

Cooperative Learning in Academic Debate Class: Effects on Competitive and Cooperative Skills

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Cooperative Learning in Academic Debate Class

Effects on Competitive and Cooperative Skills

Hirofumi Kamada

1. INTRODUCTION

In Japan many assume debate is a seemingly endless verbal competition. Actually it could be one of the best cooperative educational activities. A great philosopher John. S. Mill refers to the sense of debate, stating in his recorded conversation, "the great thing was to consider one's opponents as one's allies; as people climb the hill on the other side." Can I say as an instructor that accepting different opinions positively throughout the debate experience will lead the participants to better relationships with the others in the real world?

In this research I will investigate whether academic debate activity in Japan is beneficial for the participants' interpersonal skills. Namely, would it provide them with not only better critical / logical thinking and presentation skills individually but also better cooperative skills or social attitude through the debate activity? What are the elements of academic debate to provide such social skills? Is it possible for a debater to accept convincing arguments, even of the opposite view or side positively as its own educational benefits? Those are the main research questions for the author as a debate instructor in this study.

Questionnaires and direct interviews of the participants before and after the classes were conducted by the author in order to assess the perceived effects of academic debate classes. The follow-up research interviews to some of the participants and scholars have been also conducted by the author to ascertain the effects. Based on such data I will further investigate the effects of cooperative and social skills of the participants through educational debate.

2. COOPERATIVE SKILLS IN EDUCATIONAL DEBATE

According to one of the American English language dictionary Webster, the definition of debate as a noun is "a contest in which the affirmative and negative sides of a proposition are advocated by opposing speakers" (1983, p.467). And the

word debate in English language comes from a French word 'debatre' which means 'to fight' in English (1967, p.372). Considering the definitions, "debate" seems rather competition and conflict-oriented advocacy, for or against a proposition. It seems also that those who have not experienced educational debate regard it as just a win-or-lose verbal contest by confronting each other in Japan. It is true that most debaters argue to win a contest or a tournament round. The whole purpose of educational debate, however, is not to win a contest but to improve critical / logical thinking and research skills as well as communication and argumentation skills of debaters to provide them with better knowledge and understanding of a subject and situation in the real world.

In addition to developments of those skills the author assume that educational debate can provide the participants with more than those individual skills. In most of the educational debate in Japan they debate as a team. In the group activities each participant takes a position on both sides of a proposition in turns in order to reach a best possible decision to make, and as a result they share and exchange their views together. Debaters themselves also serve as a judge to evaluate both sides of arguments and make decisions on debate rounds by giving the reasons and feedbacks to each other in educational debate. In this sense we might say that educational debate also aims to develop group activity skills to improve team research, analysis and interactive skills among debaters as a group training, along with the instructors, judges, audiences and sometimes experts of resolutions (propositions) as a team on the whole. Thus educational debate requires and so develop not only competitive skills as a competitor but also cooperative skills as a member of groups, or collaborators. Cattani refers to the difference between *conflict* and *opposition to co-operation* as below.

All participants in a discussion have at least a thesis to defend and a thesis to contrast: search part will be both proponent and opponent. The debaters both give and ask reasons. Moreover, the agents of a debate are players and referee at the same time. In the opposite, like Janus, the roman numen of doorways, looking in the opposite directions, the best symbol of matching assertions and counter assertions. (2003: p.171)

There are, however, some criticisms of the competitive nature of educational debate. One of the most famous American socio-linguists Deborah Tannen said in her book (Tannen, 1998):

And the students who are arguing are not addressing the subtleties, nuances, or complexities of the points they are making or disputing. They do not have

the luxury because they want to win the argument – so they must go for the most gross and dramatic statements they can muster. They will not concede an opponent's point, even if they can see its validity, because that would weaken their position. Anyone tempted to synthesize the varying views would not dare to do so because it would look like a “cop-out,” an inability to take a stand (1998: pp. 256-257).

If you look at the only stage of debating or arguing, it seems debaters are only opposing against each other without considering complexities of the points of the issues as Tannen pointed out. In fact educational debate, however, has many more stages and aspects before “debating” such as researching information about both sides of a proposition by selecting out supportive evidence from vast amounts of information gathered and contemplating better arguments amongst not only debaters in the same class and school, but with the debaters in other classes and schools or with instructors and sometimes experts of a variety of issues on both sides of the proposition to make more convincing arguments as a sort of educational team. The more each debate team learns different opinions or opposing views together throughout the preparations, practices and contests, the better the participants can learn the complexities of the topics through the process of a team's consensus building by proving and / or refuting cases, issues and resolutions from both sides as a group¹ as well as individual. Further they advance in such skills of argumentation, the more they will have chances to win the convictions of more judges and audiences, which would lead them to have a much deeper understanding of different opinions among them. Through the processes, they have critically selected better cases out of the complexities of the points not as subjectively and individually but as objectively and collectively as they can.

According to Dr. Austin J. Freeley, an eminent scholar of debate education, “debate, as a method of rational decision making, is the process of inquiry and advocacy, speaking reasoned judgment on a proposition.” For an example, the NDT (The National Debate Tournament)² style in educational debate, which is prevalent not only in tournament debate but also in classroom debate in Japan,

1 “The purpose of group decision making is to decide upon well-considered, well-understood, realistic action toward goals every member wishes to achieve.” (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p.83)

2 The National Debate Tournament (NDT) began in 1947. It is one of the largest number of college student participating national championships for collegiate policy debate in the United States. The tournament is sponsored by the American Forensic Association with the Ford Motor Company Fund (<http://groups.wfu.edu/NDT/>).

takes debaters more time and preparations in the process of inquiry than advocacy, or presentation stage. The tournament style of educational debate, particularly policy debate³ is designed to place much greater emphasis on the importance of research and inquiry process of arguments. As for the class style of debates, collective inquiry and communication among team members as a inter-group activity in their school courses by observing certain rules and procedures⁴ tend to be much more required for all the participants given an equal educational opportunity in Japan. Specifically, only one or two resolutions are normally being debated both in a classroom debate during the course and in a tournament debate held annually in Japan. The debaters prepare for the arguments over a resolution to debate at least for a few months. It takes debaters tremendous research, inquiry and discussion among them during which debaters share and exchange their ideas with each other to examine better cases, which is supposed to lead a team to win a round or a contest as the result of all those activities. Through all the processes educational debate will provide them with not only individual competitive skills but also cooperative skills especially as a team during the pre-debating stages.

Another Tannen's argument against the educational debate is the winner-or-loser oriented debate character. That is partly true, since educational debate takes a form of game. However, the main purpose of educational debate especially in classroom debate is not just to win the contest or make good records of own side but rather to nurture a kind of spirit of "agree to disagree" among all the participants in the long run.⁵ In educational debate a debater takes not only one side role but also the other side's and also the role of judge I mentioned, which distinguishes educational debate from a mere competition game. Infante says the difference between verbal aggression and arguing is as follows:

People who say they dislike arguing because it damages relationships probably a confusing verbal aggression with arguing. The two can be mistaken. Both involve attack and defend orientations. However, the object of the attack and defense differs, and the difference is crucial: a person's position on a

3 One of the other major style of academic debate called "Parliamentary Debate" does not require research on external supporting materials or information over a fixed resolution. However it requires debaters to research on as many debatable topics as they can to prepare for each contest.

4 For examples, there are some fixed formats of a debate to argue fairly and critically over a resolution depend on "types of debate that differ in their goals, rules and practices" (Hanson, 1996, p.49) and some strict rules such as the prohibition of misinformation and distortion of evidence.

5 Disagreeing with others while simultaneously confirming their personal competence, however, results in learning more about others' ideas, and more willing to incorporate others' information and reasoning into their own analysis of the problem. (Johnson & Johnson, p. 311).

controversial issue is the object in the case of arguing while a person's self-concept is the subject in verbal aggression (1998: p. 83).

3. METHOD

3.1. Questionnaires

This paper reports the perceived effects on cooperative and social skills of the participants in academic debate classes. In this study Action Research was used as the research method. According to Richard and Lockhart (1994: p.12), action research is defined as study of a course of instruction. It typically involves small-scale investigative projects in the teacher's own classroom, and consists of a number of phases which occur in cycles: Planning, Action, Observation and Reflection (Sano, 2000, p.35). To illustrate the benefits of participation particularly to the cooperative and social skills of the debaters, the questionnaires to the students of two universities were conducted from 2005 to 2007, which are shown in the following. The number of sample survey is shown in Table 1. In addition to the questionnaires, the author interviewed several students, the instructors and scholars in order to verify the educational effects. These interviews enabled the author to obtain more detailed perceptions of the effects not only from the documents but also from the subjects in person.

The questionnaires (written in Japanese and translated them into English by the author)⁶ were completed by all the 177 participants immediately before and after each six class held in Kyushu University and Kurume University. The responses to open-ended questions were merged based on similarity (cf. Williams, McGee & Worth, 2001). The open-ended questions were Pre-Questions 1, 2, and 4 and Post-Questions 2 and 3, and the multiple-choice questions were Pre-Question 3 and Post-Question 1. All the pre-class questions were taken right before the introductory debate classes and the post-class questions were taken right after the debate classes. All the seven questions were as follows:

Pre-Class Question 1. How much do you know about debate?

Pre-Class Question 2. Have you ever participated in a debate competition, seminar or class?

Pre-Class Question 3. What benefits do you expect to learn in the debate class?

6 This section reports the only relevant parts of the results of the questionnaires; the entire results are obtainable from the author.

Pre-Class Question 4. What do you expect to learn in the debate class?

Post-Class Question 1. What benefits do you think you have got from the debate class?

Post-Class Question 2. What difficulties have you got in the debate class?

Post-Class Question 3. What best do you think you have learned in the debate class?

Pre-Class Questions 1 and 2 were intended to assess the debate experiences of all the participants. I excluded the debate experienced participants from my research informants based on the responses to the above questions, because the purpose of this study is to purely observe the effects of the debate class in question. Pre-Class Question 3 and Post-Class Question 1 were asked (1) to assess the participants' perceptive gaps between before and after the classes and (2) to find benefits perceived by the participants in debate classes. Pre-Class Question 4 and Post-Class Question 3 were asked (1) to show the participants' perceptive gaps of Cooperative / Social skills between before and after the classes and (2) to find the growth of those benefits perceived by the participants in debate classes. Post-Class Question 2 were asked to show a contrast to the results of the perceived benefits.⁷ The responses to open-ended questions were merged based on similarity (cf. Williams, McGee & Worth, 2001) in Table 2, 3 and 4.

3.2. Participants of the Survey

Respondents were the college students of Kyushu University and Kurume University. All of the six classes were instructed by the author with mainly the NDT and CEDA⁸ styles adopted, which are dominantly popular in Japan. The response numbers of this survey are shown in Table 1. This research used gang survey and succeeded in ensuring almost a more than 80% response.

⁷ The questionnaire included other questions, which are not analyzed in this paper.

⁸ Founded in 1971 as the Southwest Cross Examination Debate Association, CEDA is now the primary national association promoting policy topic intercollegiate academic debate. In cooperation with the National Debate Tournament Committee and the American Debate Association, CEDA formulates the annual intercollegiate policy debate topic used in tournament competition throughout the nation (<http://cedadebate.org/>.)

Table 1: *The number of respondents (Six college classes from 2005 to 2007)*

	The number of sample (Pre-Class Q)	The number of effective sample (Post-Class Q)	Response rate (%)
Kyushu University	31 (05), 22 (06), 25 (07): 78	23 (05), 16 (06), 23 (07): 62	79.5
Kurume University	23 (05), 34 (06), 69 (07): 126	20 (05), 35 (06), 60 (07): 115	91.2

3.3. Benefits of Debate Participation

Table 2 reports the items of benefits and those of growth rates perceived by the students of the two universities. And the author will report and analyze the perceived benefits, particularly those of cooperative and social skills in the following sections.

Table 2: *Perceived Benefits and the Growths before & after Debate Participation*

Benefit	Kyushu University		Kurume University	
	Pre-class *(136)	Post-class (212)	Pre-class (252)	Post-class (399)
Logical / Critical Thinking ***(87 / 136)	31	46	56	90
****[1.56 times]	**22.7%	21.6%	22.2%	22.5%
Presentation / Comm. skills (91 / 130)	40	44	51	86
[1.58 times]	29.4%	20.7%	20.2%	21.5%
Listening / Empathy skills (55 / 103)	18	27	37	76
[1.87 times]	13.2%	12.7%	14.6%	19.0%
Analytical / Objective attitude (92 / 94)	28	39	64	55
[1.02 times]	20.5%	18.3%	25.3%	13.7%
Research skills (43 / 69)	11	18	32	51
[1.60 times]	8.0%	8.4%	12.6%	12.7%
Cooperative skills (16 / 56)	5	26	11	30
[3.50 times]	3.0%	12.2%	4.3%	7.5%
Social skills (4 / 23)	3	12	1	11
[5.75 times]	2.0%	5.6%	0.3%	2.7%
In total (388 / 611)	98.8%	99.5%	99.5%	99.6%

*multiple responses in number

**percentage of responses

***(/) = the number of each response item in total to (pre / post) class questions

****[] = Growth rate combined of the two university students' perceived benefits from pre-class to post-class

3.4. The results and discussion

The perceived benefits of classroom debate participation responded by the two Japanese colleges' students were Logical / Critical Thinking, Presentation / Communication skills, Listening / Empathy skills, Analytical / Objective attitude, and Research skills in descending order of importance. The most frequent response was "Logical / Critical Thinking, which is another confirmation as the highest benefit of the NDT-style (Allen, Berkowitz, & Loudon, 1999; Colbert & Biggers, 1985; Williams, McGee & Worth, 2001, p. 204) of academic debate. It also noticeable confirmation that the largest growth among the benefit response items except cooperation and social skills was "Listening / Empathy skills" (Kamada & Inoue, 2006).

Let me look more closely at this "Listening / Empathy skills", which has been also the largest growth benefit of educational debate in my previous researches (Kamada, 2000, 2004). The response originally expressed in Japanese was "Aite-no-hanashi-wo-kikukoto-no-taisetsusa-ga-wakatta", of which literally translation by the author is "I realized how important I should listen to what the other person say". In addition to the questionnaire, the author interviewed⁹ the several participants to confirm their intentions of the responses during and after each class by asking; What do you mean by that? Most of them explained to me that they got to know how important it is to put themselves into the other's position before refuting the other side's arguments in order to get their messages across to the judges. In other words they realized how significant it is to pay much more attention to what the others or different sides intend to say than what they themselves say in order to communicate more effectively.

In the previous (Kamada, 2000, 2004) and this research, the two most frequently responded expressions as "Listening / Empathy skills" to the open ended question¹⁰ in Japanese were either Aite-no-hanashi-wo rikaisurukoto no-taisetsusa-ga-wakatta or Aite-no-tachiba-wo-fumaete-kikukoto-no-taisetsusa-

⁹ More detailed results including specific testimonies obtained in some interviews are reported in Kamada (2000).

¹⁰ As for the two multiple-choice questions, Pre-Class Question 3 and Post-Class Question 1 in this study, the items of choices had been responded to the open-ended questions before they were merged based on similarity.

ga-wakatta. The former literally translation by the author in English is "I realized how important I should understand what the other person say" and the latter is "I realized how important I should consider in what context or situation the other person says when I listen to". I interpreted the nuance of the remarks is like; "I realized how important I should put myself into the others' positions first in order to understand their real intentions." Therefore I translated this perceived benefit item as not only Listening skills but with "Empathy skills" as the merged expression, Listening / Empathy skills. Paul (1990) said:

"Debate clearly functions as a means to achieve education about the content of various value related issues. But it also endows students with the value of tolerance which may itself be related to critical thought and empathy" (Paul). According to Paul, "for individuals to overcome natural tendencies to reason egocentricity and sociocentrically, individuals must gain the capacity to engage in self-reflective questioning, to reason dialogically and dialectically, and to "reconstruct alien and opposing belief systems empathically" (Paul, pp. 64-65).

Tannen argued in the quote mentioned in Chapter 2 of this paper against debaters' competitive-prone attitude that "They will not concede an opponent's point, even if they can see its validity, because that would weaken their position". On one hand I agree to her point of highly competitive attitude of debaters especially in tournament debate in Japan from my experiences of having been a judge. On the other hand, as you can see in the descriptions of the benefit of Listening / Empathy skills, I might say educational debate experiences also provide the participants with a discovery of the significance of empathy and empathetic listening skills when they listen critically and earnestly to what the other side stands for. Some of the respondents to my interview answered they had to understand as complete as possible what the other side said before they refuted them effectively. Muir reminded us of the nature of educational debate is as follows:

We must come to see how often our claims are compelling only when expressed in our own egocentric view. We can do this if we learn the art of using concepts without living in them. This is possible only when the intellectual act of stepping outside of our own systems of belief has become second nature, a routine and ordinary responsibility of living. Neither academic schooling nor socialization has yet addressed this moral responsibility, but switch side debating fosters this type of role playing and generates reasoned moral

positions based in part on values of tolerance and fairness (Muir, 292).

3.5. The benefits of cooperative and social skills

I showed the responses of perceived benefits of Cooperative and Social skills in Table 2 in order to contrast the growth rates to the other alternative benefit items of debate class, though those responses were to the multiple-choice questions. The notable result was that the growth rates from Pre-Class to Post-Class responses of Cooperative / Social skills as the benefits were the highest among them in Table 2, as I had expected the benefits of those skills as educational debate in Chapter 2 particularly in the preparatory stages as group activities. The results of the question in this research demonstrates the perceived effects of both skills.

Comparing the different response items between the Pre-Class in Table 3 and Post-Class in Table 4, overall, there were more cooperative and specific social aware responses as a group or team activities after the debate participation. In this paper I would rather opt out of the further item-to-item analysis of the responses of the Cooperative and Social skills. Instead, I selected out two typical descriptions of the perceived benefit responded by the participants in the debate classes in 2006 at Kurume and Kyushu University to illustrate the effects in Table 4. The former description was the sample of perceived benefits on cooperative skills and the latter was that of on social skills.

Table 3: *Expectations of the benefits of Cooperative & Social skills for Debate Participation*

Rank	Category	Frequency	Proportion
1.	To learn to put myself into other's position	7	38.8 %
2.	To become much fairer attitude in group activities	6	33.3 %
3.	To learn how to be effective in business organization	5	27.7 %
	Total (20)	18	99.8 %

Table 4: *Descriptions of Benefits of Cooperative & Social skills after Debate Participation*

Rank	Category	Frequency	Proportion
1.	Reaching a consensus among group members	11	13.9 %
1.	Cooperation among different members as a team	11	13.9%
3.	Respect differences of opinions among a group	10	12.6 %
4.	Enhancing awareness as a citizen in society	6	0.7 %
5.	Learning human relationship at work	4	0.5 %
6.	The others	37	46.8%
Total (79)		79	88.4 %

I came to think that we can settle matters even in dispute through the debate class experiences, if we are disagree to the other persons' points logically and constructively each other. But in order to reach a settlement or a consensus we have to respect the process of debating in fair manner (One of the responses of Rank 1 on June 12 in 2006).

The interview response shows the participant realized the necessity of the collision of the opposite sides to reach a mutual agreement and the importance to follow the process of argument jointly to secure fairness toward a common goal. As a note, there is always a third party to judge or evaluate both sides in debate to secure the fair process of arguments and lead them to resolve issues objectively.

At first I thought debate means a training to make my arguments stronger. Actually now I think it is how to reach a better decision through communicating with the other people positively. Now I feel I know how to relate to the other people better in business through this experience. (One of the responses of Rank 5 on December 8 in 2006)

The response shows that the participant had changed his perspective of educational debate as a mere argument skills training to a communication skills training in business society after having taken the class.

Table 5: *Descriptions of perceived difficult skills of Cooperative & Social skills after Debate Participation*

Rank	Category	Frequency	Proportion
1.	Debating on the side of the opposition from one's own	14	35.0 %
2.	Reaching a consensus among a group member	10	25.0 %
3.	Cooperation among members of a group	9	22.5 %
4.	Creating time to discuss cases within a group	6	15.0 %
5.	The others	1	0.2 %
Total (40)		40	97.7 %

I show the responses of the perceived difficulty items concerning cooperative and social skills of Post Question 2 in Table 5 to contrast with the perceived benefits in Table 4. As an example I show one of the descriptions of Rank 1 responded by the participants who struggled with engaging in debating in the class at Kurume University. She responded as follows:

I got used to speak in front of the audience much better than before. But I still can't entirely oppose the other side by ranging myself on the side of the opposition from mine, which is the most difficult part of debating, even if I understand it is a game. (One of the response of Rank 1 on July 7 in 2005)

The respondent perceived one of the characteristics of debate, taking the role of the opposite side from one's own belief or position, as the most difficult part of the training. The author assumes this is because debate as a game makes the participants debating more difficult. Since a resolution of educational debate is mostly a topic in our real life, so if a participant himself / herself is the person in question of the topic, even if one knows it is a game, it is natural the person can not take the opposite side as one's own rationally.¹¹ The author interviewed one of the communication and debate education scholar Inoue¹² for the reason in March, 2003. He responded as follows:

How the person in question can take such serious and real issues objectively

11 A more detailed results including specific testimonies to the difficulties of one's perspective switch in educational debate obtained in some interviews are reported in Fukuoka Debate Society (2004, pp. 28-32).

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depends on individual tolerance level.

One of the global debate educational network IDEA also quotes why we should take the contrary side even as we risk resulting in disagreement with each other in educational debate on the web site as bellow:

A key trademark of debate is that it rarely ends in agreement, but rather, allows for a robust analysis of the question at hand. Perhaps this is what French philosopher Joseph Joubert meant when he said: "It is better to debate a question without settling it, than to settle a question without debating it." (IDEA¹³, 2008)

4. EDUCATIONAL DEBATE AS A CIVIC

Lastly, I make a hypothesis that educational debate would provide the participants with the benefits to public life in society. The benefits seem similar to that of social skills aforementioned, however, educational debate would provide the participants with another benefit of better social attitudes as a civic, which must be one of the whole purpose in education. Why we need education? Because we need to develop ourselves better through learning as a better whole. As for debate practicing in democratic society it means that many variety of parties are supposed to use it to seek for a better possible solution or make a better deal or decision through debating by observing the principle of majority rule in public or compromising each other in civil affairs, even as some of the parties deadly conflict against each others' argument. So in this last chapter I would like to explore why educational debate could give better effects not only on critical / logical thinking skills (Colbert, 1987, 1993; Usui, 1992; Allen, Berkowitz, Hunt, & Loudon, 1999; Inoue & Nakano, Kamada, 2004) but also social or negotiation skills to the students to prepare for better judgments and / or decision makings in their living and work. The 35th President of the United States of America John F. Kennedy described debate is as follows:

"I think debating in high school and college a most valuable training whether for politics, the law, business, or for service on community committees such as

13 IDEA stands for The International Debate Education Association. It develops, organizes and promotes debate and debate-related activities in communities throughout the world. It has grown from a collection of debate clubs into the pre-eminent global debate organization, touching the lives of over 70,000 secondary school students, 15,000 university students and 13,000 teachers in 27 countries.

the PTA and the League of Women Voters. A good debater must not only study material in support of his own case, but he must also, of course, thoroughly analyze the expected arguments of his opponent...The give and take of debating, the testing of ideas, is essential to democracy. I wish we had a good deal more debating in our institutions than we do now" (Freedom and Union, 7).

4.1. Debate as objective decision making education in society

It's not until expressing your different views that you can get across your messages. This process of verbal interactions is more or less taken as a must for all the following similar forms of communications: discussion, dialogue and debate. Tannen proposed dialogue (1998: pp. 288-290)¹⁴ as the alternative education against debate by characterizing it as a sort of dichotomizing proof argument like 'the burden of trying to prove others wrong' in her book (1998: p. 289). However, in education all the participants are supposed to engage in their learning activities to be constructive even if they have diversity in their dispositions. This attitude is projected and also supposed to be shared in educational debate among the participants. They try to argue each other thoroughly to inquire into focal issues not to prove others wrong but to prove and examine a resolution¹⁵ till the end of final round and even after the debate. In addition there is a clear difference among the three forms of communications.

Generally speaking, discussion aims to share and pool ideas of various topics and to reach a decision. Dialogue aims to reach an agreement of a deal or resolve a problem. Both discussion and dialogue are seeking to reach an overall agreement between and / or among the parties. However, the purpose of debate is to win a third party an agreement on a topic. It is like an argument or oral proceedings between a prosecutor and a defense lawyer in a trial to convince the judge or jury to win the decision in objective and formal manner. In court, fairness is the guiding principle to reach a decision of a trial. In the very similar way, educational debate at classes aim at reaching more objective decision making in fair manner at the end of each forum. For the coming joint judge-jury

14 Tannen recommends The New Golden Rule (Etzioni, 1996) as the model of dialogue; "Don't demonize those with whom you disagree. Don't affront their deepest moral commitments. Talk less of rights, which are nonnegotiable, and more of needs, wants, and interests. Leave some issues out. Engage in a dialogue of convictions: Don't be so reasonable and conciliatory that you lose touch with a core of belief you feel passionately about." (Tannen, 1999, p.288)

15 In educational debate the purpose of arguments is not to prove the other side wrong each other but to prove a resolution (a burden of proof) for the affirmative side (Hanson, 1996, p.24) and to disprove the arguments of the affirmative (a burden of refutation) for the negative side.

trail system starting May in 2009 in Japan as one of the movement to become “a real judicial democracy” like the other democratic nations, the author think the people should learn this fair and critical decision making skills as not only individually but also institutionally to help reach objective verdicts jointly by judge and selected citizens. It will take all of us facing a decision making of other person’s matter of life in the case like a trial on death penalty. And also if you just learn discussion and dialogue, you will risk shutting your eyes to such thorny issues to make a critical decision in society. One of the definitions of argument by van Eemeren and Grootendorst shows as follows:

“Argumentation is a verbal and social activity of reason aimed at increasing (or decreasing) the acceptability of a controversial standpoint for the listener or the reader, by putting forward a constellation of propositions intended to justify (or refute) the standpoint before rational judge” (van Eemeren, Gootendorst, & Snoeck Henkemans, 1996, p.7)

4.2. Debate Educator's view

You could also develop negotiation skills by practicing educational debate as a sort of deal-reaching simulation. You will research both parties’ information, analyze and argue each side’s demands and both sides’ crucial points, learn both parties’ strategy as a competitor and evaluate both sides of arguments as the third party objectively in order to reach a better solution or a new option by playing all-round roles of a negotiation as critical as they can for the both parties. Namely, it would provide you with not only the critical analysis and rational decision making skills but also the strategic skills¹⁶ as a pre-negotiation training through the competitive-cooperative simulation activities.

In her public lecture "Competition and Cooperation: the relationship between debate skills and negotiation skills¹⁷ "at Kyushu University in 2003, Dr. Marilyn Young, then Professor Florida State University explained as the gist in the lecture; debate can be applied to the pre-stage of negotiation as a social skills training. Through educational debate you will learn how to know what the key issues of both sides are. By knowing the focal points of both sides¹⁸ you can simulate what it takes to reach mutual concessions of a negotiation among the

16 Debate as arts of argumentation based on strategy is shown in Ziegelmüller & Kay (1996, pp. 307–339).

17 Negotiation: noun 1. (also negotiations) discussion aimed at reaching an agreement in Oxford Dictionary of English 2nd edition, 1989.

18 In a round of policy debate the affirmative side seek to prove the best advantageous points and the negative side seek to prove the most disadvantageous points over a resolution each other as the voting issues. This paradigm is the most frequently used in educational debate in Japan.

parties before reaching a compromise as the final deal in real life¹⁹. Two other educational debate experts also mentioned the benefits of social skills as follows:

According to Muir, "only an activity that requires the defense of both sides of an issue, moving beyond acknowledgment to exploration and advocacy, can engender such powerful role playing" (Muir, p289). Competitive debate exists as an opportunity for students to engage in such role playing. The role playing allowed by competitive debate is an exercise in reflective thinking, it engages the student in problem solving techniques which expose strengths and weaknesses of various beliefs (Baird, 1937). In fact, competitive debate may well constitute one of the few methods campuses have to achieve this purpose.²⁰

4.3. Nature of better problem solving method

As I showed in Chapter 2 how educational debate is generally conducted in classes, there is always a third party or the role of a judge in educational debate. The existence of the third party in a debate round is a must in debate education, which as I mentioned above makes it just like a trial in the judicial system where a truth is searched for by both sides as fairly and objectively as possible. So if this educational debate is applied as the model of a negotiation, it would make the real negotiation more integrative and fairer way of communication for both sides of the parties in the process of reaching an agreement particularly due to the existence of the role of judge or a third party as observers, evaluators and decision makers. The existence of a third party requires both parties to seek for either a common goal or a mutual option such as maximum benefits of customers and / or shareholders in business, better welfare of citizens in public and so on to convince them together just like a judge in a debate round by offsetting each party's costs and benefits. The involvement or playing of the third party would help make a fairer deal and easier for both parties to compromise by providing them with a shared goal and discovering a new option to them in negotiation. In a book of negotiation skills the significance of the third party's involvement in negotiation mentioned as follows:

"But more often they, or some third party working with them, must engage in

19 The author currently assume that one of the benefits of educational debate, Listening/ Empathy skills in Chapter 3 has much to do with this point along with the preparatory reseach.

20 This quote came from the homepage of Georgetown University "Does the debate program provide students with unique educational benefits?" in interviews with Georgetown University debate alumni and current team members" searched on February 9, 2003, through yahoo.com.

problem solving, that is, must seek a new option that better satisfies both parties' interests than those currently available. – omission – An important aspect of problem solving is openness to new alternatives, that is, a willingness to seek them oneself and give them serious consideration when suggested by the opponent or some third party.” “The third party's involvement can increase levels of negotiator satisfaction with, and commitment to, the conflict resolution process and its outcomes (1997: p.200).

Thus, educational debate might be inherently an effective approach to learn the skills of a real world of negotiation to simulate and help seek for a more objective and mutually satisfied option or solution along with a third party both in competitive and cooperative manner. Lastly, let me summarize the process of educational debate from preparation of debate stage to negotiation stage below:

A sketch from the pre-debate to negotiation stage in educational debate

1. Preparation Stage; Research, Analysis, and Construction of Arguments:
(1) Thinking; Having individual views (opinions) of both sides of a resolution
(1') Research; Gathering the relevant information (data) about the issues
(3) Discussion; Examining the logics among team members and instructors
(4) Dialogue; Reasoning the opinions by making both sides of focal points
2. Debating Stage; Practicing debate match & participating in debate contest:
(1) Debate; Arguing the sides of points, refuting, defending and closing them
(2) Debating rounds ; Debating both from the affirmative and negative sides
3. Judging Stage; Judging debate rounds and giving feedbacks about them:
(1) Judge; Listening while taking notes to judge debates and give the reasons
(2) Reflection; Reflecting the reasons of a decision of debate to improve skills
4. Negotiation Stage: Simulating both sides to reach better agreement in real life

5. CONCLUSION

This paper examined the benefits of Japanese language educational debate associated with cooperative and social skills with the results from the pioneering survey conducted on college students in Japan. Through comparisons of data, the unique characteristics of educational debate were illustrated. As for the cooperative skills, listening to the others empathically was shown and explained

as one of the highest growth rate of educational benefit. As for the social skills, public decision making skills as a civic were indicated and the applications to pre-negotiation skills in real life were suggested for a better mutual solution or options to reach.

Some potential limitations of the current research, however, cannot be denied. Many of the end-results in this paper are merely the participants' own perceptions and ungrounded impressions of people around. And also the more number of cooperative and social benefits should be further analyzed from item-to-item by taking a much closer look at the questionnaire and interview responses. For example, the further participant-by-participant analysis of benefits and difficulties is necessary for instructors to propose or improve cooperative and social skills in educational debate class.

This will, however, provide important perceived data based on suggestions for applying debate as part of cooperative education in Japan. Ideally the participants should be able to use the cooperative and social skills in the right occasions of communication in both their living and work.

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