

## INCORPORATING DRAMA IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM

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### ABSTRACT

This article attempts to describe using drama to teach students of English classroom. Drama can be one source and effective way to assist students learns English. It uses active teaching and learning activities in the classroom which are likely can motivate and engage the attention of the students. Teaching English using drama is not easy. Drama classroom activities can include role-play, drama games, improvisation, group discussion and individual or pair work. Therefore, teaching English using drama needs serious attention from the lecturer. This article focuses on how to teach English with drama. It is expected that this strategy will give significant improvement on students' achievement in mastering English language skills.

**Keywords:** drama, English drama, English classroom, drama activities, teaching drama

### ABSTRAK

Artikel ini berusaha untuk mendeskripsikan penggunaan drama untuk mengajar mahasiswa kelas Bahasa Inggris. Drama bisa menjadi satu sumber dan cara efektif untuk membantu mahasiswa belajar Bahasa Inggris. Drama menggunakan pengajaran dan kegiatan pembelajaran yang aktif di dalam ruang kelas yang yang mungkin dapat memotivasi dan melibatkan perhatian siswa. Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris menggunakan drama tidaklah mudah. Aktivitas kelas drama dapat berupa bermain peran, permainan drama, improvisasi, diskusi kelompok dan kerja individu atau berpasangan. Oleh karena itu, pengajaran Bahasa Inggris menggunakan drama membutuhkan perhatian serius dari dosen. Artikel ini berfokus tentang bagaimana mengajar Bahasa Inggris menggunakan drama. Diharapkan bahwa strategi ini akan memberikan peningkatan yang signifikan terhadap pencapaian mahasiswa dalam menguasai keterampilan Bahasa Inggris.

**Kata kunci :** drama, drama Bahasa Inggris, kelas Bahas Inggris, aktivitas drama, mengajar drama

### A. Introduction

Drama is one of the topics in literature study, especially in English. Using drama to teach English may create good communication skill and confidence of using English by students. In relation with the teaching learning using drama in English classroom, Pardede (2011) mentioned that teachers have grown interest to use literary works to teach in the classrooms as an effect of the increasing communicative approach in the teaching English either as a second language (ESL) or as a foreign language (EFL). It is in line as well with Angelianawati (2019) that drama is one of the most potential genres in literature to use for helping ESL/EFL learners learn effectively. Thus, the use of drama in

teaching English can be as an effective way to enhance the students' mastery in English.

Quoting from <https://www.merriam-webster.com> drama is literature; a composition in verse or prose intended to portray life or character or to tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions through action and dialogue and typically designed for theatrical performance. It is likely a play. According to Longley (2019) a drama, viewing from literature, is the portrayal of fictional or non-fictional events through the performance of written dialog (either prose or poetry). He added that a drama can be performed on stage, on film, or the radio. Referring to <https://literarydevices.net> drama is said as one of the literary genres which imitate some actions. The web site also defines

drama as a mode of fictional representation through dialogue and performance. It is also explained that drama is a type of play written for theater, television, radio, and film. Therefore, it can be simplified that drama is part of literature or literary genres that presents a composition similarly to a play and can be performed on a stage or any other media.

### **Recent Studies about Drama in Teaching Learning**

Recently, there are number of studies elaborating the effectiveness of using drama to increase students' performance in English. A study conducted by Ranzau and Thomas (2016) elaborated their experiences how to use drama pedagogy in a secondary English classroom. They designed and implemented activities for a novel entitled *Anthem* in three months classroom activities. During this time, they did observation and found out that using drama pedagogy particularly helped students who struggled in reading. They ended up being engaged authentically, able to make connections with their texts, and participated actively in class discussions using critical thinking. They also revealed that some reluctant students were engaged highly in learning. Zaroog (2021) proved his study that students with drama had better proficiency in using English language compared to non-drama students. He also found out that during the process of teaching and learning, drama can reduce and minimize the students' anxiety. Besides, drama also can build teachers' and students' self-confidence and concentration. His study also revealed that drama assisted teachers to develop the students' language proficiency through a well-established classroom atmosphere, developed students' creativity, helped students to enhance their imagination, and created an attractive, funny and enjoyable of teaching learning process which can motivate students to study. Another study conducted by Albalawi (2014) wanted to find out the effectiveness of using drama in teaching English for intermediate students to develop creative thinking. This study concluded that there was a significant difference statistically between the pre and post grades of

experimental group. The mean score of post experimental group was more than the mean score pre experimental group. Data analysis also revealed there was statistically significant differences of mean scores between control (those who study using the traditional method of teaching) and experimental (those who study using drama) groups regarding pre creative thinking test. Both groups obtained means core around more than 52.00 which meant both groups possessed same level of creativity.

From those study results, it can be concluded that teaching English using drama provides good opportunity for students to practice more and develop their language skills.

### **Types of Drama**

There are several types of drama which can be applied to the teaching. <https://literarydevices.net> displays the types of drama such as Comedy, Comedy of Manners, Commedia Dell'arte, Costume Drama, Farce, Grand Guignol, Jacobean Drama, Kabuki, Kathakali, Melodrama, Morality Plays, Mastery Play, Shadow Play, Situation Comedy or Sitcom, Soap Operate, Sketch, Street Theater, and Absurd Play. While the web <https://www.thoughtco.com> lists another types of drama based on the mood, tone, and actions depicted in the plot such as Comedy (sub-genres including: romantic comedy, sentimental comedy, a comedy of manners, and tragic comedy), Tragedy, Farce, Melodrama (sometimes called "tearjerkers"), Opera, and Docudrama. In addition, the web <https://writingexplained.org> classifies drama as a piece of literature such as Comedy, Tragedy, Farce, Melodrama, and Musical Drama.

### **Teaching English using Drama**

As quoted from Albalawi (2014), drama in this present study represents the educational drama used for learning that is the use of drama as a mean of teaching learning and not drama as an art. Referring drama as a method of teaching, Zaroog (2021) wrote that drama is a teaching tool that allows students to participate, demonstrate, and observe in a "controlled"

or nonthreatening environment. While Bessadet (2022) wrote that drama is a specific action to make the learning process more active, exciting, communicative, and contextual. These statements may have understanding that during the learning process, drama can build a chance for students to practice their listening and speaking skills and the teacher can evaluate these skills without pressing them. In addition, a research conducted by Armia, Asnawi, and Chairina (2019) proved that the students' speaking ability taught by using drama was positively improved. Levy (2022) also mentioned that students' speaking, listening, and writing skills will improve through performing scenes activities and dialogue writing. Thus, it is agreed that using drama can improve students' performance of English skills. Most importantly, drama techniques are valuable means to strengthen students' active involvement, encourage cooperation and collaboration in excitement, fun, and laughter during the learning process as added by Bessadet (2022).

Quoting from Levy (2022), there are several methods to cooperate drama in the classroom, particularly an ESL class such as act out the dialogue, perform reader's theater, act out the story, and write the dialogue for a scene. She also suggested another advanced activities whenever the students already experience the basic of character, dialogue, and stage movement such as act out and put words to an emotion, give "voice" to an inanimate object, create a character, write a monologue, mime and dubbing, and improvise.

Kawasaki (2021) also posted drama activities such as role-play, improvisation, and class play. She added that teacher or lecturer actually has incorporated a bit of drama into their lessons such as ask students read a dialogue from their textbooks out loud or do simple role-plays. She believed that those activities are good warm-up to further drama activities. Though, when students practice drama, they of course make mistakes, try to develop the language, and improvise the line.

### **Advantages of using Drama in English Classroom**

Boudreault (2010) wrote some advantages of using drama in an English classroom. Viewing the advantages from teacher's side, drama makes the teacher to have the role as supporter which means the teacher has less dominant role in the classroom during the learning process. Through this way, the students can explore more the language activities and take responsibility for their own learning. While for second language learners, drama can create opportunity for students to develop their imagination beyond what they usually think in general way. It can create an independent thinking learning process. In addition, using drama encourage students to express more their idea and offer a lot exercises to train their critical thinking. This can shape the students to be creative. Moreover, teaching by using drama can be an excellent method to study and work in harmony with other students. The acting process during a drama class may provide a healthy emotion in learning English.

Culham (2003) in Albalawi noticed the advantages of using drama activities as follows:

1. Students are able to express themselves in ways other than through words.
2. Drama activities offer community-building opportunities in a classroom where there are students of varying levels of language proficiency.
3. Teachers are also able to use non-verbal cues to demonstrate caring and concern for students in a way that more formal language instruction does not allow, bound as it is by the physical constraints and the pressure to understand.
4. Non-verbal drama activities provide an excellent means of releasing the stress of language learning.
5. Students, often hesitant to speak out, can become confident when the language expectation is removed entirely.
6. "Total Physical Response is enhanced through drama activities.
7. In all drama work, power dynamics shift as the teacher becomes a participant alongside the students.

8. Non-verbal drama activities transfer directly to verbal ones, and subsequent verbal interchanges are triggered by these non-verbal activities.

Another description of advantages was also described by Chauhan (2004). It said that teaching language through drama is an attractive alternative way because drama can provide a meaningful listening context and language production, push students to use any of their language resources, and improve their linguistics knowledge. Drama also gives certain situation for writing and reading skill and it is very useful to teach literary text since the students are able to analyze the plot of the story, the character involved in the story, and the style of the story vibes. With this, the students are involved actively in text. Moreover, Chauhan (2004) also suggested that using drama techniques to teach English in classroom can break down the old or conventional method of teaching and transform it into a new and better teaching method. Through this view, the students are prepared better competence as the user of English.

## B. Research Method

The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive research. It is so called a library research. The source of the data or information is obtained through reading others article as the reference be it an experimental research which applied the teaching technique of using drama or a description research.

## C. Conclusion and Suggestion

Thus, concluding from all elaboration above, drama as a mean of teaching or a teaching strategy or method can be used by the English teacher to teach English language in the classroom. There are said some benefits or advantages of using drama in language learning which can enhance the competence of students in English either the linguistics skills or the language skills.

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