Using Speed Rounds to Balance Classroom Debate Participation across Personality Types

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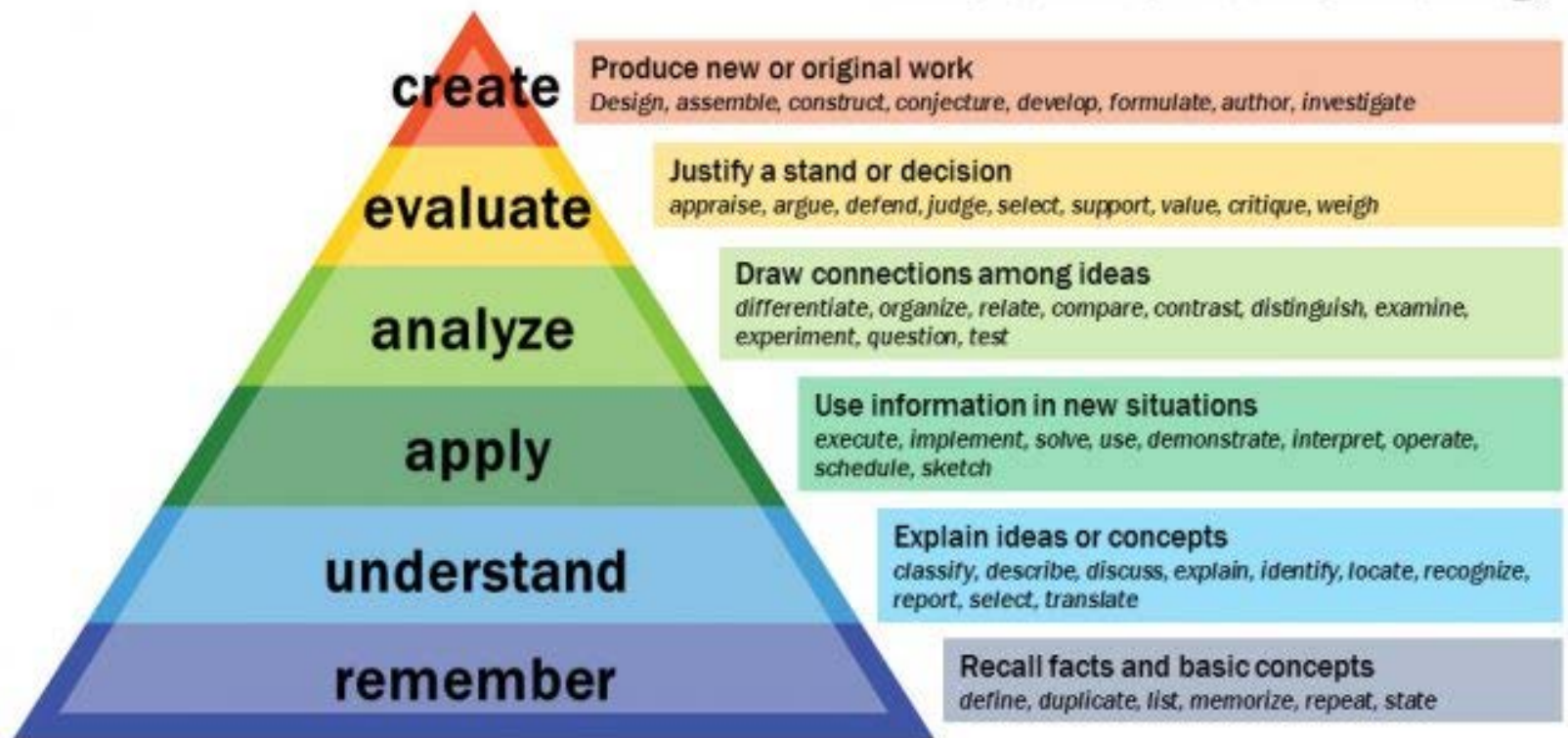Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
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Why Use Debates?

- Active learning
- Oral communication skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Academic grasp of timely topics
- Mastery of oral content

Reaching for Higher Levels

Bloom's Taxonomy

create — Produce new or original work
Design, assemble, construct, conjecture, develop, formulate, author, investigate

evaluate — Justify a stand or decision
appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, critique, weigh

analyze — Draw connections among ideas
differentiate, organize, relate, compare, contrast, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test

apply — Use information in new situations
execute, implement, solve, use, demonstrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch

understand — Explain ideas or concepts
classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate

remember — Recall facts and basic concepts
define, duplicate, list, memorize, repeat, state

Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

Obstacles

- Few students involved (between 2 and 6, Kennedy (2007))

- Energy and learning limited to a few students

- Large class size

Before the Debate

- Generate several ideas prior to class

- Polling software (Poll Everywhere)

- Small groups of students prepare an opening statement for debate (in and out of class)

- Individual assignment prior to debate

Start of Debate

- First Round: Opening statement delivered by a randomly selected small group

- Students note the key points made by either side

- Small groups decide which key points they would like to debate

- Key points are written on the board (Padlet, Google Docs)

Padlet: Key Point Organizing

What is a Speed Round?

- Students are given a predetermined time (20-30 seconds) to respond to a specific key point made by opposing team

- Sit or Stand (circle)

- Instructor alternates the side that they select to speak

- Once a student has spoken in the speed round, they cannot speak again until everyone has a chance to speak or another speed round begins

Speed Round

- Students must respond to the key point on the board
- Once no one raises their hand, a new key point can be opened for speed round debate
- Keeps debate on topic
- Can be inserted between traditional debate rounds or after the traditional debate is over
- Works in large classes (n=110)

IRB-approved Survey

- 400-level U.S. Agricultural Policy course

- 104 students (69 male, 35 female)

- Two semesters

- Students self-identified as either introverts, extroverts or in-between (ambiverts)

IRB-approved Survey
Pre and Post Debate Questions

- **Rate your knowledge of the debate topic** on a scale of 1-10, one being not very informed and 10 being very informed

- **What was your view on the debate statement?** Score this on a 1-10 scale, 1 being you strongly disagree with the statement, 10 being that you strongly agree with the statement.

- **Does the debate format give you anxiety?** Score this on a 1-10 scale, 1 being you are very anxious, 10 being your are completely comfortable

- **How likely are you to speak during the debate?** (1-10; 1 being extremely unlikely, 10 being extremely likely)

- **How likely are you to speak during a typical class?** (1-10; 1 being extremely unlikely, 10 being extremely likely)

Knowledge Differences

- Students reported significant knowledge gains following the debate

- Probability of Difference: $p < 0.01$

- Effect Size = +0.86
  - Mean difference divided by pooled group standard deviation (>0.5 = large effect)

Personality Characteristics
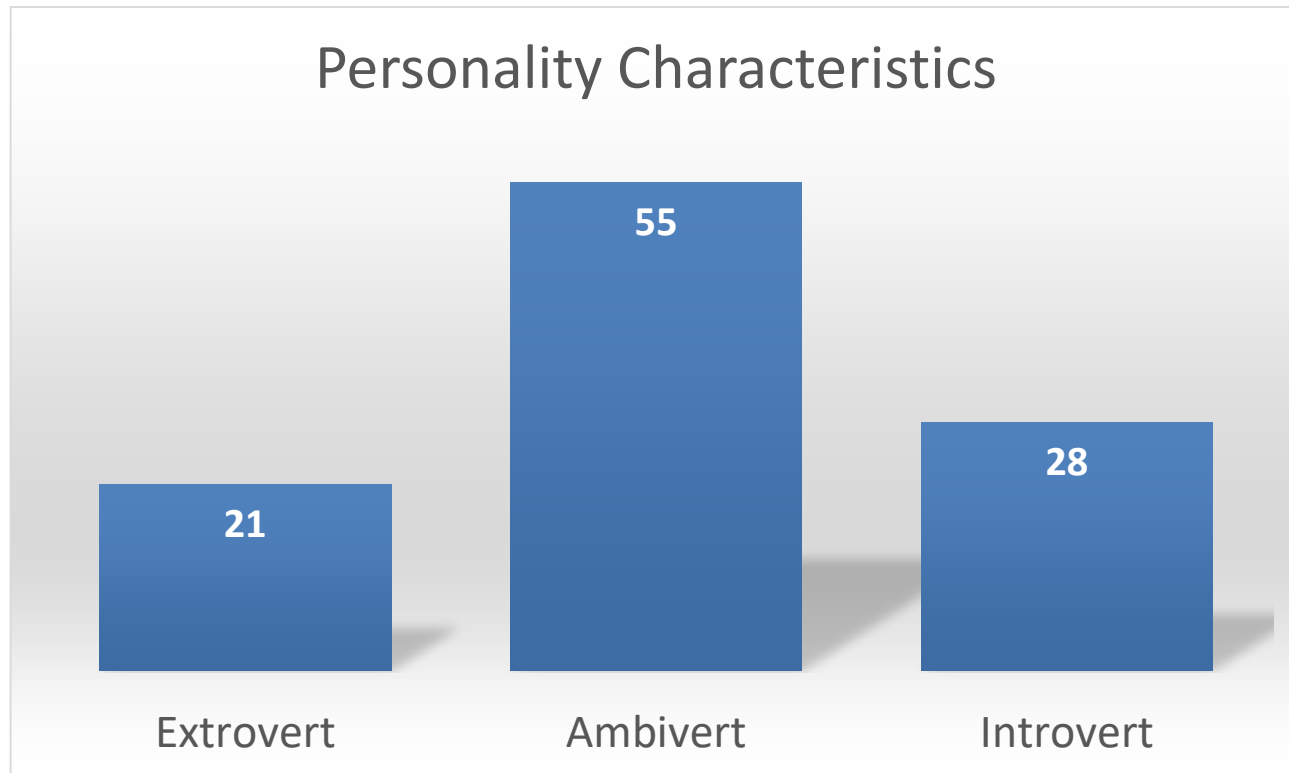
Extroverts Rate Themselves as Significantly More Likely to Speak in a Typical Class

Comparisons significant at the 0.05 level are indicated by ***.				
SelfIntrovert Comparison	Difference Between Means	Simultaneous 95% Confidence Limits		
extrovert - ambivert	2.3333	0.3976	4.2691	***
extrovert - introvert	2.7372	0.5454	4.9290	***
ambivert - extrovert	-2.3333	-4.2691	-0.3976	***
ambivert - introvert	0.4038	-1.4816	2.2893	
introvert - extrovert	-2.7372	-4.9290	-0.5454	***
introvert - ambivert	-0.4038	-2.2893	1.4816	

Debate Anxiety Given Personality Characteristics


Distribution of DebateAnxiety

Extroverts Rate Themselves as More Likely Than Introverts to Participate in the Debate

Comparisons significant at the 0.05 level are indicated by ***.				
SelfIntrovert Comparison	Difference Between Means	Simultaneous 95% Confidence Limits		
extrovert - ambivert	0.5377	-0.8635	1.9389	
extrovert - introvert	1.6071	0.0303	3.1840	***
ambivert - extrovert	-0.5377	-1.9389	0.8635	
ambivert - introvert	1.0695	-0.1987	2.3376	
introvert - extrovert	-1.6071	-3.1840	-0.0303	***
introvert - ambivert	-1.0695	-2.3376	0.1987	

Speed Rounds Balance Debate Participation

1. **The number of times a student spoke during the debate was not statistically different across personality types.**

2. This is true even though Extroverts were more likely than Introverts to say that they would speak during the debate.

Percentage of Category that Spoke

EXTROVERT	AMIBERT	INTROVERT
0.4762	0.6000	0.5714
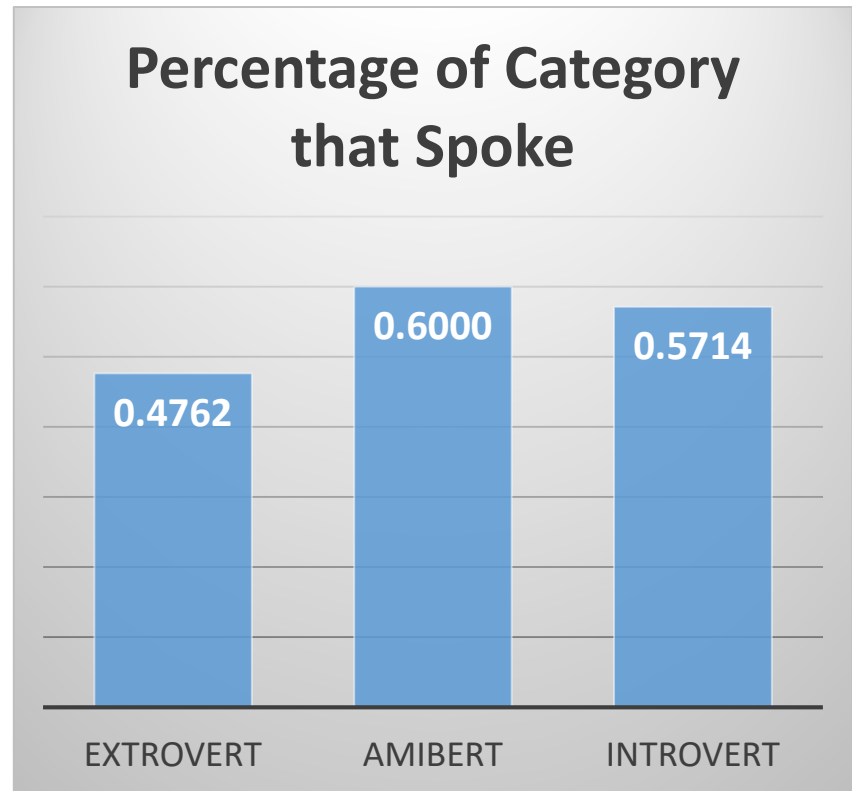
Debate View

- Students did not report a significant change in their debate view following the debate

- Drawback of the debate

  – Debriefing

- Structured Controversy

Contact Information

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Please contact me with questions, comments, or ideas for collaboration!