

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief explanation of the study. It consists of the background of the study, the questions and purposes of this research, research significance, research framework, and previous studies related to this research.

A. Background

The current study intends to explore students' performances in their English drama project, particularly in acting, speaking, and nonverbal expression. This study is also essential to be explored, since project-based learning (PjBL) is recognized as commonly used to develop students' language skills at different levels and in different situations (Fried-Booth, 2002), and one of the project-primarily based that has many benefits in learning is drama. Drama is beneficial for English teaching and learning since it helps students understand language and improves language skills by integrating verbal and nonverbal aspects of communication (Stewig & Buege, 1994; Maley & Duff, 2006). Moreover, the current study is expected to help teachers and students get a comprehensive picture of understanding drama in the aspects of acting, speaking, and nonverbal expression.

According to Buck Institute for Education (BIE) 1999 in Trianto (2014), Project-Based Learning (PjBL) refers to a learning model that involves students in case-solving tasks and allows students to work independently in designing their own learning and ultimately resulting in realistic value for students' work products. PjBL provides an important strategy to help students to achieve a greater understanding of a topic and increases their learning motivation. The origins of PjBL were proposed by an American philosopher and educator, John Dewey, and now become one of effective tools for enhancing language and content learning in EFL classrooms (Guo, 2006, p. 147). Project-based learning may also offer EFL students opportunities to experiment with language, which

leads to improve their language skills. Referring to this advantage, one of the methods that can be applied in the classroom as PjBL is drama.

Drama, one of the major genres in literature, is ideal for cross-curricular learning and a beneficial tool for use in many subject areas. It has become one of teachers' most widely used strategies since it encourages students during the learning process and become an influential tool in promoting communicative competence (Altun, 2019). Bessadet (2020) emphasizes how drama brings authentic situations for students and supplies them with confidence to deal with the world outside the classroom since the aim is more than linguistic. In short, drama has many advantages in developing students' language skills by bringing real-life situations. One of the language skills that can be improved is speaking skills.

Based on the preliminary observations at State Islamic University in Bandung, several students who have roles as main casts and supporting casts in the English drama project felt that speaking is the most challenging to express the character to the audience. First, they have to adjust the tone of their voice to the character itself, whether it is about being a king, an older woman, or even narrator. Even so, they have to volume up their intonation to deliver the line to the audience and make some improvisation. In line with this, Ihunwo & Dede (2013) argue that during performances, the actor is expected to be audible and intelligible enough to for the audience to get the flow of the play. To face this problems, the students always practice every week, either individually or in a group. Nevertheless, acting, speaking, and nonverbal expression are the aspect of performances they pay attention to.

In Britannica essay on acting, the American theatre director, actor, and acting teacher, Strasberg (1959) defines acting as the performing art in which movement, gesture, and intonation are used to realize a fictional character for the stage, for motion pictures, or for television. During the performance, an actor must portray a character, including facial expressions, vocal inflection, movement, and body language. Since it is similar to role-play the advantages are

also the same. Such Valenta (1998) states, playing roles can activate the complex experience of learners much more than any other method since it demands students' communication, movement, opinions, etc. Acting or role-play, basically can develop students' confidence in spoken English (Hawkins, 1993).

In Addition, Hillyard (2016) explains that drama contributes to speaking skills as it relates to both verbal and nonverbal communication since it relates to pronunciation, diction, and voice control. It is also relevant to body language, gestures, facial gestures, stances, and posture. These verbal and nonverbal communication help learners interact with their interlocutors in real life. As Ashton-Hay (2005) mentions, drama can help develop learners' oral skills by assisting them with pronunciation and intonation. Furthermore, the use of gestures that represent the meaning of words to be learned has a positive effect on vocabulary acquisition (Simpuruh & Syamsinar, 2021).

In particular, Neeland (1996, p. 204) states that in drama, situations are improved, or acted out, as if they were actually happening, the students are involved as participants, feeling discovering, thinking, through "acting and reacting," in response to the situation as it unfolds around them. Moreover, Ferdinal, Seswita, & Sandika (2020, p. 53) find out that there are performance elements in drama who literary scholars have divided into acting, character motivation, character analysis, empathy, speaking, breath control, vocal, inflection, projection, speaking style, diction, gesture, and facial expression.

Several previous studies have been conducted regarding this issue. Kemalglu-er & Sahin (2022) and Kusumawati (2019) discussed the implementation of project-based learning (PjBL) in ELT to find out its significant benefits for students in developing language skills. Another study by Anggraini (2022) explored how drama projects as PjBL allow students to develop their English skills. Also, Alasmari & Alshae'el (2020) investigated how using drama in the classroom can affect English language learning among young learners. Regarding document analysis, a study by Rohman, Nababan & Santosa (2019) analyzed the translation quality of the drama script 'Waiting for Godot.' However,

as Kao and O'Neill (1998, p. 35) mention, language teachers and academics have neglected to perform credible and precise research regarding what is happening in drama-oriented language classes. Thus, the current study may give significance to further research.

As a result, the fundamental objective of this study is to shed light on the students' performances in English drama project as three questions proposed. More specifically, the current study fills the gap from previous studies to reveal how the main casts' acting, speaking, and nonverbal expressions are performed by assessing their performance through a video recording archive and the drama script which document analysis is used here.

B. Research Questions

Three research questions were addressed:

1. How are students' acting in the English drama project?
2. How are students' speaking performance in the English drama project?
3. How are students' nonverbal expression in the English drama project?

C. Research Purposes

From the research questions above, this study is aimed at obtaining the three following purposes:

1. To uncover how students' acting in the English drama project
2. To discover how students' speaking performance in the English drama project
3. To find out how students' nonverbal expression in the English drama project

D. Research Significances

This study is expected to give theoretical and practical significances. Theoretically, the result of this study reveals the analysis and describes how the main casts' acting, speaking, and nonverbal expression are performed as the study regarding this issue is still restricted. Practically, the result of the study is

expected to inspire the teachers to use PjBL, which integrates drama activities into the classroom by paying attention to the aspect of the drama itself as literature in ELT and giving students knowledge that there are elements in drama that could be noted while producing a drama project. Furthermore, this study is also expected to give a comprehensive picture in understanding the elements of drama.

E. Research Framework

Project-based learning (PjBL) is an approach that encourages learner-centered education via exploratory, interactive, and creative activities that extend beyond the classroom (Fried-Booth, 2002). In PjBL, students actively participate in the learning process by conducting in-depth investigations, evaluating data, solving issues, drawing conclusions, developing products, and sharing knowledge (Beckett & Miller, 2006; Gras-Velázquez, 2020). PjBL encourages authentic target language use in classroom settings in relevance to students' lives, learner decision-making, and autonomy, and it brings about several benefits, including improved language. More importantly, PjBL is a process- and product-oriented (Stoller, 1997).

On the other hand, Torres and Rodriguez (2017) argue that PjBL is a constructivist educational method that helps students understand the process of problem-solving via group work and social interaction. Since it is tied to students' experiences and community, they will become more interested and able to have a deeper understanding of the content (Saenz et al., 2018). However, as the increased interest in student-centered learning, autonomous learning, and collaborative learning, the use of PjBL has been incorporated into language education including ELT (Hedge, 1993).

Drama is a character in action. The word drama derives from the Greek meaning "to act, do or perform," and was first introduced by the Greek philosopher Aristotle (Klarer, 2004). Reaske (1966) explains that drama is a work of literature that depicts the life and human activity by presenting various actions. Drama has become one of the alternative teaching methods used by teachers and

teacher educators (Griggs, 2001) and was first employed in education in the early twentieth century (Bolton, 1993). Many scholars have pushed for incorporating drama into language classrooms, as they claiming that this teaching tool will produce valuable academic outcomes if used effectively since it achieve better language achievements (Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020).

In drama, actors or casts are chosen to present to the audience what is written in the playscript. There are various aspects that actors must consider while delivering the story to the audience, such as acting, speaking, and nonverbal expression. Ferdinal et al (2020, p. 53) state that those aspects fall under the performance elements of drama. They also point out that acting is the use of face, body, and voice to portray an actor or a character.

Acting, as Meisner and Longwell (1987, p. 27) define, is behaving truthfully under imaginary circumstances, which means that despite pretend circumstances, acting encourages students to use their target language (TL) with their true selves. Through this reliance on imagination, students could develop a sensitivity to the intricacies of TL interaction and become familiar “with the cultural appropriateness of words and expressions to specific settings and social situations” (Stern, 1980, p. 79) as they would in their first language with attention to the new context they are speaking in. Moreover, Ferdinal et al (2020, p. 53) mention that character motivation, character analysis, and empathy are the components in acting and the current study covers all the components that to be analyzed.

Speaking is an essential part of drama to convey the lines in front of the audience. Remembered that many studies show the drama approach can develop communicative behaviors, which means in speaking, it offers oportunites to practicing the target language and para-language aspects of communication bringing together both mind and body (Bessadet, 2020). In line with this, Charles and Kusanagi (2007) state that drama helps students develop their English abilities: speech acts; pronunciation and intonation, and discourse strategies; provides a genuine context for communication and makes the target language

more real. In drama, Ferdinal et al (2020, p. 53) state speaking as a verbal aspect to expressing or delivering lines. He also examines the aspects of speaking in drama or theatre; breath control, vocal, inflection, projection, speaking style, and diction. Furthermore, the current study covers all the components in speaking except breath control.

Drama activities also involve nonverbal aspects. It refers to communication that is produced in other ways than words (for example, eye contact, body language or gesture, and facial expression) (Knapp & Hall, 2002; Ferdinal et al., 2020). Nonverbal cues are important in delivering the unspoken messages. When the verbal utterances deliver the line, the nonverbal behaviors that accompany the uttered words imply the expressions of feeling and emotions of the actors, and it can make the actors more memorable (Sambanis, 2013; Schiffler, 2012). Ferdinal et al (2020, p. 53) argue gestures and facial expressions are included to nonverbal expression in performance elements of drama. In addition, another scholar who identified eye contact as the part of nonverbal expression is Knapp & Hall (2002) and the current study covers all the components in nonverbal expression. Furthermore, the current study focuses on acting, speaking as verbal communication, and nonverbal expression as nonverbal communication, which falls under the performance elements in drama as variables that analyzed in the English drama project.

F. Previous Studies

Several prior research regarding this issue have been undertaken. A study by Kemaloglu-er & Sahin (2022) discussed the implementation of project-based learning (PjBL) in ELT in order to give a comprehensive knowledge of the use of PjBL in a genuine rural classroom setting via in-depth analysis. The participants in this study were 7th-grade students (seven males, three females) and their teacher. They were all Turkish native speakers and had been learning English for six years. The data were collected through closed- and open-ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and students' production using the descriptive case study design. The result of the study shows that PjBL has been favored as an

educational means contributing to the development of various competencies. To differ with the current study, drama is applied as PjBL in the university context as well the participant itself from English Education Department students, and all of them are Indonesian native speakers.

Kusumawati (2019) explained how PjBL might be useful in the classroom, particularly in technical high schools, to focus on speaking abilities. This study involved twenty students in tenth grade of SMK Nursery of Dian Indonesia. The classroom action research (CAR) design was chosen to know the process of teaching and learning of speaking, which is focused on language components (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency) and students' responses in learning speaking by using PjBL. The result was that the students achieved better due to the use of project-based learning. They were motivated and interested in participating in the activities and became more excited about the project. They perform better in tasks, projects, and performance. Meanwhile, the current study uses drama as PjBL and focuses on performance elements in drama, which is not only about speaking, there are acting and non verbal expression.

Another study about drama as PjBL was conducted by Anggraini (2022), who explored how drama project as PjBL provides students with opportunities to develop their English skill and to discover students' perceptions of performing drama as project-based learning in English language learning. The participants in this study were students involved in drama production. There were 30 students as participants at the university level. This study employed a questionnaire to assess students' perspectives and attitudes regarding drama as project-based learning. Based on the study's findings, most students agreed that the whole process of the drama could help them speak English. Moreover, drama as project-based learning helps them learn English, such as themes, implied meanings, new vocabulary, and new sentences. The differences with the current study are the participants only involved 8 students, which refers to the main casts and document analysis is employed as an instrument tool.

In regard to drama in ELT, a study was carried out by Alasmari & Alshae'el (2020). They investigated how using drama can affect English language learning among young learners. They found out that the participants' language skills are developed after gathering the data via an English language test and classroom observations, especially in the communicative aspect, such as interactions and conversations. These participants, who are 6th-grader female pupils in Sakaka City, become more engaged in the learning process and it is confirmed from the result that introducing drama activities in language classrooms positively supports language acquisition. Moreover, the current study gathered data from video recording archive that students have performed the drama before. Also, in English language skills it is just focusing on the speaking aspect.

Regarding document analysis, a study by Rohman, Nababan & Santosa (2019) appeared. The study aims to determine the translation quality of the drama script 'Waiting for Godot.' The sources of the research data are the drama script and two versions of its translation. They analyze the data using document analysis by assessing the translation quality in two aspects. They are accuracy and reliability, also focus group discussion is carried out to validate the data. The findings show that in the target language 1, about 96% of 168 data are accurate. In the target language 2, about 94% of 156 data are accurate. For the reliability aspect, there are 99% of data from target languages 1 and 2 are reliable. Different from the current study, where the data is not only taken from the script to validate how the cast mentions the words or sentences as an aspect of pronunciation, but the video archive of their performances is also taken as a data source as well to assess students' performance in the aspect of acting, speaking and nonverbal expression.