning process by participating actively in discussions, problem-solving activities, and group projects. By involving students in decision-making and encouraging them to express their opinions and ideas freely, the Participatory Approach fosters critical thinking skills, communication abilities, and teamwork. These skills are essential for student's overall development and their ability to navigate complex academic and social environments. Additionally, this approach creates a supportive and inclusive classroom atmosphere where students feel empowered and motivated to learn. By integrating the Participatory Approach into education, Genesis Christian School aims to cultivate independent learners who are well-prepared to contribute positively to society and engage effectively in future academic pursuits.

Foster a participatory environment in debates, this approach supports the development of critical thinking skills, communication abilities, and teamwork among students. It encourages them to explore diverse perspectives, analyze information critically, and formulate well-supported arguments. Through active participation in debates, students not only enhance their language proficiency but also cultivate essential skills for academic success and personal growth. Moreover, the Participatory Approach aligns with the educational philosophy of Genesis Christian School by promoting student-centered learning and fostering a supportive classroom community. It encourages students to express their opinions confidently, respect differing viewpoints, and engage in constructive dialogue with peers. This approach also nurtures students' social and emotional development by encouraging empathy, cooperation, and mutual understanding.

2.1.4 Theory #3: Community Language Learning

Community Language Learning (CLL) is a method that integrates the academic sphere into an integrated approach. It emphasizes focusing on two primary aspects of this comprehensive method. Diane-Freeman & Marti-Anderson (2011) The book discusses how CCL centers on the complete development of students, encompassing not only their academic aspects but also their emotions, motivation, physical reaction, and significant aspects of the learning process. (p. 07).

Eli-Hinkel (2011) asserts that teachers bear the responsibility of guiding students to proficiency in non-recurring English Language learning activities and all associated skills (p. 768). This includes utilizing debates as a non-recurring activity to supplement learning, allowing students to connect their emotions with discussed topics, promoting holistic development, and enhancing oral proficiency. Speaking encompasses various elements crucial for comprehensive learning in debates including pronunciation and grammar working in tandem. Yoshida, M. T. (2016) States that pronunciation entails cognitive, physical, and communicative aspects, rendering it complex and instantaneous. (p. 51)

In various countries, debate continues to be employed not only within university degrees such as law but also holds significant importance in education. This is rooted in the necessity for students to effectively articulate and present their ideas in society, beginning with learning how to express themselves confidently within the classroom environment. The Community Language Learning theory is important for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School because it emphasizes collaborative learning and the creation of a supportive learning community. This pedagogical approach fosters an inclusive learning environment where students feel safe to explore and learn English together. Community Language Learning allows students to work in

small groups or pairs under the guidance of the teacher, focusing on conversation and peer interaction for language development.

This approach not only promotes language acquisition but also strengthens interpersonal communication skills, teamwork, and empathy toward peers. By fostering a collaborative and supportive learning atmosphere, the Community Language Learning theory helps students feel motivated and engaged in their learning process. It provides them with opportunities to apply English in meaningful and authentic situations, preparing them to communicate effectively in diverse contexts both inside and outside the classroom. Consequently, CLL aligns with the educational philosophy of Genesis Christian School by promoting integral development and individualized learning experiences. It encourages students to take ownership of their learning process and supports differentiated instruction by adapting teaching strategies to meet students' needs and interests. Through CLL-based debates, students not only improve their language proficiency but also cultivate essential skills such as active listening, negotiation, and cooperation.

2.1.5 Theory #4: Task-Based Approach

Task-Based Approach (TBA) is an instructional method employed by teachers to engage students in real-life tasks within the classroom setting, emphasizing speaking as a primary skill and integrating practical scenarios in the real context. Ellis-Rod (2003) explains that this method spotlights the effective integration of the CTL method. Both approaches complement each other cooperatively, with TBA specifically emphasizing tasks aligned with CLT (Communicative

Language Teaching) principles. Those tasks promote meaningful communication and language use in real contexts. (p. 05).

David-Nunan. (1991) Presents three activities as examples of task-based instruction, which plays a crucial role in initiating the method with students. (p. 53-57). The task outlined in the book is valuable for classroom debates, serving as an initial step for a student to enhance their speaking abilities, followed by the teacher helping them to improve in the debates within the class. This method requires a degree of commitment, coupled with careful consideration when introducing it to students. Barbara and Celia affirm that "Your goals should not demand perfection, because that sets you up for failure." (Barbara et al., 2018, p. 22). This should not lead to mediocrity among students, but educators must carefully navigate the balance between encouraging the process and minimizing the fear of making mistakes, as debates can otherwise fail.

Ask students to bring back the answers to the activities requested is also a part of the process, but on the teacher's side it concerns integrating the different parts of the learning process, seventh-grade students of GCS should receive the improvements in grammar, pronounce, assessments and critical thinking among the activities of teacher are asking for. Debates work in different parts of the learning process but are an integral task. Andrew-Cohen (1994) It is argued that the learning process through the technique of task-based approach requires students' effort, enabling them to acquire a comprehensive set of skills by exerting more than minimal effort. (p. 168)

The Task-Based Approach is crucial for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School because it focuses on practical language use and meaningful learning experiences. This

pedagogical method centers around engaging students in tasks that require them to use English to accomplish real-world objectives, such as solving problems, completing projects, or conducting research. By integrating this approach into their curriculum, Genesis Christian School aims to equip students with the language skills necessary for effective communication in various situations.

It encourages students to apply their language knowledge and skills in authentic contexts, promoting active learning and critical thinking. It helps students develop fluency, accuracy, and confidence in using English by making learning relevant and purposeful. Additionally, this approach enhances students' ability to work collaboratively, manage tasks independently, and communicate effectively with their peers and teachers. By emphasizing task-based activities, Genesis Christian School supports students in becoming proficient English language users who can apply their knowledge beyond the classroom, preparing them for future academic and professional endeavors.

2.1.6 Theory #5: Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a pedagogical approach made by Charles A., where the teacher facilitates real-life communication situations with students and encourages them to actively engage in using their target language in authentic contexts. This method aims to help students go deep into practical language usage. Klaus-Brandl (2008) states that CLT is focused on developing students' communicative competence by emphasizing real-life situations. It aims to motivate students to actively engage in speaking about practical context, and it encourages students to acquire language skills applicable to everyday interactions. (p. 05).

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001) emphasize that this technique requires students to integrate emotions, feelings, and skills into speaking situations (p. 90). The significance of this approach resides in its use of real-life debates, enabling students to feel personally engaged in their learning environment and promoting a sense of closeness to the English language through active communication in debates. The experience that students gain enables them to discuss comfortably in debates based on their knowledge and insights. Berg-Esenwein's (2017) Experience, despite not being the ultimate teacher, provides substantial support in two areas: first, enhancing interactions with others, and second, justifying our positions in various situations. (p. viii).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is crucial for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School because it prioritizes real-life communication skills over rote memorization and grammar drills. This pedagogical approach emphasizes the practical use of English in authentic contexts, encouraging students to engage actively in meaningful interactions. By focusing on communicative competence, CLT aims to develop students' ability to express themselves fluently and accurately, both orally and in writing.

In the context of Genesis Christian School, CLT supports students in becoming proficient communicators by providing opportunities for them to engage in discussions, debates, role-plays, and collaborative tasks. These activities help students apply their language knowledge in practical situations, enhancing their confidence and proficiency in English. Moreover, CLT fosters critical thinking skills as students learn to negotiate meaning and express their ideas effectively.

Consequently, integrating CLT into the curriculum, Genesis Christian School prepares students to communicate confidently in various social and academic settings. This approach not

only enhances language acquisition but also promotes cultural awareness and empathy by encouraging students to interact with diverse perspectives and backgrounds. Overall, CLT equips seventh-grade students with the necessary language skills to succeed academically and navigate real-world communication challenges with competence and confidence.

2.2 Important Definitions

2.2.1 Debate

According to the Dictionary of the Spanish Language "discussion" (RAE, 2001, para. 01). A debate in educational settings involves teachers facilitating discussions where students articulate their diverse viewpoints in a structured environment, allowing them to express their ideas within a context of critical thinking. Tuukka, et al. (2022) affirm that debate has played a crucial role in academia since ancient times, combining various skills to facilitate research. These debating practices were initially used to cultivate skills in oration and law, eventually becoming integrated into the educational system to promote intellectual development. (p. 156). This tool integrated into the educational system has generated significant benefits for students, fostering their comprehensive development for life. Implementing this tool has also shown substantial improvement in student learning, as they contribute their ideas and engage in constructive debates.

Understanding the definition and context of debate is associated with research aimed at enhancing the oral skills of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School. This involves creating a controlled space where students can discuss topics of interest, express their viewpoints, and simultaneously cultivate critical thinking and problem-solving abilities through the techniques employed. These approaches prove highly beneficial, resulting in students who

demonstrate improved speaking skills. AnnMarie Baines, et al. (2023) state that debate is a comprehensive speaking format, improving standards across the grades, being one of the best ones. (Para. 3).

It is important to engage students in debates as part of their learning experience because debates encourage critical thinking, effective communication, and confidence building. Debates require students to research, analyze information, formulate arguments, and articulate their viewpoints persuasively. This process helps them develop skills in gathering evidence, evaluating sources, and constructing logical arguments, which are essential not only in academic settings but also in real-life situations.

Debates foster active engagement and participation among students, promoting collaboration and teamwork as they work together to prepare and present their arguments. Engaging in debates also cultivates empathy and respect for differing opinions, as students learn to listen attentively and respond thoughtfully to opposing viewpoints. Moreover, debates provide a platform for students to practice public speaking skills and overcome stage fright or fear of speaking in front of others. By participating in debates, students gain confidence in expressing their ideas effectively and persuasively, which is valuable for their personal and professional development.

Overall, incorporating debates into the educational curriculum helps students acquire and apply essential skills such as critical thinking, effective communication, teamwork, and confidence, preparing them to be informed, engaged, and articulate individuals in both academic and real-world contexts.

2.2.1.2 History

English Speaking Union (2022) explains that the tradition of debate has deep historical roots, tracing back to Ancient Greek philosophers and Indian scholars. Prominent figures such as Socrates and Cicero exemplify early practitioners of debate, engaging in discussions that continued until the end of their lives. In the 1950s, a notable example of a structured debate occurred between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, characterized by its rhetorical precision and focus on the debated topics. This format was inspired by modern debate practices commonly seen in electoral cycles. The first televised debate took place in 1956, but it was in 1960 debate that garnered the most attention. The decisive factor in this debate's outcome was the candidates' charisma and strength of character, highlighting the significance of body language in establishing an emotional connection with the audience.

Debates have been a significant educational tool for more than six decades, continually evolving to enhance their effectiveness. Today, debates play a crucial role in helping students expand their vocabulary and develop critical thinking skills. This method promotes comprehensive learning by requiring students to articulate and defend their viewpoints, engage in rigorous analysis, utilize a foreign language, and refine their public speaking skills. The integration of these competencies prepares students both mentally and linguistically, increasing their confidence and competence beyond the classroom. Moreover, the practice of debating contributes to their ongoing language acquisition and empowers them to express their perspectives assertively, thereby serving as a valuable secondary benefit of this educational approach.

2.2.1.3 Participants

Teaching Innovation Center (2021) says participants: These are the students who engage in the debate, each adopting a position on the topic under discussion.

Moderator: The moderator is the person responsible for summarizing the discussion. They must ensure that speaking turns are alternated fairly among participants and enforce respect for these turns. Additionally, the moderator should curtail any excessively long or irrelevant contributions, ensuring that discussions remain focused on the topic. They are also responsible for managing the time allotted for each participant's contributions.

Evaluator: The evaluator must carefully observe all aspects of the debate. Their responsibilities include assessing the objectivity and responsibility with which opinions are presented, determining whether all participating groups are given equal opportunities, and evaluating if the topic is addressed appropriately.

Synthesizer: Like the moderator and evaluator, the synthesizer must monitor the overall progression of the debate. They are tasked with drawing their conclusions, identifying both the strengths and weaknesses in the debate's organization and the arguments put forth by each group. Finally, the synthesizer must convey their analysis and conclusions to the participants.

2.2.2 Speaking related to debates

According to Richa (2011), engaging in debate is a highly effective activity for language learning, as it actively involves students in various cognitive and linguistic processes. In addition to offering meaningful opportunities for speaking, reading, and listening practice, debate is

particularly valuable for developing argumentation skills that are essential for persuasive writing and speaking.

The development of speaking skills in a debate is essential, particularly for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School who are eager to enhance their communication abilities. Engaging in debates provides these students with a unique opportunity not only to express their ideas but also to learn how to argue effectively and persuade others. As they prepare, they are required to research and organize their thoughts, which aids them in structuring their speeches logically and coherently.

During the debate, the student's speaking skills are tested in real-time. They must present their arguments confidently, respond to their peers' objections, and adapt their discourse or explanation to the reactions of the audience and judges. This experience not only enhances their fluency and clarity in speaking but also teaches them to manage pressure and think critically on the spot. As a result, debate becomes a valuable tool for their personal and academic growth in communication.

This process of developing speaking skills, linked to the outcomes of debate, underscores the importance of consistent practice and feedback. These elements are crucial for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School to improve their public speaking abilities and effectively connect with their counterparts. Ultimately, debate not only provides substantial support in skills such as speaking but also helps them build self-confidence.

Chapter III

Methodological Framework

In this chapter, the methods employed for analyzing and organizing the research were presented. This included detailing the instrument utilized, categorizing data, outlining data collection procedures, and describing the process of data analysis. This chapter demonstrated how each component integrated into a cohesive process aimed at achieving robust and reliable results. It provided clarity on the implementation of the research methodology, ensuring rigorous data collection methods and systematic analysis. By detailing this aspect, the chapter underscored the importance of a well-structured approach to research, which contributed to the generation of meaningful insights and conclusions.

3.1 Research Approach

According to Pritha-Bhandari (2020), the qualitative research entails analyzing non-numerical data such as text, video, or audio to gain insight into concepts, opinions, and experiences. It is employed to delve deeply into issues and innovate new avenues for research. Differing from quantitative research, which emphasizes numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research is prevalent in disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, education, health sciences and history, among others in the humanities and social sciences (para. 1). This approach is based on experiences, opinions, and non-numerical outcomes, which are aimed through debates. The goal is to measure students' results in terms of what they have learned and their progress, rather than in numerical terms. Qualitative research applied in debates offers a profound understanding of students' perspectives on diverse viewpoints, their capacity for critical evaluation of information, and their confidence in expressing opinions. It explores the complex context and personal experiences that influence students' engagement and outcomes in debates.

This approach is crucial for identifying educational strategies that enhance analytical thinking, communication skills, and overall academic engagement.

Utilizing qualitative research into debate setting, educators can refine teaching methods, personalize feedback to meet individual students' needs, and cultivate a collaborative learning environment. These methodologies illuminate how debates promote essential skills such as research, argumentation, and public speaking, preparing students to articulate well-informed viewpoints and navigate complexities in real-world context. In sum, qualitative research enriches educational experiences by deepening the understanding of the multifaceted learning processes inherent in debating.

3.2 Research Design

According with Darshini-Ayton (2023) Phenomenology Research Design is all about understanding and interpreting human behavior and the meanings people attach to their experiences. It focuses on both; what people go through and how they feel about those experiences. This approach looks at perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and emotions. The main goal is to explore lived experiences and the insights individuals gain from them. Since the key data comes from the person being studied, in depth interviews are typically the go-to method for gathering information. (Para. 3) This design enables the thesis to explore how seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School perceive and interpret their experiences through interviews, yielding rich and qualitative data. It facilitates the identification of patterns and promotes empathy, thereby adding a human dimension to the research. Additionally, it encourages the researcher to reflect on her own experiences, enhancing the validity of the work, being essential for addressing topics that require a deep understanding of human experience.

Consider Dulock Helen (1993) The goal of the descriptive research design is to accurately represent the characteristics of a particular individual, situation, or group. Such studies help uncover new insights, describe current conditions, assess how often certain events take place, and organize information into categories. Additionally, this approach involves observing, describing, and documenting elements of a situation as they unfold in real life. (Para 2.) In conclusion, this research design will enable the documentation of the frequency of phenomena such as collaboration and conflict among seventh grade students at Genesis Christian School, thereby enhancing the overall analysis. By adopting this approach, a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the student's experiences will be achieved, which is essential for grasping the impact of debate on their academic and personal development.

3.3 Information Sources

As a primary source in this research, the seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School will serve as key informational resources. Definition of students according (Cambridge University Press, n.d.) Someone who is a student of a particular subject is very interested in it. The primary source in this research, the seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School will serve as key information resources. Through classroom observations, their behaviors and dynamics during debate activities will be documented. A pretest will be administered to assess their initial knowledge and skills, followed by intermediate activities designed to enhance their participation and development. Finally, a post test will measure the impact of these experiences on their learning.

In this thesis, the researcher will incorporate research studies as a secondary source to support the claims about how debate activities influence the development of communication skills and critical thinking in students. These studies provide valuable insights that complement

the findings from my own research. As an example, the research will reference a study that shows how participating in debates helps middle school students build self-confidence and improve their argumentation skills.

For this thesis, a tertiary source will be included to provide a border context for understanding the impact of debate activities on student learning. One such resource is the article titled “The role of a debate in the development of critical thinking.” This article compiles findings from various studies and offers a synthesis of research on how debate fosters critical thinking and communication skills. By referencing this article, the researcher aim to establish a theoretical framework that summarizes existing knowledge in the field, helping to contextualize the research. This tertiary source will also assist in identifying effective trends and approaches that have been shown to enhance communication skills among students, thereby enriching the overall discussion in the thesis.

3.4 Analysis Categories

These categories not only guide the evaluation process but also serve as learning objectives for students, helping them to focus on essential aspects of debate preparation and execution. By analyzing debates based on predefined categories, educators can provide targeted feedback to students, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. This structured approach fosters continuous learning and growth, encouraging students to refine their speaking abilities, logical reasoning, and ability to articulate well-supported arguments.

3.4.1 Fluency

According to Vocabulary fluency is defined as “powerful and effective language” (Vocabulary, 2024, para. 01). Fluency in speech refers to the smoothness and rhythm with which

speakers convey their thoughts verbally. It encompasses the pace at which words are articulated and the natural flow of language during communication. When speakers exhibit a consistent and effortless delivery, characterized by appropriate pauses and cadence, their fluency is typically perceived as proficient. Conversely, irregular pauses or inconsistent speed can hinder fluency and indicate difficulty in conveying ideas effectively.

3.4.2 Pronunciation

According to Vocabulary pronunciation is defined as “the way a word or a language is customarily spoken” (Vocabulary, 2024, para. 01). Pronunciation refers to the correct articulation of words according to established rules and conventions. Each language has specific phonetic guidelines covering how words should be spoken, ensuring clarity and mutual understanding among speakers. Mastering pronunciation entails not only learning the rules but also practicing the correct articulation of sounds to achieve clear and effective verbal communication.

3.4.3 Feedback

According to Vocabulary Feedback is defined as “the process in which part of the output of a system is returned to its input in order to regulate its further output” (Vocabulary, 2024, para. 01). Feedback plays a crucial role in the learning process, serving as essential guidance following an action or task. It consists of constructive comments and insights aimed at enhancing future performance. By incorporating feedback into practice, individuals can refine their skills, deepen their understanding, and achieve higher levels of competence.

3.4.4 Monitoring

According to Vocabulary monitoring is defined as “the act of observing something” (Vocabulary, 2024, para. 01). Monitoring entails the systematic observation and assessment of students’ learning progress by teachers. It involves attentive oversight aimed at facilitating continuous improvement during the debate process. Through vigilant observation, educators can

identify areas needing further development. This ongoing monitoring allows teachers to provide timely intervention, guidance, and support tailored to individual student's needs.

3.5 Data collection Instruments

The seventh-grade debate program at Genesis Christian School utilized instruments tailored to meet teacher's specific needs for a comprehensive assessment. These instruments are integral to providing the researcher with essential information, ensuring a focused approach that highlights pertinent aspects while minimizing less critical details. This study employs three key instruments: firstly, interviews to initiate and conduct to a placement exam, assessing students' English proficiency levels and contextual backgrounds, alongside specific question related to debates. Secondly, focus groups are employed to conduct a more targeted placement exam among peers and to facilitate optimal debate preparation, focusing on topics of student interest. Finally, student observation is utilized to document crucial aspects for enhancing future programs and supporting students in areas where improvement is needed. This structure approach aims to establish a clear and expansive framework for program initiation, progression, and conclusion, optimizing the debate experience with the necessary tools to achieve its objectives effectively.

3.5.1 Student Observation

In base an Ella-Taylor, et al. (2006) states the observation instrument is a tool designed to assist teachers in gathering information about their students. This instrument comprises three sections: an interview with the teacher, a review of the student's record and an evaluation rubric. (parra.1) This instrument assist teachers in determining the students' initial and subsequent proficiency levels upon entry and exit. It facilitates feedback and enables assessment of the

progress made by the student over time. The observation tool offers a comprehensive framework for evaluating academic skills while also providing insights into student behavior. The researcher can assess how students interact in group settings, their levels of engagement, and their verbal and non-verbal communication abilities. Furthermore, it aids in determining their English proficiency, helping to identify specific areas for improvement, including vocabulary, grammar, and overall communication skills.

3.5.2 Pre-test

According to Rea and Parker (2014) explain that pre-testing involves giving the data collection tool to a small group of people from the target population before conducting the full survey. If any issues arise during the pre-test, it's probable that similar challenges will occur during the larger study. The main goal of pre-testing is to pinpoint any problem with the data collection instruments and to explore potential solutions. (p. 163) The pretest would work by enabling the researcher to conduct brief speeches and group discussions prior to implementing the debates. This initial assessment would help identify the students' current speaking abilities and any areas where they may struggle. For instance, if certain concepts are unclear or if students have difficulty articulating their thoughts, the challenges. By collecting this feedback, the researcher ensures that the debates are more effective in enhancing the students' oral skills, thereby fostering a more engaging and productive learning environment.

3.5.3 Activities in between:

Activities in between can effectively gather data on student engagement and learning outcomes during the debate process through research and debate based on the information obtained. By conducting research workshops and facilitating debates the researcher can collect

qualitative data on student participation and understanding. For example, students may assess their confidence and preparedness through brief surveys after research sessions, while the debates themselves can reveal common strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, reflection journals can provide insights into students' emotional engagement and comprehension. This comprehensive approach enables the researcher to gain a clearer understanding of student development and refine instructional strategies for improved educational outcomes.

3.5.4 Post-test

According to QuestionPro (n.d.) Post-test surveys are related to feedback forms that individuals complete after finishing a class, training, program, or event. These services inquire about participant's experiences, what they have learned, and their overall feelings about the process. Using post-test service in debates can significantly enhance the experience for participants by focusing on research, resource gathering, and reflection. Students should be encouraged to thoroughly research their debate topics, looking at different perspectives and using credible sources to strengthen their arguments. Gathering evidence, such as statistics and expert quotes, and creating an annotated bibliography can help them understand the relevance of their sources. After the debates, surveys can assess how students felt about their preparation and confidence, as well as their emotional engagement during the discussion. This feedback offers valuable insight that can help educators improve future debates, making them more effective and engaging for everyone involved. Post-test surveys after the debates can evaluate their effectiveness by measuring student's confidence in the usefulness of their research and their engagement.

3.6 Collection data process and data analysis

The educator initially conducted a semi-structure interview with participants of the seventh-grade debate program at Genesis Christian School. During this session, participants were asked questions designed to elicit responses beyond the specific queries if students desired. Based on the outcomes from these interviews, students proceeded to a focus group phase. Here, the engaged in discussions centered around specific topics such as their English proficiency, cultural interest, and preferred debate themes. The teacher used this information to guide and motivate students by incorporating their suggested topics into the program.

Subsequently, each student underwent an assessment phase where the educator actively participated in the debates and closely monitored their progress. A document record was maintained to track each student's English proficiency levels before and after the program, providing clear evidence of their linguistic development.

Chapter IV

Data Analysis

4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

This chapter is focused on analyzing the information that the researcher obtained from the instruments mentioned in the previous chapter. The results obtained through student observation, pre-test, activities in between, post-test, and the data collection and analysis process will illustrate the progress achieved by the seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School. Analyzing these results is crucial, as it will not only assess the level of learning accomplished but also evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies and activities implemented throughout the educational process. This detailed analysis is essential for identifying strengths, achievements, and areas that may require adjustments, which will help refine the teaching methods used in the future. By doing so, it ensures that the pedagogical approach is continually aligned with the specific needs of the students, ultimately optimizing their learning experience. Furthermore, through the analysis of the data, the researcher aims to address the question posed at the beginning of this study, specifically: what is the outcome of using debates as a strategy to improve speaking skills in seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School during the third quarter of 2024?

In addition, it is important to note that to protect the students' privacy, their personal information is not included in this document. To ensure confidentiality, each student has been assigned a unique identifier, such as "S1," "S2," "S3," and so forth, which will be used throughout the study in place of their actual names. The subsequent sections will provide a detailed presentation of the essential data collected, along with a description of the research instruments utilized. This method not only ensures the anonymity of the participants but also allows for a transparent explanation of the procedures followed in the study.

4.1.1 Student Observation

As previously discussed, when first engaging with a new group of students, it is essential to observe their language proficiency and behavior in a natural classroom setting. In this research, the observation checklist was designed to assess several key areas: students' English proficiency, listening comprehension, and their confidence in speaking. The primary objective of this initial observation was for the researcher to familiarize themselves with the students, understand learning profiles, and assess their interaction with the English language during lessons. This observation took place during a standard English class for seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School.

The checklist created for this study focused on gathering data related to how well students comprehend spoken English, their participation in classroom activities, and the level of confidence they exhibit when speaking English. The purpose of the checklist was not to evaluate students' abilities critically but rather to provide insights into their strengths and areas that require further development. By analyzing these factors, the researcher sought to identify effective teaching strategies that would best support the student's growth in oral communication skills. The following sections will present the data collected, starting with an examination of students' language proficiency, their performance in listening tasks, and their willingness to engage in spoken activities.

The following sections will present three key figures that illustrate the students' English proficiency, listening comprehension, and confidence in speaking they will highlight the students' performance in each area, offering insights into their strengths and areas for improvement.

Figure 1

Student Observation - English proficiency

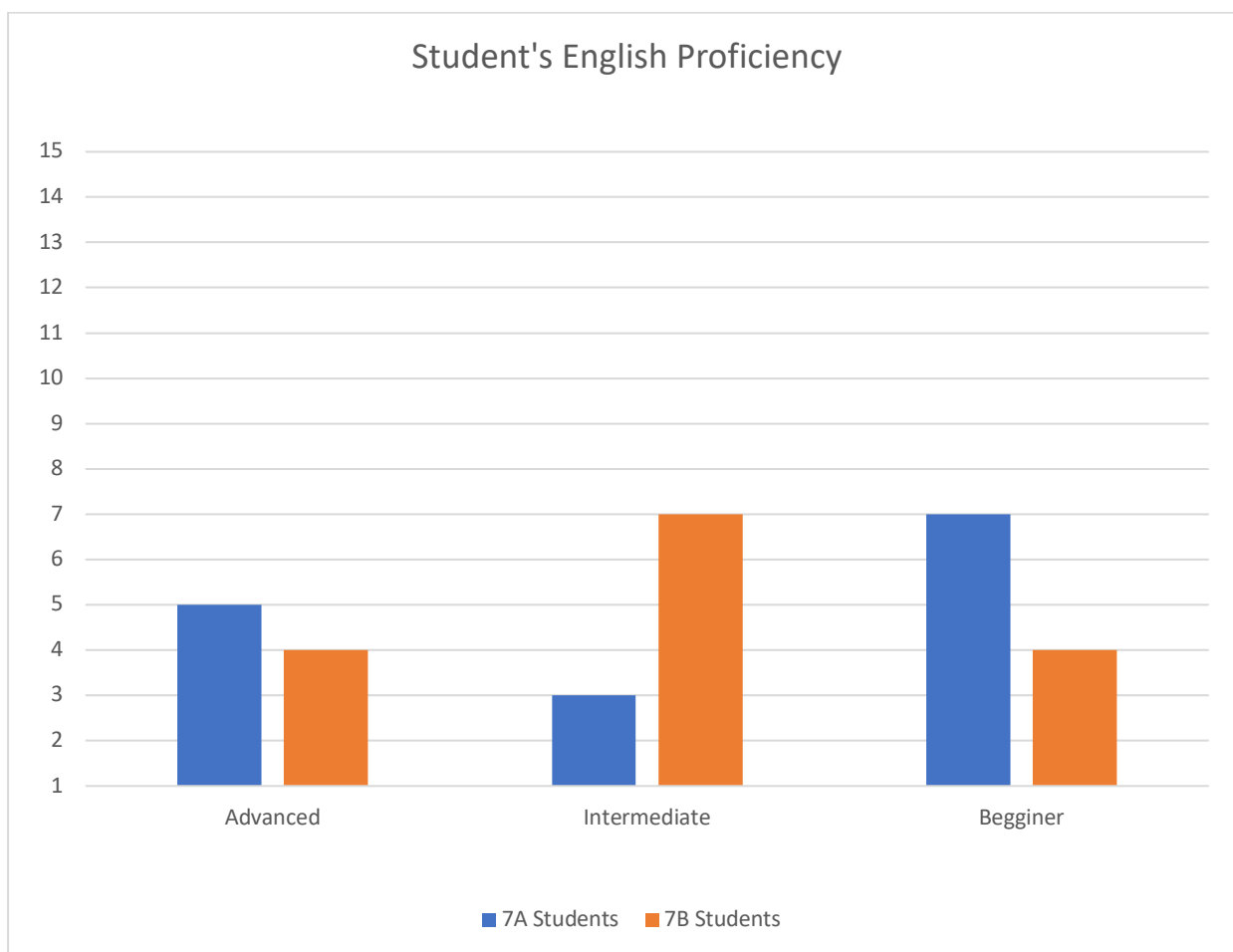


Figure 1. Shows the distribution of the group based on their English proficiency levels.

Designed by the researcher.

It represents the composition of the seventh-grade classes, which are divided into 7A and 7B. Each class has 15 students, for a total of thirty students. This fact is relevant to the research due to the class dynamics and student participation. Since the majority of the students are at the beginner level, the accuracy of their answers tends to be low. However, despite this, the overall participation in the class is quite good. Students actively engage in discussions and make

consistent efforts to contribute, even though they sometimes struggle with vocabulary and grammar. This enthusiasm and willingness to participate reflect their interest in learning, despite the challenges they face with the language.

The researcher observed the class over one week, with each session lasting thirty minutes. The lesson was taught by a well-prepared teacher with seven years of experience, assigned by the school's principal. The relationship among the students appeared informal, friendly, and respectful. Their behavior towards the teacher was appropriate, and they seemed comfortable engaging with her, whether asking questions or participating in discussions. The teacher predominantly used English for instructions and questions, and to address the group. Spanish was used sparingly, mainly in moments when students showed confusion or needed further clarification. This was due to the fact that the students demonstrated a strong understanding of spoken English, particularly in listening comprehension.

An important aspect to highlight is that, due to the smaller class size of 15 students, the lessons are more personalized. Regarding classroom materials and the practice of speaking English, the teacher uses a textbook that provides extensive practice of the topics already studied, covering topics in detail before directing students to work on exercises in the book. On many occasions, she also brings 3D materials to facilitate hands-on learning activities. Additionally, there is a whiteboard at the front of the class, which is used by both the teacher and the students to display examples and engage in practice exercises.

In addition to the personalized approach facilitated by the small class size, the teacher employs a variety of strategies to engage students in meaningful learning experiences. The lessons are structured to promote both individual and group work, allowing students to practice

their language skills in different contexts. Interactive activities, such as pair work and group discussions, are regularly incorporated to encourage communication and build confidence in speaking. The teacher also utilizes technology to enhance the learning experience, incorporating digital resources such as interactive apps and videos that complement the textbook exercises. These resources help students better understand and apply the language in real-life situations. Despite some challenges in language proficiency, the students demonstrate steady progress in their ability to engage with the material, suggesting that the learning environment is conducive to their growth. The following, Figure 2, displays the results of the students' listening comprehension. This figure provides an overview of their ability to understand spoken English, highlighting the different levels of proficiency observed within the group.

Figure 2

Student Observation – Listening Comprehension

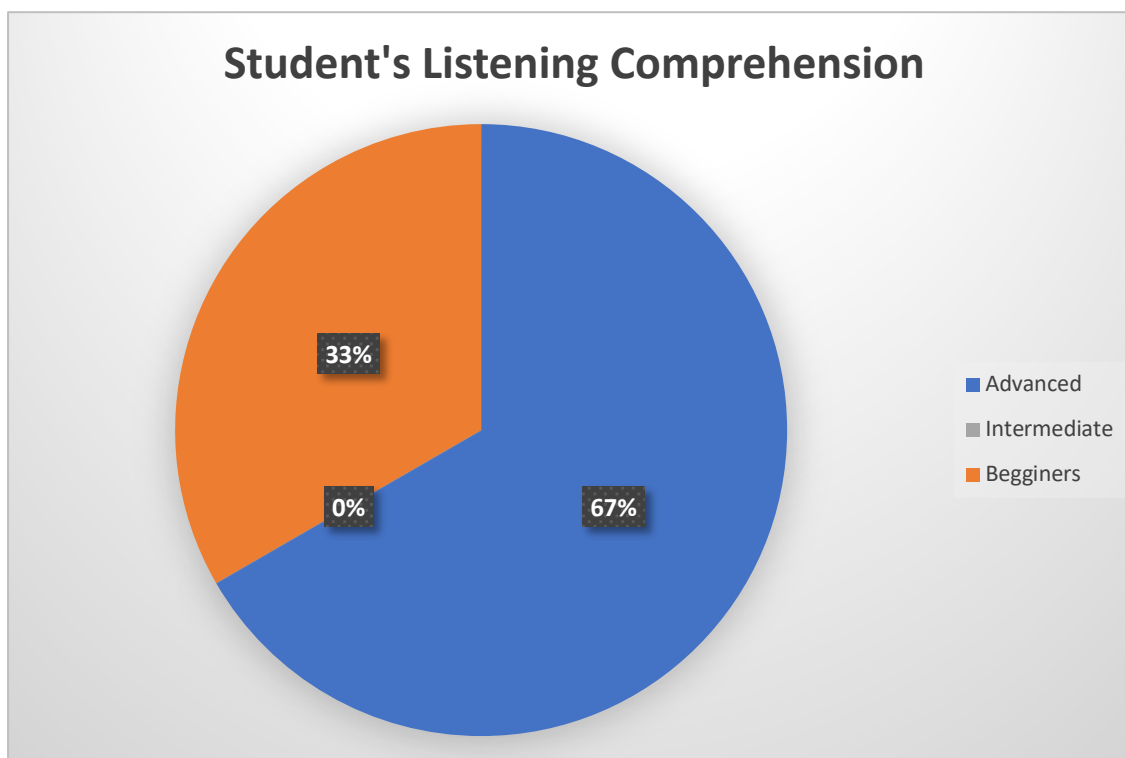


Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of students based on their listening comprehension levels, highlighting both advanced and beginner students. Designed by the researcher.

This figure illustrates the listening comprehension levels of the students, based on their ability to understand spoken English instructions. Out of the thirty students observed, twenty were able to follow the teacher's verbal instructions with ease, demonstrating a solid understanding of spoken English. These students were able to comprehend the tasks and content being presented, which allowed them to participate in the lesson effectively. While this group displayed a strong ability to process spoken language, it's important to note that this comprehension does not directly correlate with their speaking proficiency. Their listening skills reflect an understanding of the language, but they still face challenges in using English fluently in conversation.

Conversely, the remaining ten students experienced more difficulty in grasping the teacher's spoken instructions, often requiring additional clarification or support. This group struggled with understanding both the vocabulary and sentence structure used in the lesson. While they were still able to engage in some aspects of the class, their listening comprehension was less developed, and they needed more guidance to follow the lesson effectively. These students' speaking skills were at a beginner level, and their struggles with listening comprehension were often reflected in their limited verbal participation. These findings highlight a disparity in listening comprehension among the students, which underscores the importance of addressing the individual needs of both groups to improve their overall language proficiency.

In conclusion, the data from Figure 2 underscores the significant variation in students' listening comprehension skills. While most students can understand spoken English instructions, a smaller group continues to face challenges in this area. These differences highlight the need for

targeted support to enhance both listening and speaking skills, as comprehension alone does not guarantee proficiency in language production. To bridge this gap, differentiated teaching strategies and additional practice in listening and speaking are essential to support the diverse needs of the students and foster overall language development.

Figure 3

Student Observation - Confidence in Speaking

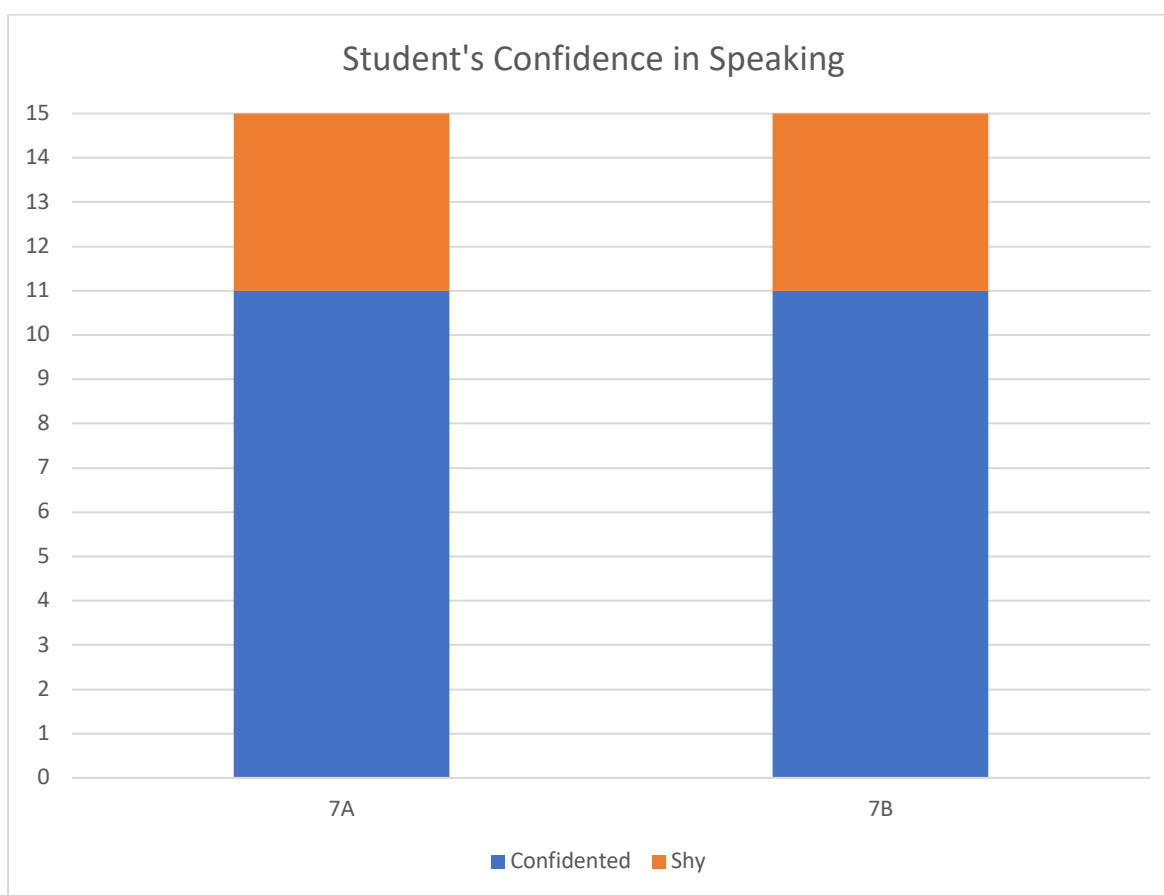


Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of students based on their confidence in speaking English, ranging from confident to shy students. Designed by the researcher.

Figure 3 shows the results of students' confidence in speaking English, categorizing them into confident and shy speakers. Among the 30 students, 22 exhibited a high level of confidence when speaking English, regardless of their proficiency. This group included both students with strong English skills, for whom speaking was a natural part of communication, and those at a beginner level, who, despite their limited vocabulary and grammar, spoke English with ease. These students did not feel discouraged by their mistakes; in fact, many of them created new words or creatively used English, attempting to express their thoughts without fear of making errors. Their active participation and willingness to try even when uncertain reflect a positive attitude toward language learning and an understanding that mistakes are part of the process.

On the other hand, 8 students were more hesitant and shy about speaking English, often avoiding verbal communication or participating minimally in class. While some of these students had a reasonable understanding of English, they were reluctant to speak due to feelings of insecurity, fear of making mistakes, or a lack of vocabulary. Their hesitation was noticeable, and they typically preferred to remain silent rather than take risks with their speech. This shyness, despite their comprehension, limits their chances to practice and improve their speaking skills, which is crucial for their overall language development.

Despite the findings presented in Figure 3, it is important to highlight that it is not common for students, especially those with a lower level of English, to feel confident speaking the language. In many cases, students who have not yet fully mastered English tend to feel insecure or hesitant to participate in speaking activities due to fear of making mistakes or being judged. However, the 22 students who demonstrated significant confidence in speaking English, regardless of their proficiency level, showed a positive attitude toward language learning. Their willingness to speak in English, even when they do not fully grasp the grammar or vocabulary, is

an admirable trait that is not often observed in other educational contexts. These students are not afraid to create new words or improvise, which demonstrates an open mindset and a willingness to learn through practice—both of which are essential for progress in any language. In conclusion, Figure 3 highlights a distinct contrast in the level of confidence between students, with the majority demonstrating a positive, risk-taking attitude in their oral communication.

4.1.2 Pre-test

For the pre-test, the students were only given the necessary instructions for the activity, without being informed that it was part of a research study. They participated naturally, as they would in any regular class. The teacher in charge, who was aware of the research, evaluated the sketch as part of their regular oral exam in English, without the students knowing that their performance would also be analyzed as part of the study. The activity required each group of students to perform a sketch based on a movie they collectively chose. Each group was expected to present a scene lasting approximately two and a half minutes per student, meaning the total time of each sketch varied depending on the number of students in the group. This task allowed students to demonstrate their ability to communicate in English in an informal, dynamic setting, encouraging the spontaneous use of the language while interacting with one another.

To prepare for the task, students were provided with a guide that included a single example from a movie, along with dialogue excerpts to help them structure their performances. They were given one week to prepare, and during this time, they were encouraged to bring costumes and props to enhance their presentations. Each student was also required to write their speech, which would later be assessed for fluency. On the day of the presentation, no additional time was given to review the material, as they had already practiced extensively during the previous week. During the session, each group presented their sketch individually.

To assess this initial activity, the researcher designed a rubric with three key criteria to evaluate the student's oral performance: creativity, fluency, and pronunciation. These criteria allowed the researcher to measure the student's speaking abilities more comprehensively, capturing both their language proficiency and their engagement with the task. The rubric was designed to focus on how students approached the activity creatively, how fluidly they spoke in English, and the clarity of their pronunciation. The students were graded on a scale of 0 to 10 for each category, with a maximum possible score of thirty points. This scoring system provided the researcher with a detailed understanding of each student's oral communication skills and helped to track their progress throughout the study.

Table 1

Pre-test scoring table

Criteria	Punctuation		
	Advanced	Intermediate	Beginner
Creativity	10 points	7.5 points	5 points
Fluency	10 points	7.5 points	5 points
Clarity	10 points	7.5 points	5 points

Table 1. This table presents the criteria used to assess the student's performance during the pre-test. It includes the key indicators of creativity, fluency, and pronunciation. Designed by the researcher.

As shown in Table 1, all the indicators listed in the left column are related to oral proficiency. The scores in the right column represent a potential scale of skills to assess each student's performance and determine their level of proficiency. The rubric was designed to evaluate key aspects of oral production, such as creativity, fluency, and pronunciation. Each

student's score reflects their performance during the pre-test, offering insight into their current speaking abilities. Therefore, the points obtained by the students in the pre-test are reflected in the table below, which provides a clear overview of their strengths and areas for improvement.

Table 2

Table of scores graded with each student 7A.

Scored Table			
Student	Creativity	Fluency	Clarity
S1	7.5	5	7.5
S2	10	10	10
S3	10	5	7.5
S4	10	10	10
S5	10	7.5	7.5
S6	5	5	5
S7	5	5	5
S8	10	7.5	7.5
S9	10	10	10
S10	5	7.5	7.5
S11	7.5	7.5	7.5
S12	10	5	7.5
S13	10	5	7.5
S14	7.5	10	10
S15	10	5	7.5

Table 2. Presents the 7 A students' results from the pre-test. Designed by the researcher.

Table 3

Table of scores graded with each student 7B.

Scored Table			
Student	Creativity	Fluency	Clarity
S1	10	10	10
S2	5	7.5	10
S3	10	10	10
S4	5	7.5	7.5
S5	10	7.5	7.5
S6	10	10	10
S7	10	10	10
S8	7.5	7.5	5
S9	7.5	7.5	5
S10	10	10	10
S11	5	7.5	7.5
S12	5	7.5	7.5
S13	10	7.5	7.5
S14	10	7.5	5
S15	5	7.5	7.5

Table 3. Presents the 7 B students' results from the pre-test. Designed by the researcher.

This instrument was used as an oral activity to assess the students' speaking skills, and the results obtained are consistent with those observed during the previous stage of the study. It is

important to clarify the specific criteria evaluated by each of the selected indicators. Creativity evaluates how students present original ideas or add unique elements to their performance. Fluency refers to the student's ability to speak smoothly and confidently, without unnecessary pauses or hesitations. Clarity focuses on the ease with which the student's ideas are communicated, including their articulation and the listener's ability to understand the message. These three indicators allowed for an assessment of the student's oral communication abilities during the pre-test.

In terms of performance, two groups of six students achieved a perfect score in their oral presentations, demonstrating a high level of proficiency in English. These students exhibited strong fluency, clear pronunciation, and effective communication skills, which allowed them to express their ideas confidently without hesitation. Their ability to structure and deliver their presentations showed an advanced understanding of the language. Interestingly, despite the overall positive performance, students in these groups still faced challenges with vocabulary usage, as many were limited in their word range. However, their ability to work around these limitations with creativity and determination contributed to their success. This reflects the student's proficiency level, where those with a higher command of English were able to navigate their oral presentation more fluidly, whereas those at the beginner level often struggled with vocabulary but still demonstrated a commendable effort to convey their message.

Despite the strong performance of some students, there was also a noticeable lack of preparation and commitment from others. In several cases, students failed to adequately rehearse before the presentation, resulting in less fluid and confident performances. Some students showed a lack of motivation and did not dedicate sufficient time to preparing their scripts or practicing their roles. However, students who participated in the most well-prepared and engaging sketches reported enjoying the activity. They noted that, despite the challenges, the experience allowed

them to feel more comfortable speaking in English. These students expressed that the activity provided an opportunity to use the language more spontaneously and enjoyably, which contributed to building their confidence in oral expression. This suggests that when students invest more effort and preparation, they can significantly benefit from such activities.

Figure 4

Final Scores of the pre-test

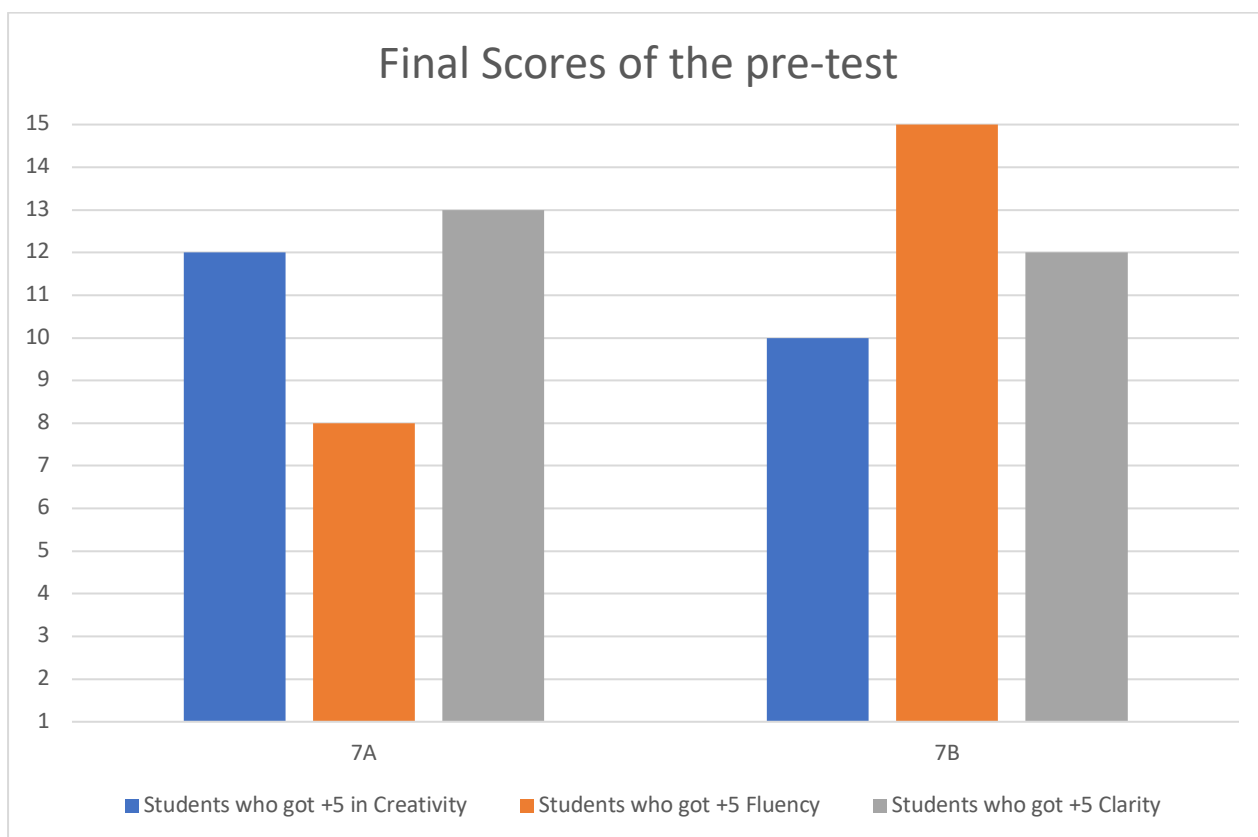


Figure 4. Presents the overall results of the pre-test. Designed by the researcher.

This figure highlights the final scores from the pre-test, which reveal a clear distinction in the students' proficiency levels. Among the group, a small number of students demonstrated advanced proficiency in English, achieving the highest scores, reflecting both their strong language skills and high level of engagement during the task. These students exhibited fluency, accuracy, and a strong command of the language. Most students fell within the intermediate

range, showcasing a solid understanding of English, although their performance indicated areas for improvement, particularly in vocabulary and fluency. While they were able to express their ideas with some hesitation, their results show that with further practice, they have the potential to reach a higher proficiency level.

The remaining students, who scored at the beginner level, exhibited a lack of preparation and commitment, which affected their performance. Despite this, they demonstrated a basic understanding of English and, with more dedication and effort, had the opportunity to improve their skills over time. Some struggled to form coherent ideas in English, but their attempts showed growth potential. Overall, while there were varying levels of performance, the results suggest that the students, if motivated and committed, have the potential to further develop their English proficiency and achieve higher levels of fluency with consistent practice and focus.

4.1.3 Activities in Between

Following the completion of the pre-test and the intervening activities designed to strengthen language skills, the next phase of this study involves the debate activities themselves. These debates will be a key component in assessing the student's ability to apply their language proficiency in a dynamic and interactive context. The students will be divided into two teams, Favor and Against, and will engage in structured debates on carefully selected topics. These initial debates are not the final stage of the study, but rather preparatory exercises that will help students develop their communication and critical thinking skills. The two debates presented here will serve as practice and preparation for the main debate, which will take place during the post-test. This final debate will provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the student's language proficiency and progress throughout the course.

For the debate activities conducted at Genesis Christian School, seventh-grade students were divided into two groups: Favor and Against. These groups consisted of students from

varying proficiency levels, ranging from advanced to beginner, ensuring a diverse mix of skills in each team. The topics for the debates were carefully selected to encourage critical thinking and align with the student's curriculum, focusing on current issues such as allowing cell phones in the classroom and the cons and pros of social media for young people. Each group was tasked with preparing arguments either supporting or against the topic, which required students to engage deeply with the subject matter and think critically about different perspectives. By organizing students into mixed-level teams, the debates fostered collaboration and peer learning, providing an opportunity for all students to contribute, regardless of their initial language proficiency.

To facilitate a structured and engaging debate, the classroom was arranged in a way that promoted interaction, focus, and organization. The seating arrangement was designed to encourage direct communication between the debating teams while also allowing the audience to observe and participate in the discussion. This layout provided a clear division between the two teams and ensured that all participants, including the moderator and audience, had distinct roles and responsibilities during the debate. The classroom was arranged in a format that allowed for a structured and interactive debate environment. The students were seated in two facing rows, with 12 students on each side. The rows were positioned in such a way that one team sat directly across from the other, creating a clear distinction between the Favor and Against teams. Each team had a central space for their speakers to present their arguments. The facing seating arrangement encouraged eye contact and engagement between the teams, fostering a more dynamic exchange of ideas.

In addition to the two teams, there was a designated section for the audience, which consisted of five students. The audience was positioned in front of the moderator, so that they could listen and observe the debate and, at the same time, make constructive comments. This setup encouraged students to be attentive, take notes, and think critically about the arguments

being presented. At the front of the room, a moderator was positioned in a central role, standing in front of the classroom, to oversee the debate. The moderator's job was to maintain order, ensure that the debate flowed smoothly, and manage the time allocated for each speaker. The moderator also ensured that both teams had equal opportunities to present their arguments and respond to opposing points.

Figure 5

Classroom set up for the debates.

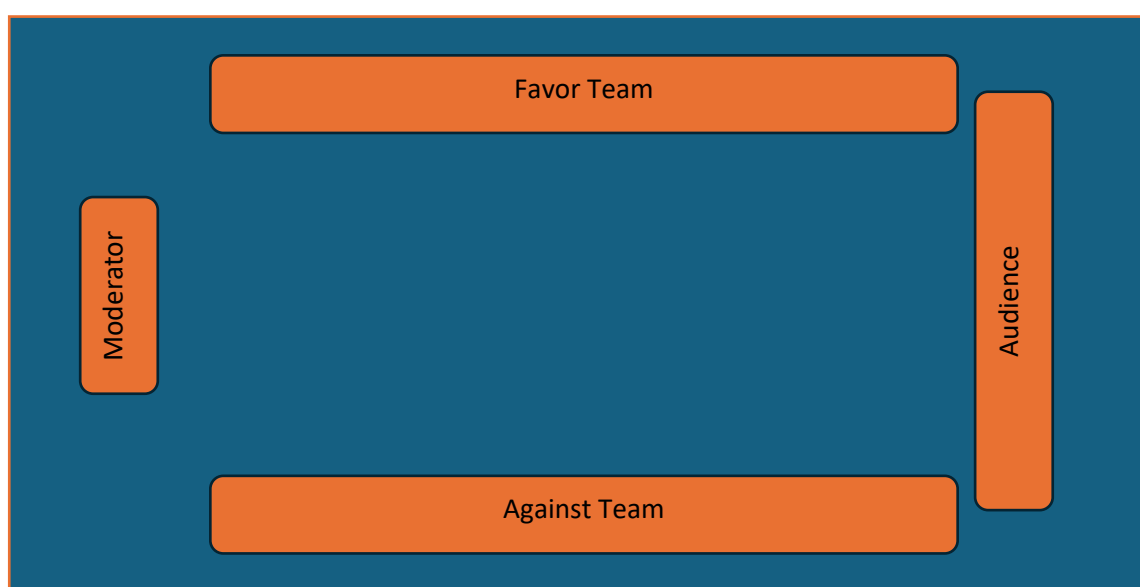


Figure 5. It represents the setup classroom to start the debate. Designed by the researcher.

Although the students were already familiar with the basic structure of debates, they were provided with a prior lesson to ensure they were well-prepared to engage with the topics effectively. During this lesson, students were encouraged to thoroughly research their assigned topics, gathering relevant information to construct strong, evidence-based arguments. The goal of this preparatory phase was not only to ensure that students understood the positions they were required to defend but also to immerse themselves in the context, perspectives, and key details of the topic. This preparation allowed students to participate with greater confidence and depth, fostering a more meaningful and thoughtful exchange of ideas during the debates.

4.1.3.1 First Debate

The topic for the first debate was "Should Smartphones Be Allowed in Educational Institutions?" As described earlier in the research, the classroom was arranged to foster an organized and focused debate environment. This arrangement was designed to encourage direct engagement between participants, creating a structured space for the debate. Before the debate began, students were given time to prepare, during which they researched their positions and organized their arguments. Although they had rehearsed their points in advance, the setup of the classroom, with all eyes on them, added a layer of pressure. The students, though well-prepared, still experienced noticeable nervousness. Despite this, the preparation time also sparked a sense of motivation among them. They were eager to present their ideas clearly and confidently, even though the reality of speaking in front of their peers was daunting. The time spent preparing helped them gain a deeper understanding of the topic, allowing them to feel more equipped to participate actively and thoughtfully in the debate.

The moderator officially opened the debate by outlining the format and rules to ensure that the discussion remained structured and fair. Each group was allocated 3 minutes to present their initial arguments, during which they were required to clearly state their position on the topic "Should Smartphones Be Allowed in Schools?" and explain the reasoning behind their stance. Once both groups had presented their arguments, the debate shifted to a rebuttal phase. In this segment, each group had the opportunity to respond directly to the opposing team's points, providing counterarguments and defending their position. Following this, both teams had a final moment to summarize their arguments and conclude their statements.

After the debates, the audience was given a specific amount of time to provide constructive feedback. During this phase, audience members were encouraged to offer observations on the arguments presented, ask clarifying questions, or highlight points they found

particularly persuasive. This feedback session was followed by a Q&A round, where the teams had the chance to respond to questions posed by both the moderator and the audience. Finally, the moderator concluded the session by giving a verdict, summarizing the strengths of each team's argument, and offering feedback on the overall debate performance.

The students demonstrated a notable level of confidence during the debate, which can be attributed to the intrinsic motivation they felt while defending their respective positions. Being tasked with advocating for a specific stance allowed each student to engage personally with the topic, providing them with a sense of ownership over their arguments. This motivation was crucial in helping them overcome initial nervousness, as they were more focused on presenting well-structured arguments rather than on the anxiety of speaking in front of their peers. Even those who initially struggled with English proficiency found ways to express their ideas, often relying on clear, simple language and confident delivery. Their drive to defend their viewpoints and convince others contributed significantly to their engagement, making the experience a positive and productive learning activity. As a result, all students, regardless of their language skills, were able to participate meaningfully in the debate, indicating the power of motivation and purpose in fostering public speaking confidence.

The students in the audience also exhibited a mature approach to the debate, focusing on the topic rather than the individuals presenting. Throughout the session, audience members were observed listening attentively, taking notes, and thinking critically about the arguments being made. They responded in a manner that was respectful and objective, engaging with the content of the debate rather than directing comments toward the speakers themselves. This behavior reflects a level of maturity in terms of both social interaction and critical engagement. Furthermore, when offering constructive feedback, the audience members spoke in a calm, measured tone, carefully choosing their words to provide insightful comments. This not only

fostered a respectful atmosphere but also created an environment where everyone felt comfortable participating. The audience's ability to remain focused on the subject matter, rather than on the personalities of the debaters, allowed the debate to maintain a high level of professionalism and academic value.

The debate activity also served as an effective means of developing students' foreign language skills, particularly their ability to think critically and express complex ideas in English. While the advanced students naturally stood out due to their fluency and command of the language, all participants, including those with intermediate and beginner levels, demonstrated significant progress in their language use. The advanced students were able to defend their points with clarity and precision, articulating their ideas in a well-structured manner. However, what was most remarkable was how all students, regardless of their proficiency level, were able to construct coherent arguments, rebut opposing views, and contribute to the overall discussion. This demonstrates that the debate encouraged the use of English not just as a means of communication, but as a tool for intellectual engagement. Students were challenged to express themselves in a foreign language, think critically about their positions, and adjust their arguments in real-time based on the flow of the discussion. This experience not only enhanced their language skills but also helped them develop the critical thinking abilities necessary for engaging in meaningful dialogue. As such, the debate activity provided a valuable opportunity for language learners to apply their skills in a dynamic and authentic context, reinforcing the notion that such activities play a crucial role in fostering both language proficiency and critical thinking.

As a conclusion of the first debate, it provided students with a unique opportunity to practice and refine their English language skills in a dynamic and intellectually stimulating context. Through the process of preparing, presenting, and defending their arguments, students were able to apply their language knowledge in a real-world scenario, which is essential for

developing fluency. Regardless of their proficiency level, all participants had the chance to express complex ideas in English, strengthen their vocabulary, and enhance their communication abilities. The debate allowed students to engage with the language in an active, meaningful way, helping them bridge the gap between passive language learning and active use. As they faced the challenge of thinking critically and articulating their thoughts under time constraints, students not only improved their fluency but also developed a deeper understanding of how to construct arguments, use persuasive language, and engage in reflective dialogue all valuable skills in both academic and real-life contexts.

Another important outcome of the debate was the increased awareness of smartphones as potential distractions in the classroom. The topic of whether smartphones should be allowed in schools prompted students to reflect on their own experiences and consider how these devices impact their focus and learning. Through the debate, students critically analyzed the pros and cons of smartphone use, which helped them recognize both the benefits and the drawbacks of these devices in an educational setting. This critical awareness is a significant step in their cognitive development, as it encourages them to assess the role of technology in their lives and make informed decisions about its use.

Following the debate, the researcher provided valuable feedback to the students, focusing on key areas for improvement in both language use and presentation skills. She highlighted that many students had difficulty with the correct pronunciation and usage of words. The researcher also noted challenges in sentence formation, where students often presented incomplete or run-on sentences that hindered the clarity of their arguments. She encouraged the students to focus on improving the organization of their thoughts, advising them to link ideas more logically and use appropriate transitions to build cohesive and well-structured arguments. Additionally, the researcher emphasized the importance of continued practice to enhance fluency, advising

students to speak more naturally and confidently to reduce pauses and hesitation during presentations. Overall, the feedback provided a clear roadmap for further developing both their language proficiency and their ability to present ideas more effectively in future debates.

Figure 6

Mispronounced words feedback

Mispronounced Words			
Distraction	Perspective	Analysis	Influence
Consequence	Communication	Productivity	Addiction
Interruptions	Discipline	Solution	Explanation

Figure 6. It represents the mispronounced words at the first debate. Designed by the researcher.

4.1.3.2 Second Debate

The topic for the second debate was "Is Social Media More Harmful Than Helpful for Young People?" As in the first debate, the classroom was arranged to facilitate a structured and focused debate environment. This setup continued to foster direct engagement between participants, ensuring that all students could actively contribute to the discussion. The advanced students, who had participated as debaters in the first session, took on the role of the audience for this debate. Their presence as listeners was essential for providing constructive feedback to their peers, encouraging the less experienced students to engage more confidently. Once again, students were given time to prepare, allowing them to research their positions thoroughly and organize their arguments effectively. This preparation time, combined with the prior experience of the first debate, helped reduce nervousness while motivating the students to participate more

confidently in defending their positions. The increased familiarity with the debate process, along with the feedback from the first round, resulted in notable improvements in the overall execution.

In this second debate, students showed a marked improvement in their confidence and ability to express their ideas. The preparation and reflection from the first debate gave them a clearer understanding of how to organize their arguments more logically and communicate their points more effectively in English. Those who had initially struggled with language proficiency were able to articulate their thoughts more clearly, making fewer mistakes and speaking with more conviction. The presence of the advanced students in the audience was particularly motivating for their peers, as they served as role models, demonstrating the level of fluency and clarity they could aspire to achieve. This also helped create a supportive environment, where students felt more encouraged to speak up, knowing that they would receive constructive feedback rather than judgment. Even in a slightly pressured environment, the students maintained a respectful tone and addressed the topic thoughtfully, focusing on the issues at hand rather than on their anxieties. This shift in focus contributed to a more balanced and productive debate overall, with all participants being more engaged and confident in their arguments.

As in the first debate, the audience played a crucial role in maintaining the structure of the debate and offering valuable feedback. The advanced students, who were tasked with observing the debate rather than participating directly, provided insightful comments and constructive criticism to their peers. Their feedback focused on the clarity of arguments, the effectiveness of rebuttals, and the ability to stay on topic. In addition to this, the advanced students also helped create a more positive environment by reinforcing the importance of building arguments logically and staying focused on the core issues. The debaters, in turn, considered this feedback, showing noticeable improvements in their presentation style and language use. For example, several students who had previously struggled with sentence structure began to present more coherent

arguments, paying greater attention to grammar and word choice. Moreover, the ability of the students to engage in critical thinking was evident as they analyzed the topic of social media from different perspectives, considering both its positive and negative impacts on young people. This thoughtful consideration reflected a significant improvement in their intellectual engagement and language development, demonstrating the success of the debate format in helping them grow both as language learners and critical thinkers.

In conclusion, the second debate was an opportunity for students to further develop their English language skills, build their confidence, and refine their debating techniques. The improvements from the first debate were evident in the more structured and fluent presentations made by the students, as they considered the feedback from their peers and the teacher. The advanced students, by stepping into the role of the audience, were able to contribute significantly to the growth of their classmates, both through their feedback and their examples of language proficiency. The debate on social media helped students analyze an issue that directly related to their lives, making it easier for them to engage with the topic and express their opinions in English. As a result, students not only improved their language proficiency but also developed a deeper understanding of how to present logical, persuasive arguments. The experience reinforced the importance of debate as a tool for encouraging critical thinking, fostering collaboration, and enhancing language skills in a supportive and dynamic environment. The student's ability to incorporate feedback and refine their language use highlighted the success of the activity in promoting both academic and personal growth.

It is important to note that before the debate, both the researcher and the teacher in charge took the time to sit with each student individually to discuss their thoughts on the topic and assist with their preparation. During these one-on-one sessions, the teacher and researcher provided guidance not only on organizing their arguments but also on pronunciation challenges. They

worked together to address mispronunciations and offered corrective feedback to help students articulate their ideas more clearly. By identifying specific language difficulties and providing tailored support, the researcher and teacher ensured that each student felt more confident in their ability to express themselves during the debate. This personalized attention allowed students to refine both their language skills and their understanding of the topic, which ultimately contributed to their improved performance and greater fluency in English during the debate.

Figure 7

Mispronounced words feedback

Mispronounced Words		
Addiction	Technology	Influence
Privacy	Communication	Mental health
Cyberbullying	Accessibility	Connection

Figure 7. It represents the mispronounced words at the second debate. Designed by the researcher.

The following figure presents a detailed analysis of the student's performance during both debates, focusing on five key criteria: critical thinking, fluency, clarity, confidence, and language proficiency. These factors were systematically observed throughout the debates. Critical thinking evaluates how effectively students analyze and respond to opposing arguments, while fluency measures their ability to express themselves smoothly and coherently. Clarity reflects how well students communicated their ideas, ensuring their arguments were easily understood. Confidence gauges the level of self-assurance students demonstrate when speaking, and language proficiency provides insight into their command of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The results, as

shown in the following figure, provide a comprehensive overview of how the students evolved in these areas and highlight where further improvement may be needed.

Figure 8

Analysis of the student's performance during the first debate

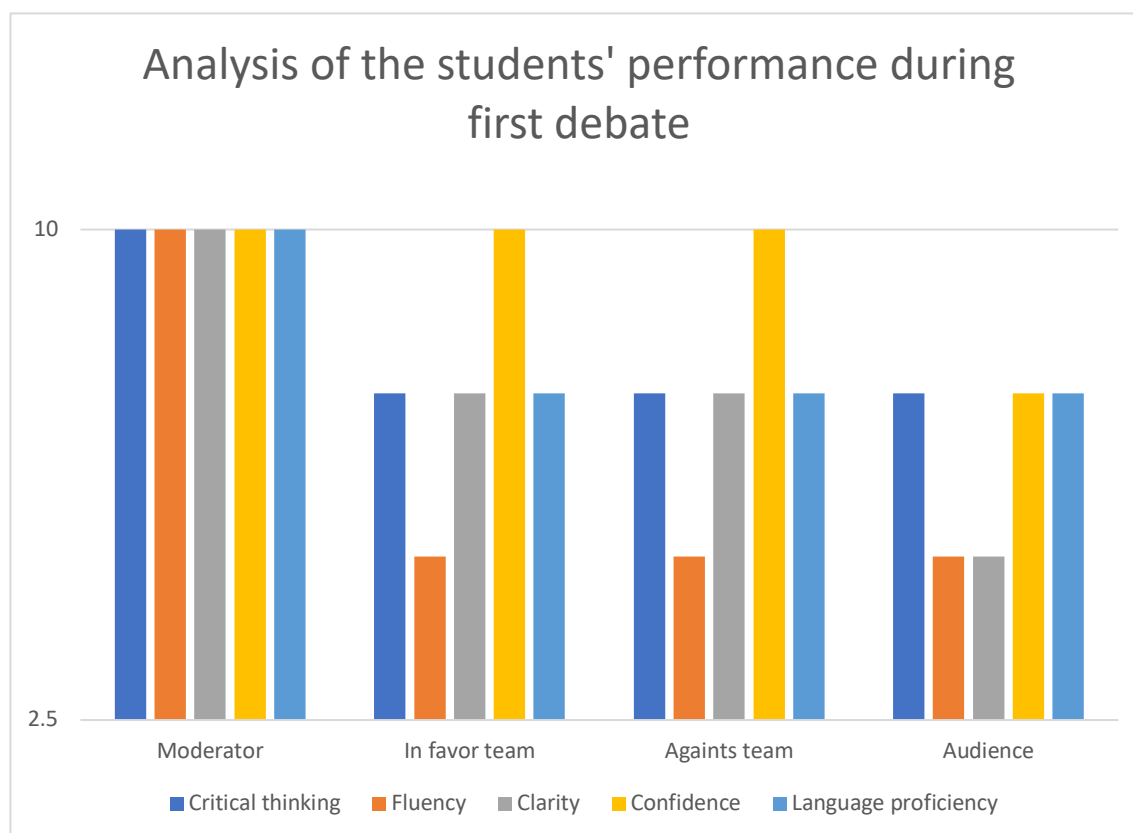


Figure 8. It represents the analysis of the student's performance during the first debate.

Designed by the researcher.

In the first debate, the audience exhibited a relatively lower level of English proficiency, as it consisted mainly of students at intermediate and beginner levels. This created an interesting dynamic within the debating teams, where both the pro and con groups were strongly supported by more advanced students. These advanced participants not only stood out due to their fluency but also took on the role of helping their peers articulate their ideas more clearly and effectively. While all students, regardless of their level, were allowed to express their thoughts and actively

participate, it was the more advanced speakers who provided the necessary support to ensure that arguments were communicated effectively. However, despite the audience's best efforts to follow the discussions and contribute to the debate, their level of English limited their ability to make more complex or detailed interventions, as was often the case with the more experienced debaters. That said, the experience was still valuable, as the challenge of stepping out of their comfort zones allowed the audience to exercise their critical thinking skills and improve their language abilities in a practical setting. Although there were clear areas for improvement, particularly in terms of fluency and precision the active participation of both the debating teams and the audience contributed to a richer, more engaging debate. In the end, while there were challenges, the learning process was rewarding and productive for everyone involved.

Figure 9

Analysis of the student's performance during the second debate

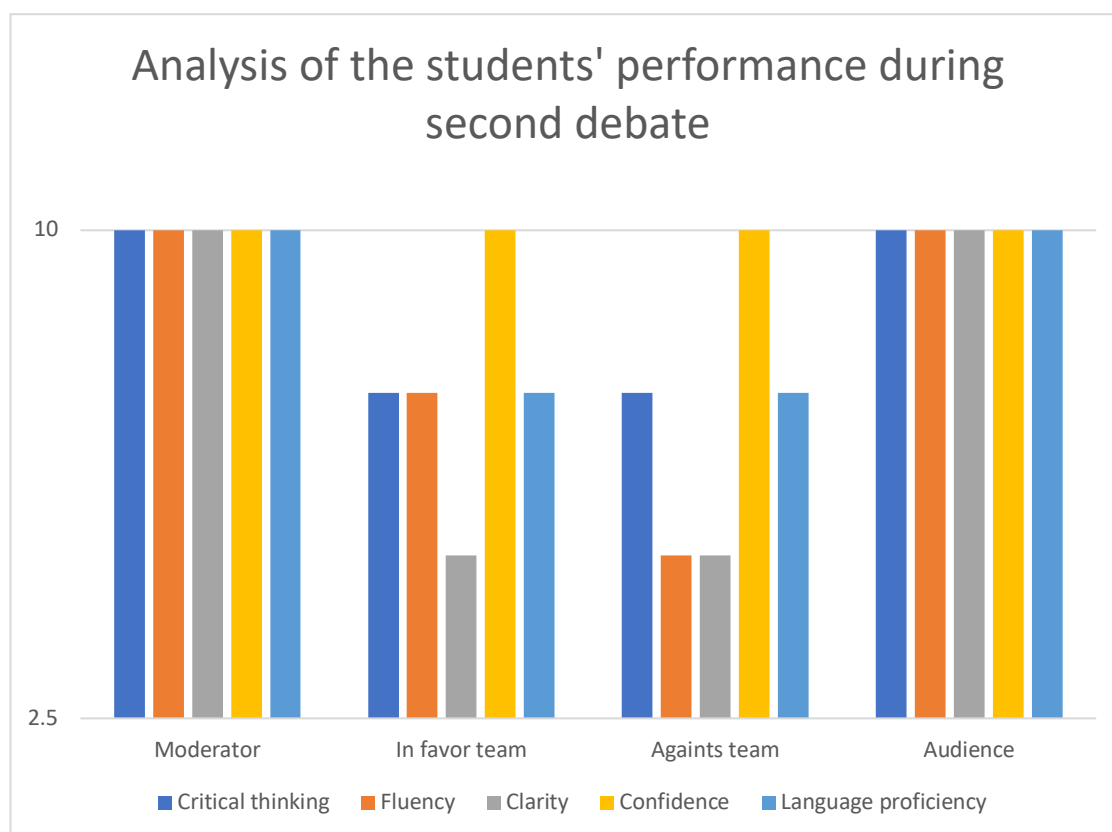


Figure 9. It represents the analysis of the student's performance during the second debate.

Designed by the researcher.

In the second debate, the groups were reshuffled, with the advanced students now serving as the audience. This shift had a significant impact on the dynamics of the pro and con teams, as they were now composed mainly of intermediate and beginner students. Before the debate began, the teacher and the researcher took substantial time with each student, addressing individual questions, assisting with pronunciation, offering feedback on areas for improvement, and providing motivational support. This personalized attention was instrumental in preparing the students for the debate and had a noticeable effect on their performance. Although the students did not achieve perfect scores, there was a clear improvement across all aspects of the debate process. They demonstrated stronger language skills, more confident speech, and a marked increase in critical thinking. This experience not only enhanced their English proficiency but also helped them feel more secure when speaking in English. The second debate clearly showed that the process was contributing to their overall language development, reinforcing the value of this type of active, real-world learning experience. The students left the debate with a sense of accomplishment and motivation to continue improving their English skills.

4.1.4. Post-test

Following the completion of the activities in between designed to enhance language skills, the final phase of this study will focus on the post-test, which includes the concluding debate. This final debate will be the most significant evaluation component, providing a comprehensive assessment of the student's ability to effectively use the language in a dynamic and interactive context. Students will divide into two teams, Favor and Against, and will engage in a structured debate on a carefully selected topic. Unlike the earlier debates, which served as practice and

preparation, this final debate will allow for a thorough evaluation of each student's communication abilities.

The assessment will focus on key areas such as critical thinking, fluency, clarity, and confidence in speaking. These criteria will provide a well-rounded measure of the student's progress and will offer valuable insights into their overall language proficiency. The final debate will serve as a culmination of their learning experience, demonstrating the impact of the course activities on their language development and their ability to apply English in real-world contexts.

The topic for the post-test debate was "Should debates be implemented in oral classes to improve students' English proficiency?" Similar to the previous debates, the classroom was arranged to create a structured and focused environment that facilitated active participation. This setup continued to encourage direct engagement among participants, ensuring that all students had the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. The advanced students, who had previously participated as debaters, were now the audience. Their presence was crucial in providing constructive feedback, helping the less experienced students feel more confident in presenting their arguments.

Additionally, one advanced student remained in each team (Favor and Against) to provide support and guidance to their peers, ensuring that the less experienced participants had the assistance they needed during the debate. Before the debate, students were given time to prepare, allowing them to thoroughly research their positions and organize their arguments effectively. This preparation time, combined with the experience gained from earlier debates, significantly reduced nervousness and motivated the students to participate more confidently. The familiarity with the debate process, coupled with feedback from previous rounds, led to noticeable improvements in the student's overall performance. This final debate offered a comprehensive

evaluation of their critical thinking, fluency, clarity, and confidence in speaking, providing a clear picture of their progress throughout the course.

Throughout the discussion, students presented strong arguments on how debates foster crucial skills such as critical thinking, the ability to organize ideas clearly, and improvements in fluency and speaking confidence. The pro team argued that debates, a dynamic and challenging activity, not only improve English proficiency but also help students develop an analytical mindset, learn to listen and respect different viewpoints and gain confidence in oral expression. They emphasized that structured interventions in a debate setting require a high level of preparation and reflection, allowing students to enhance their language proficiency in an all-encompassing way. Furthermore, some members of the pro team noted that debates offer an excellent opportunity to practice language in real-world scenarios, developing argumentative skills that extend beyond the classroom.

On the other hand, the con team raised concerns about the feasibility of implementing debates in every class, especially for students with lower levels of English. They argued that the pressure of participating in a debate could cause anxiety for less confident students, which could undermine the potential benefits of the activity. They also suggested that other methods might be more effective for improving language skills, such as interactive activities or small-group practice, which would allow for more personalized learning and be less intimidating. Some members of the con team also highlighted that, for beginner students, the structure of a debate might be too complex, leading to frustration rather than stimulating learning.

Throughout the debate, it became clear that, by discussing a topic so close to their own educational experience, students were not only applying their language skills but also reflecting on their learning process. The advanced students, assigned to each team for support, played a crucial role in guiding their less experienced peers, providing pronunciation corrections, and

helping to structure arguments. This support was essential in maintaining fluency and coherence in the interventions of the less advanced students. Additionally, the presence of advanced students in the teams fostered a collaborative atmosphere, where everyone felt encouraged to participate and improve their performance.

Table 4

Table of scores graded by each team on the post-test.

Scored Table				
Team	Critical Thinking	Fluency	Clarity	Confidence
Moderator	10	10	10	10
Favor	10	7.5	10	10
Against	10	7.5	10	10
Audience	7.5	7.5	7.5	10

Table 4. Presents the 7 B students' results from the post-test. Designed by the researcher.

Figure 10

Analysis of the student's performance during the post-test.

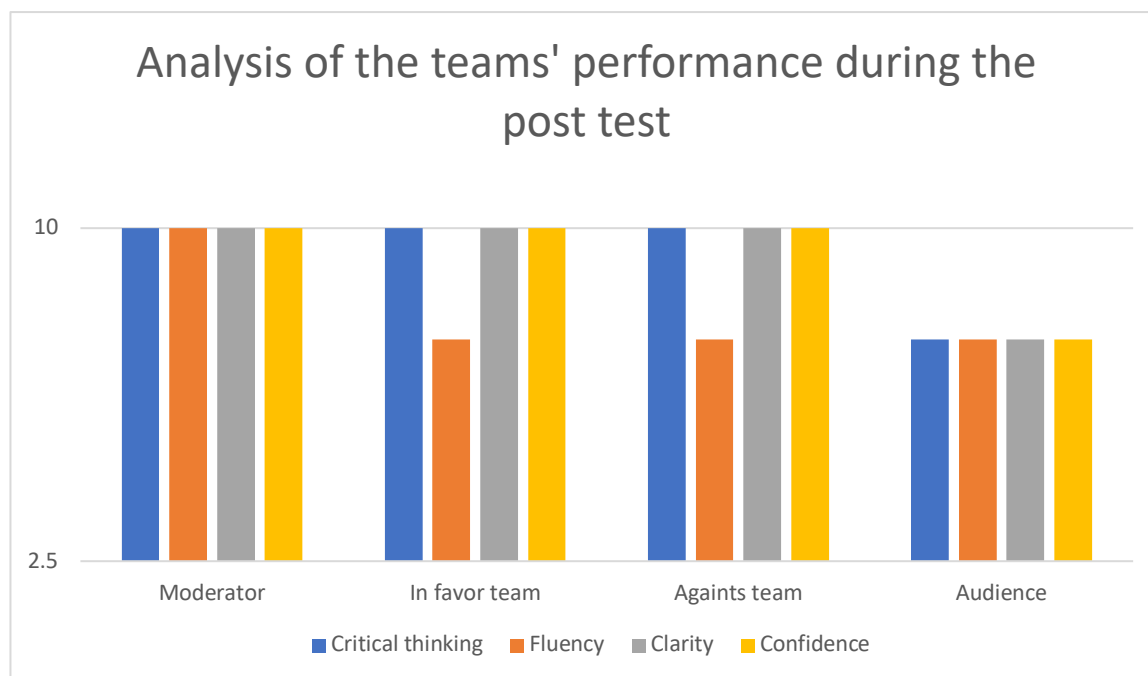


Figure 10. It represents the analysis of the student's performance during the post-test.

Designed by the researcher.

According to language proficiency, the final debate showed significant progress compared to earlier sessions. The students demonstrated greater confidence in their interventions, expressing their ideas more clearly and structured, and there was a noticeable improvement in fluency. While moments of hesitation or insecurity still occurred, the consistent practice and feedback throughout the course helped many students overcome their doubts and engage more actively. The debate activity, in addition to serving as an evaluative exercise, provided an opportunity to consolidate students' language skills in a practical and stimulating context, reaffirming the value of debates as a tool for enhancing English proficiency in oral communication.

In addition, the final topic was specifically chosen to allow students to reflect on their own experiences and share their thoughts on the effectiveness of debates in improving their language proficiency. The students were not only asked to defend or oppose the idea but also to

critically assess whether the debate format had truly been beneficial for their learning process. This allowed the students to voice their opinions on whether the skills they had developed throughout the course such as fluency, critical thinking, and confidence were directly tied to the debate activities. As the students were actively preparing and participating in the debates, this final topic allowed them to reflect on how well the approach had worked for them and whether they felt the method had contributed to their growth in English proficiency. Their insights and feedback were valuable in understanding the impact of the debate format on their language development.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions drawn from the research on using debates to improve speaking skills in seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School during the third quarter of 2024. Through a comprehensive analysis of the findings, this section aims to synthesize how debates contributed to the student's language development, particularly in their ability to express ideas clearly and effectively in English. Additionally, the implications of these results will be discussed, the limitations of the study will be acknowledged and potential areas for improvement will be suggested. Finally, this chapter will offer recommendations for the implementation of debates as a teaching strategy in the classroom, as well as suggestions for future research in the fields of language acquisition and interactive learning.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the instruments employed including observations, a pre-test sketch, two debates as activities in between, and a final debate as a post-test the conclusions will evaluate the effectiveness of debates in enhancing students' speaking abilities. The findings will be discussed concerning the specific objectives of the study: assessing improvements in speaking fluency, student engagement, and critical thinking, as well as boosting students' confidence in public speaking. Additionally, this chapter will address the applicability of debates as a practical and effective teaching strategy for educators seeking to enhance speaking skills in their classrooms. Finally, the conclusions will identify the challenges faced during the study and provide actionable recommendations for the future implementation of debates as a teaching tool in English language instruction.

5.2.1 To determine the speaking proficiency of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School

At the onset of the study, a significant challenge was observed in the speaking proficiency of the seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School. Many students struggled to speak in complete sentences, often relying on isolated words or fragmented phrases, which hindered their ability to express ideas clearly and coherently. This difficulty was most pronounced among students at the beginner level, who found it challenging to organize their thoughts in English. Even intermediate students faced difficulties with expanding their vocabulary and expressing more complex ideas, often simplifying their speech to basic sentences. To assess this, a pre-test was conducted, and students were categorized into three proficiency groups: advanced, intermediate, and beginner. The results highlighted a range of abilities, with a small group of advanced students demonstrating fluency, while the majority fell within the intermediate range, and a few students were classified as beginners, suggesting the need for further development.

Upon the implementation of debates as a strategy, immediate improvements were observed. The debates provided a structured environment where students were encouraged to think on their feet and communicate more effectively. For example, even the beginner students, who initially struggled, began to express more complete thoughts, expanding their vocabulary and improving sentence structure. These early changes were particularly noticeable in students' ability to form more coherent sentences and express ideas with greater clarity. These early changes indicated that, with consistent practice and the opportunity to engage in meaningful discourse, all students, regardless of their initial proficiency level, had the potential to improve their speaking skills. Additionally, the debates also helped boost students' confidence in speaking English, as they became more comfortable with the process of expressing their ideas aloud.

5.2.2 To apply debates as a strategy to improve the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School

At the beginning of the study, students exhibited several challenges in their speaking abilities, particularly in fluency and confidence. Many students hesitated to speak in complete sentences, often resorting to translation or using fragmented phrases when attempting to communicate in English. This lack of fluency and the tendency to rely on translation hindered their ability to express their ideas clearly and spontaneously. Additionally, students at the beginner level struggled with organizing their thoughts in English, which often led to pauses and hesitation during speech. Even the intermediate students showed a reliance on simpler vocabulary and struggled to expand their ideas fully in English. To address these challenges, debates were introduced as the central pedagogical strategy. This method involved two debates as activities in between and a final debate as a post-test, designed to encourage spontaneous, real-time speaking. In these debates, students were required to formulate and express their arguments without the opportunity for translation, forcing them to organize their thoughts quickly and speak more fluidly. The debates also emphasized the importance of clarity and structure in communication, which helped students better organize their arguments and present them more coherently.

Throughout the study, debates proved to be highly effective in enhancing students' speaking abilities. One of the most significant improvements observed was in students' ability to organize their thoughts and present arguments clearly and coherently. At the outset, many students struggled with fluency and with logically structuring their ideas. However, the structured nature of the debates encouraged them to focus on organizing their thoughts more effectively, which led to a more fluent and organized delivery. Additionally, the debates encouraged peer interaction, where students could observe and learn from one another's communication styles, further contributing to their development. Furthermore, the debates fostered critical thinking, as

students were required to analyze different perspectives and respond accordingly, thereby enhancing both their cognitive and linguistic skills. Overall, the strategy not only improved speaking fluency but also promoted greater engagement and active participation in the learning process, demonstrating that debates are an effective pedagogical tool for developing oral communication skills.

5.2.3 To analyze the use of debates as a strategy to improve the speaking skills of seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School

The analysis of debates as a strategy to enhance speaking skills revealed that students faced significant challenges in fluency and coherence at the outset. Many students, particularly those at the beginner level, had difficulty forming complete sentences and lacked the confidence to speak in front of their peers. In response to these challenges, debates were implemented as a core activity, providing students with a structured and interactive environment to practice speaking English. The debates allowed students to engage in real-time communication, requiring them to think critically and respond to opposing viewpoints, which helped improve both their speaking fluency and critical thinking skills. Moreover, the debates created an authentic communicative context, motivating students to speak more actively and take risks in using English to express their opinions.

As the debates progressed, substantial improvements in students' speaking abilities were observed. Students became more confident in expressing their ideas and demonstrated increased fluency and coherence in their speech. The structured nature of the debates helped students organize their thoughts more effectively, while the need to respond quickly and logically fostered critical thinking. This also encouraged students to practice responding under pressure, which further developed their ability to speak confidently in real-world situations. By the time of the final debate, students showed a marked improvement in their ability to speak clearly and

confidently, with many overcoming their initial hesitations. The process not only enhanced their speaking proficiency but also encouraged them to engage more actively in the learning process, reinforcing the value of debates as an effective strategy for developing oral communication skills. The student's overall progress demonstrated the power of debates to foster both linguistic and cognitive growth in a collaborative environment, emphasizing their potential as a tool for language learning.

5.3 Restatement of the Research Question

The primary research question guiding this study was: What is the outcome of using debates to improve speaking skills in seventh-grade students at Genesis Christian School during the third quarter of 2024? This question sought to explore the effectiveness of debates as an instructional strategy aimed at enhancing various aspects of speaking proficiency, such as fluency, coherence, accuracy, and confidence. The study was designed to assess how the structured, interactive nature of debates could support students in organizing and expressing their ideas clearly in English. In particular, the research aimed to investigate whether debates could foster greater engagement with the language, encouraging students to participate actively and take ownership of their learning. Given that language proficiency is deeply linked to the ability to use the language in practical, real-world contexts, debates were selected to offer students a dynamic and engaging environment in which they could practice real-time communication and develop their speaking skills.

The study also sought to examine the specific mechanisms through which debates might improve speaking proficiency. By requiring students to think critically, respond spontaneously to questions, and present coherent arguments under time constraints, debates created an opportunity for students to challenge themselves and develop essential speaking skills in a supportive yet challenging setting. This approach was expected to promote fluency, improve students' ability to

structure their ideas, and boost their confidence in using English in front of others. To achieve this, the study utilized a pre-and post-test design, comparing students' speaking abilities before and after the implementation of debates. The goal was to determine whether debates could lead to measurable improvements in students' speaking skills and provide valuable insights for educators seeking effective strategies for language instruction. By analyzing both the immediate outcomes of the debates and the longer-term impact on student's engagement with the language, the research aimed to contribute to the growing body of literature on language teaching methods, offering practical recommendations for integrating debates into classroom instruction to enhance speaking proficiency.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, it is recommended that educators and those responsible for teaching foreign languages incorporate debates as a key tool to foster oral production among students. Debates not only encourage the expression of ideas and arguments in a structured manner but also promote the development of essential communicative skills, such as active listening, meaning negotiation, and coherent speech organization. By integrating debates into the educational process, teachers can stimulate active participation, enhance verbal fluency, and simultaneously strengthen students' confidence in using the language in real-world interaction contexts. The findings of this study suggest that debates can be a highly effective strategy for improving speaking skills in seventh-grade students, particularly in areas such as fluency, organization of ideas, and overall confidence in speaking English.

Based on these outcomes, it is recommended that educators consider incorporating debates into their regular language instruction as a dynamic, engaging method for developing students' oral communication abilities. Specifically, debates offer students the opportunity to practice real-time communication in a structured environment, where they are encouraged to

think critically and express their ideas coherently. This not only helps them improve their language proficiency but also fosters important cognitive skills, such as critical thinking and argumentation. Furthermore, the study suggests that debates can be particularly beneficial for students who may be less confident in their speaking abilities, as the supportive nature of the activity encourages active participation and peer collaboration, creating a positive learning environment.

In addition to integrating debates into the classroom, it is recommended that teachers tailor the debates to the specific proficiency levels of their students. For example, beginner students may benefit from shorter, simpler debates focused on familiar topics, while more advanced students can be challenged with complex issues that require more sophisticated language use and critical analysis. Teachers should also consider providing ongoing feedback throughout the debate process, offering guidance on language use, pronunciation, and argumentation strategies.

This feedback will help students refine their speaking abilities and gain confidence in their capacity to communicate effectively. Finally, incorporating peer evaluation into the debate process can further encourage students to reflect on their performance and provide constructive feedback to one another. This collaborative approach can enhance the overall learning experience and help students recognize the value of peer support in language acquisition. By implementing these recommendations, educators can maximize the potential of debates as a strategy for improving speaking skills and fostering a more interactive, student-centered learning environment.

In addition to the general recommendations, this section offers more targeted suggestions for improving oral production in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. These strategies are designed to address the unique challenges faced by EFL learners, focusing on enhancing

fluency, accuracy, and confidence in spoken communication. By incorporating these recommendations, educators can better support their students in overcoming common obstacles to effective oral expression and create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment.

Finally, to effectively implement debate as a teaching strategy in EFL classrooms, the following recommendations are suggested:

- Observe the group to accurately assign specific roles to each student.
- Establish Clear Guidelines and Rules.
- Select topics of interest to students.
- Provide Preparation Time Before the Debate.
- Encourage Active Participation from All Students.
- Support critical thinking and argument development.
- Foster a Supportive and Constructive Feedback Environment.

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