

NON-UNDERGRADUATE THESIS FINAL PROJECT

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A DEBATE CAMP-BASED TO'DOPULI MANDAR IN ENHANCING SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING



By:

MARDEWI

H0122006

**This undergraduate thesis is written and submitted to fulfill part of the
requirements to obtain a Bachelor of Education degree**

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION

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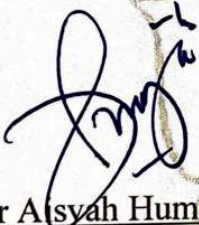
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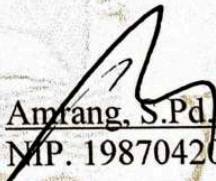
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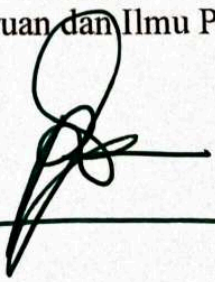

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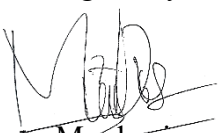
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Critical thinking skills are a key 21st-century competency that determine the readiness of youth to face global complexities. Facione (2020) defines it as an analytical, evaluative, and inferential process based on logic and valid evidence. However, the 2022 PISA results ranked Indonesia 66th out of 81 countries with a score of 385, far below the OECD average of 472. This reflects the gap between student-centered educational policies and the still prevalent teacher-centered learning practices (Claramita et al., 2022; Wijaya & van den Heuvel-Panhuizen, 2015). The World Bank report (2023) further emphasizes that teacher training in Indonesia has not fully aligned with 21st-century pedagogies that emphasize higher-order thinking skills.

A similar issue was found at SMAN 2 Majene, West Sulawesi, where this research was conducted. Initial observations showed that students struggled to construct logical arguments, lacked confidence in public speaking, and were unable to engage in reflective debates. Furthermore, the strong flow of globalization has weakened the internalization of local cultural values such as social empathy and mutual cooperation (Efendi & Kismiantini, 2022; Zhang, Mu & Hu, 2023). Therefore, a learning strategy is needed that not only strengthens critical thinking skills but also revives cultural values as the foundation of national character, in line with the 2025 PKM Theme 6 focus on Strengthening Education, Science, and Technology.

Local culture holds significant pedagogical potential in enriching the learning process (Rahmawati et al., 2021). One such example is the Mandar culture in West Sulawesi, which is based on three core values: sipamandaq (respecting differences), sipakatau (humanizing others), and siwaliparri' (cooperation). These values have been formulated by the researcher into the To'dopuli Mandar framework and integrated into the Debate Camp, a debate-based learning strategy emphasizing dialogue, critical reflection, and collaboration. The camp format was chosen for its more intensive and contextual nature compared to conventional debates, allowing students to undergo

comprehensive coaching through cultural exploration, debate practice, and collaboration.

This approach aligns with Rahman & Almazova (2021), who highlight the effectiveness of debate in training critical thinking, and Zhou (2023), who states that culture-based pedagogy can strengthen student identity and academic resilience. Thus, the To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp strategy, combining the World Schools Debate format (Putri et al., 2024) with local cultural values, serves as an innovative contextual learning method to enhance critical thinking and cultivate cultural character. Its novelty lies in the empirical integration of debate methods and Mandar cultural values, which have not been previously applied in regional school education contexts.

B. Research Objective

This study aims to test the effectiveness of the To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp strategy in enhancing critical thinking skills and strengthening student character based on Mandar cultural values. It also seeks to assess students' perceptions of the implementation of culture-based learning, particularly Mandar values.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The conceptual framework of this research is based on the critical thinking assessment rubric by Hildenbrand & Schultz (2012), which includes seven key indicators: problem identification, evidence evaluation, context consideration, hypothesis development, issue integration, implication identification, and effective communication of thoughts. These indicators serve as the foundation for developing the instruments and structure of the To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp training, which emphasizes analytical, evaluative, and reflective thinking processes in a dialogical learning context.

The debate approach used adapts the World Schools Debate model (Putri et al., 2024), which effectively develops critical thinking, argumentative, and collaborative skills. This model is contextualized through three stages of learning: pre-debate for exploring local cultural values, debate execution with a standardized assessment system, and post-debate reflection based on the

module, the To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp, which has proven effective in enhancing critical thinking skills while cultivating students' character rooted in local culture. In the future, the findings from this research have the potential to be developed into a learning strategy that combines critical thinking and culture-based character education, published in a nationally accredited journal, and replicated in various schools and regions to strengthen the implementation of Merdeka Belajar and the Pancasila Student Profile.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Conclusion

This research shows that the To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp learning strategy is effective in enhancing critical thinking skills and fostering student character based on local Mandar cultural values. The statistical analysis shows significant improvement in the critical thinking skills of students in the experimental class compared to the control class, with very positive student perceptions of the implementation of sipamandaq, siwaliparri', and sipakatau values. These findings emphasize that integrating local culture into learning not only enriches cognitive aspects but also strengthens students' identity and character. Therefore, the To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp can be an innovative contextual learning strategy that aligns with the Merdeka Belajar policy and the strengthening of the Pancasila Student Profile.

B. Recommendations

The To'dopuli Mandar Debate Camp strategy is recommended for continuous implementation and replication in schools as part of learning that develops critical thinking skills and shapes character based on local Mandar cultural values. Furthermore, future researchers are advised to conduct further studies to test the effectiveness of this strategy in various cultural contexts and educational levels, so that the To'dopuli Mandar learning strategy can continue to be developed as a contribution to strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile and the Merdeka Belajar policy.

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