

**STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN BUILDING SPEAKING  
PERFORMANCE AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN  
ENGLISH DEBATE AT SMA NEGERI 1 SUMBER  
CIREBON**

**A THESIS**

Submitted to English Language Teaching Department of *Tarbiyah* and Teacher  
Training Faculty of *Syekh Nurjati* State Cyber Islamic University Cirebon in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement of Undergraduate Degree



Arranged by:

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FACULTY OF TEACHER AND TRAINING  
SYEKH NURJATI STATE CYBER ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
CIREBON**

**2025**

**SUBCOVER**

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TARBIYAH AND TEACHER TRAINING FACULTY  
SYEKH NURJATI STATE CYBER ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
CIREBON**

**2025**

## ABSTRACT

***Inayatulloh Najari. 2108103037. Students' Strategies in Building Speaking Performance and Critical Thinking Skills in English Debate at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber Cirebon.***

Critical thinking and public speaking are common problems in Indonesia. Moreover, few students have critical thinking and public speaking skills in English. This study investigates the strategies used by students in developing speaking and critical thinking skills through English debate activities. Conducted in a state senior high school in Cirebon, this study focuses on three debate winners who have achieved success at the Cirebon city level. One of the teachers at the school will also be used as a resource person in this study. This research uses a case study research design. This research investigates how these students learn and hone their debating skills by using qualitative techniques such as interviews and diary studies. The data analysis technique used is thematic analysis with the steps of analysis namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verifications. The purpose of this study is expected to reveal various strategies, such as active practice, discussion with peers, critical analysis of arguments, and extensive use of English in an informal setting. This research will be projected to provide insights into effective learning practices, which can be useful for educators and learners who want to excel in English debate. The study found that English debate winners enhance their speaking performance through structured practice, participation in learning communities, peer collaboration, institutional support, and media use. Regular practice and exposure to authentic materials improve fluency, pronunciation, and confidence. In developing critical thinking, students analyze topics, identify logical fallacies, and construct arguments using evidence-based reasoning. Debates foster adaptability, teamwork, and decision-making, with feedback playing a crucial role in refining skills. Overall, English debate significantly enhances students' speaking fluency, confidence, and critical thinking, making it a valuable educational tool for developing articulate and analytical communicators.

**Keywords:** *English debate, speaking performance, critical thinking, learning strategies.*

## **APPROVAL**

### **STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN BUILDING SPEAKING PERFORMANCE AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH DEBATE AT SMA NEGERI 1 SUMBER CIREBON**

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*Assalamu'alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh*

After guiding, analyzing, briefing, and correcting the writing of Inayatulloh Najari with register number 2108103037 entitled "STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN BUILDING SPEAKING PERFORMANCE AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH DEBATE AT SMA NEGERI 1 SUMBER CIREBON", we are of the opinion that her thesis can be offered to be presented to the English Language Teaching Department, *Tarbiyah* and Training Faculty, *Syekh Nurjati* State Cyber Islamic University of Cirebon.

*Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh*

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## LETTER OF AUTHENTICITY

*Bismillahirrahmanirrahim*

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Honestly, I have written this letter of authenticity according to the truth. I will be sincerely responsible for any risk that will happen in the future if it is proven to offend the ethics of scientific writing.

  
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Cirebon, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

The Researcher

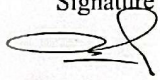







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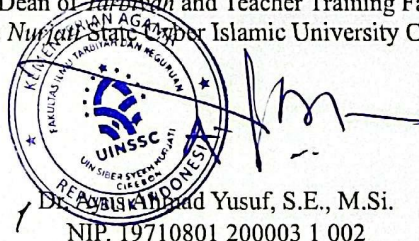
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## RATIFICATION

The thesis which is entitled “STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN BUILDING SPEAKING PERFORMANCE AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH DEBATE AT SMA NEGERI 1 SUMBER CIREBON” written by Inayatulloh Najari, with the registered number 2108103037, has been examined on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2025. It has been accepted by examiners as one of the requirements for an undergraduate degree in English Language Teaching Department of *Tarbiyah* and Teacher Training Faculty of Syekh Nurjati State Cyber Islamic University Cirebon.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to myself as a testament to perseverance, and above all, to my beloved parents, Mrs. Euis Istikomah and Mr. Iim Hilmanul Hakim. Your endless prayers, love, and unwavering support have been my greatest strength throughout this journey. I would also like to thank my dearest family, especially my siblings Hilwana Fahma, Hilmania Rahma and Raif Riyaadlu Zaini. May this humble work serve as a reflection of my dedication and a step forward in my pursuit of knowledge. Thank you all for being part of this journey.





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## MOTTO

You can do it if you believe you can

*“Kemampuan manusia tanpa Artificial Intelligence (AI) akan kalah oleh kemampuan manusia dengan Artificial Intelligence (AI)”.* (Zakky Yavani)

*“Jika kamu ingin mendapatkan hal yang sebelumnya belum pernah kamu dapatkan, maka kamu harus melakukan suatu hal yang sebelumnya belum pernah kamu lakukan.”* (Alinda)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

*"Sesungguhnya Allah tidak akan mengubah keadaan suatu kaum sehingga mereka mengubah keadaan yang ada pada diri mereka sendiri".* (Ar-Ra'd:11)

*Mun Kiyeng tangtu Pareng*

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The title of my thesis is **“STUDENTS' STRATEGIES IN BUILDING SPEAKING PERFORMANCE AND CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH DEBATE AT SMA NEGERI 1 SUMBER CIREBON”** is submitted to fulfill one of the requirements for achieving the graduate degree at the English Language Teaching Department of *Syekh Nurjati* State Cyber Islamic University of Cirebon.

In composing this thesis, so many people have helped, and advised directly or indirectly. So, in this opportunity, the writer would like to express my sincerity and profound thankfulness to:

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10. All parties that the author cannot mention one by one who have provided very helpful input, good advice, and encouragement during the consultation process.

The writer realized that this thesis is still far from perfect, and there are many mistakes, either in the arrangement or in the context. Therefore, the writer should welcome the reader's comments and suggestions. Finally, the writer hopes this thesis will be valuable to the readers, especially for the writer himself and the English Language Teaching Department of *Syekh Nurjati* State Cyber Islamic University Cirebon as a general reference.

Cirebon, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

The Researcher

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## PREFACE

All praise and gratitude are devoted to Allah SWT, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, who has bestowed strength, patience, and guidance upon the researcher throughout the entire process of completing this thesis. Without His divine will and mercy, this academic endeavor would not have been possible. This thesis, entitled “Students' Strategies in Building Speaking and Critical Thinking Skills in English Debate at SMA Negeri 1 Sumber Cirebon”, is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the undergraduate degree in the English Language Teaching Department at the Faculty of *Tarbiyah* and Teacher Training, *Syekh Nurjati* State Cyber Islamic University Cirebon. It represents not only a scholarly task but also a meaningful learning journey filled with intellectual growth and personal development.

The researcher acknowledges that the completion of this thesis was not solely the result of personal effort. Therefore, heartfelt appreciation is extended to all parties who have provided support, guidance, and encouragement during the research process. While every effort has been made to ensure the quality and accuracy of this work, the researcher remains open to constructive feedback and suggestions for further improvement. It is sincerely hoped that the findings of this research will contribute positively to the field of English language teaching, particularly in fostering students' speaking performance and critical thinking through debate activities. May it serve as a useful reference for educators, students, fellow researchers, and readers who share a passion for language education and its practical development.

Cirebon, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

The Researcher

Inayatulloh Najari  
Reg. Number 2108103037

## TABLE OF CONTENT

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| SUBCOVER .....                                   | I     |
| ABSTRACT.....                                    | II    |
| APPROVAL.....                                    | III   |
| OFFICIAL NOTE .....                              | iv    |
| LETTER OF AUTHENTICITY .....                     | v     |
| RATIFICATION.....                                | vi    |
| DEDICATION .....                                 | vii   |
| AUTOBIOGRAPHY .....                              | viii  |
| MOTTO .....                                      | ix    |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....                            | x     |
| PREFACE .....                                    | xii   |
| TABLE OF CONTENT.....                            | xiii  |
| LIST OF FIGURES.....                             | xvii  |
| LIST OF TABLES .....                             | xviii |
| LIST OF APPENDICES.....                          | xix   |
| CHAPTER 1.....                                   | 1     |
| INTRODUCTION .....                               | 1     |
| 1.1 Background of the Research.....              | 1     |
| 1.2 Identification of the Issues/Phenomena ..... | 6     |
| 1.3 Delimitations and Focus of the Study .....   | 7     |
| 1.4 Research Questions .....                     | 7     |
| 1.5 Aims of the Research .....                   | 8     |

|          |  |    |
|----------|--|----|
| 1.6      | Significances of the Research.....                         | 8  |
| 1.6.1    | Theoretical Significance.....                              | 8  |
| 1.6.2    | Practical Significance.....                                | 9  |
| 1.7      | Theoretical Foundation.....                                | 9  |
| 1.7.1    | The Concept of Speaking .....                              | 9  |
| 1.7.1.1  | Definition of Speaking.....                                | 9  |
| 1.7.1.2  | Elements of Speaking.....                                  | 12 |
| 1.7.1.3  | The Difficulties of Speaking .....                         | 14 |
| 1.7.1.4  | The Characteristic of a Successful Speaking Activity ..... | 17 |
| 1.7.2    | The Concept of Critical Thinking.....                      | 19 |
| 1.7.2.2  | The Role of Critical Thinking in Speaking Performance..... | 22 |
| 1.7.2.3  | Critical Thinking in Debate.....                           | 24 |
| 1.7.3    | The Concept of Debate.....                                 | 26 |
| 1.7.3.1  | Definition of Debate .....                                 | 26 |
| 1.7.3.2  | Basic Elements of Debate .....                             | 27 |
| 1.7.3.3  | The Role of Debate for Language Learning.....              | 29 |
| 1.7.3.4  | Procedure of Debate.....                                   | 31 |
| 1.7.3.5  | Benefits of Debate .....                                   | 33 |
| 1.8      | Previous Studies.....                                      | 35 |
| 1.9      | Frame of Thought.....                                      | 39 |
| 1.10     | Research Method.....                                       | 40 |
| 1.10.1   | Research Design and Steps of the Research.....             | 40 |
| 1.10.1.2 | Research Design .....                                      | 41 |
| 1.10.1.3 | Step in the Research.....                                  | 42 |

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| 1.10.2   | Sources and Types of Data.....  | 43 |
| 1.10.3   | Data Collection Techniques and Instruments.....                           | 44 |
| 1.10.3.2   | Diary Studies .....   | 45 |
| 1.10.4   | Data Analysis Techniques.....   | 46 |
| 1.10.5   | Research Timeline .....   | 48 |
| CHAPTER II.....  |   | 49 |
| THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AND ENHANCING SPEAKING<br>PERFORMANCE .....                            |   | 49 |
| 2.1  | Mastery of the mother tongue.....   | 49 |
| 2.2  | Structured Routines to Develop Fluency.....                               | 51 |
| 2.3  | Joining an English learning community.....                                | 53 |
| 2.4  | Collaborative Practice with Peers or Speaking Partners .....              | 56 |
| 2.5  | Institutional Support through School or Teacher-Led Training .....        | 58 |
| 2.6  | Utilization of Media and Technology as a Tool for Speaking Practice ..... | 63 |
| CHAPTER III.....   |   | 67 |
| DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS<br>IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF ARGUMENTS..... |   | 67 |
| 3.1  | Analysis and Development of Debate Topics .....                           | 67 |
| 3.2  | Strategies in Identifying and Analyzing Opposing Arguments.....           | 70 |
| 3.3  | Building a Strong and Structured Argument.....                            | 73 |
| 3.4  | Understanding Complex Issues and Seeing Multiple Perspectives .....       | 75 |
| 3.5  | Conveying Ideas Effectively .....   | 77 |
| CHAPTER IV .....   |   | 81 |
| THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DEBATE IN IMPROVING SPEAKING AND<br>CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS .....          |   | 81 |



|  |     |
|--|-----|
| 4.1 Utilization of Practice Time for Speaking and Critical Thinking..... | 81  |
| 4.2 Effects of Simulation on Debate Performance .....                    | 84  |
| 4.3 The Role of Teamwork in Debate.....                                  | 87  |
| 4.4 Response to Criticism from Coaches or Peers.....                     | 89  |
| CHAPTER V.....   | 93  |
| CONCLUSION .....   | 93  |
| 5.1 Conclusion .....   | 93  |
| 5.2 Suggestions.....   | 94  |
| REFERENCES .....   | 97  |
| APPENDICES.....  | 112 |



## LIST OF FIGURES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1 Critical Thinking Framework .....                    | 21 |
| Figure 2 Frame of Thought .....                               | 39 |
| Figure 3 Interactive Analysis Model for Qualitative Data..... | 48 |



## LIST OF TABLES

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Table 1. Research Timeline..... | 48 |
|---------------------------------|----|



## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Appendix 1 Interview Questions for Debate Winners (Students) .....          | 112 |
| Appendix 2 Interview Questions for Teacher .....                            | 116 |
| Appendix 3 Interview Guidelines (Student).....                              | 120 |
| Appendix 4 Interview Guidelines (Teacher) .....                             | 124 |
| Appendix 5 Interview transcript and thematic analysis Respondent 1 .....    | 127 |
| Appendix 6 Interview transcript and thematic analysis Respondent 2 .....    | 140 |
| Appendix 7 Interview transcript and thematic analysis Respondent 3 .....    | 158 |
| Appendix 8 Interview transcript and thematic analysis Respondent 4 .....    | 186 |
| Appendix 9 Daily Journal of Respondent 1 .....                              | 202 |
| Appendix 10 Daily Journal of Respondent 2 .....                             | 208 |
| Appendix 11 Daily Journal of Respondent 3 .....                             | 219 |
| Appendix 12 Thematic analysis of interview and daily journal findings ..... | 228 |
| Appendix 13 Data collection documentation .....                             | 234 |
| Appendix 14 SK Dosen Pembimbing Skripsi .....                               | 235 |
| Appendix 15 Pengantar Penelitian.....                                       | 236 |
| Appendix 16 Surat Balasan Izin Penelitian.....                              | 237 |
| Appendix 17 Plagiarism.....   | 238 |

