

# ISSA Proceedings 2014 - How Mental Develops In Kenre Dueling

*Abstract:* As a verbal-dueling, Kenre is still vitality in Yi area of Southwest China. It is characterized by poetic wisdom. Kenre is not only a kind of verbal behavior and dialogue art, but also a way of communication and inheritance. The mode of mental development in Kenre dueling includes evoking, remembering, deriving, creating, principling and rhyming.

*Keywords:* Kenre dueling mental Yi minority

Large-scale debating thoughts have occurred in China, India, and Ancient Greek, which constitute the three ancient debating system. Various Chinese ethnic minorities also enjoy a long history of debating tradition, among which, the Kenre dialectical practice of Yi minority is a common example. “Kenre” is a kind of transliteration from Yi language, while “Ke” means utterance and “Nre” represents removal and compromising. Together, “Kenre” means verbal-dueling. The dueling is a direct dialogue, which centers on some certain object or question with the aim to reach the correct answer to the object. It ends when one party win the dueling.

## *Section 1: the formula of kenre dueling*

The process of Kenre dueling varies slightly among different Yi areas. It is generally divided into the first and second halves. The first half follows the procedure: opening remarks, narration or debating, retrieving the classics, and setting up questions. They welcome the guests and compliment the other party with polite remarks. This can be viewed as an impromptu speech to relax the atmosphere and comfort the guests.

*The host party:* The esteemed guests, your silence worries the guests. How is everything going in your home? How about the cereal harvest? Does the lady defend the enemy? Does the lad marry?

*The guest party:* It is a great honor to attend the ceremony. Everything is fine in my home. The husbandry is prospers and the crops enjoy a good harvest. The family and friends are safe.

There is a transitional period called “go and have a look”. It is somehow a

challenge for debating. It is said that “We should like two energetic deer to compete”.

The procedure for the second half is like this: the origin of the epic, the evolution of the epic, and the narration of the epic history. The first half mainly tests the participant’s response ability while the second half is to test the proficiency of the epics. The words and remarks, like endless bullets, come out from the participants continuously. The second half is based on the epic named Hnewo Teyyr. The debate combines the clues and stories to the history events, like creation, immigration, wars, and settlement, and cultivates lots of hero images.

If the debate reaches a draw, then the riddle or examination session will follow. This session is for the completion of experience and knowledge. The host party usually narrates the places he/she traveled, the historic resorts, the beauty of the people, and the customs exaggeratedly. Finally, one “referee” (usually a senior citizen), on behalf of the audience, will make a toast to the participants, which represents the peaceful compromising. Kenre dueling is somehow a mental sport inclusive of cooperation and competition.

The popularity of debating in human history is because that it is a unique dialogue education. Dialogue is the real conflicts between different thoughts, and the approach for truth exploration and self-recognition. Jaspers (1991) thought that without considering the social and historical background, education itself can be divided into the following three categories: scholastic education, master and apprentice education, and Socratic education. The last one means that there is no fixed educational model, and the learning party and the teaching party can think freely.

After endless inquiries and questions, students and teachers will find themselves naive to the absolute truth. Teachers will arouse students’ sense for exploration. This kind of spawning induction education is advocated by Socrates. This educational method will arouse the internal potential of students, instead of putting too much pressure from the outside (Jaspers, 1991, p. 46). Socrates himself was a philosopher who practiced this kind of dialogue education.

### *Section 2: the mode of mental development in kenre dueling*

Human’s mind has the characteristic of bilaterally. Paying a attention to the realistic life from the perspective of dueling, human’s thinking is a process of

cognitive game of inherent dialectic. The real idea is dialogue, which is important ways for human beings to understand themselves and the world. The real education is dialogue education. Kenre dueling is a kind of Socratic education. Before activities dialogu with classic, In activities dialogu with others, After activities dialogu with himself. The mode of mental development in Kenre dueling includes evoking, remembering, deriving, creating, principling and rhyiming.

*Sub-sections 1: Evoking is the starting of dialogue intentionality in Kenre dueling*

The essence for Kenre dueling is the competition of abundance of knowledge and experience. It regards the origin of objects and life experience as the logic evidence. The debater will always exaggerate the places he/she visited, and the scenery he/she saw. The debater will always challenge to ask the opponent in a provocative way: Have you ever been to somewhere? Have you ever seen something?

*Sub-sections 2: Remembering is the representing of knowledge in Kenre dueling*

The contents of dueling include the folklore, the oratory skill, the living skill, the traditional rituals and festivals. It has the moral recognition, innovation, memorizing, and entertainment. The influence posed by the knowledge to the individual varies greatly according to individuals' interests, hobbies, styles, and abilities. For human beings, Kenre dueling is a kind of self-education, which is a major means for the carrying of human culture. Education activity, as a pass of the accumulated knowledge, is for each individual. As a result, this kind of inheritance will influence the individual first. This kind of influence is quite different. Under this kind of influence, people usually want to be known and to be capable (Hu, 1999, p. 315).

*Sub-sections 3: Deriving is the projecting of thinking in Kenre dueling*

From the beginning of the argumentive intentionality to the poetic expression, the using of formula of defense of Kenre dueling is highly. The dueling process is a process of improvisation. No memory means no creation. The improvisational process is a conversion process from change to un-change. The categorization and the specialization are strategies for creating in Kenre dueling

*Sub-sections 4: Creating is the generating of thinking in Kenre dueling*

For example, in the greeting between debaters of both sides when they start the Kenre dueling, change refers to the names or symbols representing characters of things: pheasants in the Fern grass, caraganas in the bamboo, bears in the forest,

deer in the mountain, honeys in the rocks below, otters in the river front, white dogs in the courtyard outside, heavy pigs in the courtyard inside, chickens under the eaves, girls in the house, boys in the sitting room and so on; un-change refers to the functional words which represent their action: peaceful or not, auspicious or not, hospitable, no talking and other phatic words, which of function of welcoming the arrival of the guests.

#### *Sub-sections 5: Principling is the structuring of logic in Kenre dueling*

Kenre dueling is a language activity among the participants. Debaters prove their own viewpoint, overrule the opponents' view, and eliminate the controversy through individual statement or combination of statements. For a long time, either as a phenomenon or a question, dueling is followed closely by logic, rhetoric, and pragmatics. This is not only because debate is a common phenomenon and a language activity, it also reflects the disparity among individuals. Different thoughts will continue to advance in the debate and discussion. Two opposite thinking skills have been established in our mind. The first one is to categorize, and the second one is to treat each object differently. They also breed the seeds for debate and negotiation. The categorical logos is always resisted by the individualized ant-logos (Billig, 2011, p. 159).

#### *Sub-sections 6: Rhyming is the expressing of poetic wisdom in Kenre dueling*

Kenre dueling is based on a classical epic named *Hnewo Teyyr*, which contains 14 chapters including the creation of world. "Hnewo" is a transliteration of Yi language, it means verbal passing of knowledge. For the Yi minority, this epic is a chronological book, which is widely spread and accepted by Kenre dueling. The language is always exaggerated and innovative.

The Kenre dueling is a process to cultivate the Yi minority's poetic wisdom of tracking the origin. In Liangshan area, where Kenre dueling exists, rituals are a common ingredient for life. The ritual participants exist and divided according to their blood relation and location. During the rituals, people share the same sorrow, happiness, and destiny. They dance, sing, and pray together. They also express their wishes, exchange the information, promote the mutual recognition, and reinforce their union and harmony. Rituals have an effect on strengthening the social action and tribe agglomeration. Kenre dueling comes from this kind of ritual life and is marked as an outstanding feature for public social life. Kenre dueling is an excellent ingredient of the verbal culture, which should be advocated and further developed. The limit of blood relation and family boundary

should be broken. It should be developed in the entire nation and whole society. Then, it will influence the whole nation and society in a higher level. The spirit of collectivism, competition, and union should be fully exerted, and establish a new sense of honor which means sharing of weal and woe. This new sense of honor will be rooted in the emotional conciseness of the Yi minority, and will be a spiritual power for mutual assistance and mutual prosperity. The spirit for tracking the origin, the system of sharing the same name between the father and the son together with the poetic thinking and nature, have formed the cultural tradition of poetic wisdom (Gu, 2011, p. 21)

## References

- Billig. M. (2011). *Arguing and thinking - A rhetorical approach to social psychology*. (K. Li, Trans.). Tianjin, China: Chinese People University Press.
- Gu, E.H (2011). *Research on the inheritance mechanism and pedagogical significance of the Kenre*. Chongqing, China:Southwest University.
- Hu, D. H. (1999). *Educational theory*. Lanzhou, China: Lanzhou Education Press.
- Jaspers, K. T. (1991). *What is education*. (J. Zhou, Trans.). Beijing, China: Three Book Store Press.