

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DRAMA TECHNIQUE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE CLASS

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### Abstract

Teaching English literature through drama makes students aware that “English is not just words, structures and idioms, but it is a lively, dramatic and versatile means of communication (Case and Wilson, 2003: 4). Learning English Literature by only reading and comprehending the content can cause boredom for most learners. Based on this situation, dialogue or drama performances have been a favourite technique or an alternative way in teaching English Literature. The dialogues of drama are selected from the plays of well known author or the students create their own plays based on the form of drama. For examples; Pantomime, Costume Drama, Melodrama and Comedy. The objectives of the study are to describe the implementation of drama and dramatic activities in English Literature teaching, and to find out the students’ opinion on the implementation of drama as a technique to teach English Literature. The study employs descriptive qualitative method by which data were collected through academic literature review, document analysis, observation, and questionnaire. From the study it is found that drama was the best alternative to facilitate learner to experience autonomous learning and give students more opportunity to learn Literature and perform their ability in front of the audience.

**Keywords:** *Drama, English Literature Class*

### Introduction

English, as a language, has many aspects to study. Literature is one of them. Literature includes poetry, drama, fiction, and many kinds of nonfiction writing. Besides that, it also includes oral, dramatic, and broadcast compositions which are not necessarily preserved in a written format, such as films and television programs ([www.galegroup.com](http://www.galegroup.com)). From the definition, it can be inferred that kinds of nonfiction which are either in the written or spoken format can be classified as literary work.

Basnet (2001) provide a rather accurate categorization distinguishing three types of literary texts: (a) the visual texts as films, television, advertisement, cartoons, photograph, etc. (b) the spoken and written texts as spoken drama, interviews, film and TV commentaries, radio programs, poetry, novels, play scripts, journalism, newspapers, academic writings, brochures, pamphlets, etc. (c) the musical texts as vocal / instrumental, records, CDs, etc. Studying literature, however, has not been given a great attention

by educational practitioners. They usually teach English focusing on language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), and language elements (structure, pronunciation, and meaning). That is why literature often becomes an unfamiliar subject for students to study.

Students' involvement in the learning process has become the main aim of modern approaches that focus on student-centered class rather than teacher-centered class. Clever involvement that demands a student to use creative thinking skills is the kind of involvement that helps student to learn effectively. Many methods have been used to assess students' effective involvement. Drama is one of the most important methods that provide much more involvement for both teachers and students in the learning process.

In foreign language classroom, drama is an effective method as Mattevi (2005) states "the use of drama in the language classroom allows the teacher to present the target language in an active, communicative and contextualized way. Dramatization helps the

teacher address the four skills of language learning (speaking, listening, writing and reading), and it also favors and facilitates the study of some often neglected aspects of language such as pronunciation and body language."

Blanch (1974) also points out "the two elements of drama are action and dialogue, and both have a place in the foreign-language learning experience. They may be introduced into the classroom by means of a "drama lab," a learning activity that permits students to act out foreign language materials such as tableaux, poetry, ballads, folklore, and plays. Drama allows the student to express his individuality, and the material, if it is culture-related, brings to life the cultural context of the foreign language."

Drama also approved its effectiveness on developing creative thinking. Bogdan (2008) states "Drama enables students, in all levels of education, develop their intellectual skills such as creativity, problem solving, communication, socialization and empathy and it gives individuals the opportunity for self-actualization, group work and sharing their responsibilities."

Most ELT teachers especially English Literature teachers nowadays advocate some elements of a 'Communicative Approach' and therefore recognise and appreciate the value of Drama in English Literature class. This course discusses the concept of prose, such as: the intrinsic elements (the Structural Elements which include plot and structure, character and characterization, point of view, setting, theme and symbol; and Stylistics Elements which include style, tone, symbolism and allegory, and idea and theme) the extrinsic elements (literature and society, psychology, biography and thoughts); and the aspects of drama, such as: theoretical aspect and theatrical aspect as well as monolog or dialogue in script and presentation of the story.

The aim of this project was to find a way to make English Literature more attractive to bachelor students. The writer decided to have students perform short drama performance on stage, besides reading them. However, after

many years of experience working with the students and my colleague, the aim of the project has become manifold. At the linguistic level the purpose for students as future teachers, is to allow them to practise a foreign language in front of an audience.

The challenge for them is to speak clearly in English using adequate pronunciation and prosody, i.e. the patterns of stress and intonation in a language. At the cultural level the project allows the students to "perform literature", and create a feeling that solely reading the works would not provide. It also gives them the opportunity to use body language and emotions while performing short plays and poetry on stage. As Brian McGuire (2013) states in her work on empathy and drama activities, performing in a foreign language allows to "understand the actions and the emotions of others with one's own body."

### **Methodology**

Related to the objective of the study, the writer uses a descriptive method, This method is used to represent a broad spectrum of research activities having a common purpose of describing situations, events, or phenomena (Mason and Brangle, 1997: 37). Ary (1985: 415) states that a descriptive research is directed toward determining the nature of a situation, as it exists at the time and place of the study. From those definitions, this research has an aim to analyze the implementation of drama techniques in English Literature Class.

Suharsimi Arikunto (2006: 245) states that a descriptive research, generally, is non-hypothesis research. This thesis, therefore, just collects data, analyzes them and draws a conclusion based on the data only, without taking general conclusion. It means that the result is just valid for the data used in this research, not for others. Thus, the method of the research is document analysis. Suharsimi (1998: 92) says that the other terms for document analysis are content analysis, activity analysis, or information analysis. Based on Suharsimi's definition, another

word for document analysis is content analysis.

The sources of the data of this research are events, respondents, and documents. The events are the process of the implementation of drama techniques in English Literature class at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. The respondents are the lecturer of english literature and the students of the sixth semester of English Department student. The documents are the handbook, the text books, and the guidelines being followed. The participant of the study were the sixth semester of English Department Students, consisted of 24 females and 8 males.

Similar to the source of data, the techniques in collecting data that is used in this research are Observation, Interview, questionnaire and Document Analysis. In analyzing the data, the writer refers to the

technique proposed by Strauss and Corbin, that is constant comparative method. In this method, there are four steps in analyzing the data: 1. Determining set of information 2. Making categories of information based on their similarity. 3. Determining the relation between categories. 4. Developing proposition based on the relationship between categories.

### Findings and Discussion

The findings are focused on the implementation of drama performances in English Literature class. They are discussed in separated points: 1. Lesson plan, 2. Overall implementation of drama, 3. Questionnaire result. 4. Observation result. The following is the table of lesson plan in implementing drama in English Literature Class.

## 1. Lesson Plan

Table 1.  
Lesson plan

Lesson	Learning activities	Rationale	Resources
1-3 Pre-reading activities	<p><i>Activity 1:</i> Making predictions about the plot, characters of the story:            SS look at the cover of the book and predict:            - the plot            - the characters in the story</p> <p><i>Activity 2:</i> Vocabulary building            - SS predict the vocabulary items that they would come across in the story.            - SS find out the answers to their prediction by keeping a record of the vocabulary items they come across when reading.</p> <p><i>Activity 3:</i> Knowing the author            a. SS look at the photo of the author and think of three things that they would like to know about him.            b. SS scan through the information about the author and find the answers.            c. SS try to select the part of the life of the author, which they think has affected the author 's writing of the story "The Black Cat"</p>	<p>1. - To arouse SS' s interest in reading the story.</p> <p>2. - Help students build up a vocabulary list while reading.</p> <p>3. - Enhance the SS' s understanding of the story.            - help SS understand the relationship between the life experiences of an author and his work.</p>	Handbook English Literature: Prose and Drama
While-reading activities	<p>1. The setting:  <i>Activity 1:</i> Introducing the characters &amp; their relationship</p>	<p>1. - Guide SS to extract information</p>	Handbook English Literature:

	<p>- Based on the description on page 1 of the story, SS draw a family photo of the narrator and write a caption to describe the photo.</p> <p><i>Activity 2: Interviewing the main characters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS form in pairs and look at each other's drawing of the family photo of the narrator.</li> <li>- SS take turns and play the role of an interviewer to interview the narrator and his wife.</li> <li>- Based on the description on page 1 SS try to finish a dialogue and then role play the dialogue with their partner.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">2. The Plot</p> <p><i>Activity 1: Knowing cause &amp; effects of the main events</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS are given a picture showing the ending of the story.</li> <li>- SS are asked to trace back to the main dramatic events that cause this ending.</li> </ul> <p><i>Activity 2: Analyzing the structure of the story</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teacher presents to the students the basic structure of a story.</li> <li>- Based on the model, SS analyze the structure of The Black Cat.</li> </ul> <p><i>Activity 3: Keeping a response journal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS keep a response journal by writing the quotes in the story which impress them most and list the reasons why.</li> <li>- SS also need to respond to the quotes by relating the quotes they have chosen to their own thoughts or experience.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">3. Characterization</p> <p><i>Activity 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Completing a diary based on the plot of the story, SS analyze how the narrator feels and thinks after each dramatic event and fill in the diary for him.</li> <li>- SS describe the main changes that have taken place within the narrator, which leads to his final character at the end of the story.</li> </ul> <p><i>Activity 2: Comparing and contrasting the characters</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS imagine themselves as a writer</li> </ul>	<p>about the setting of the story, including the introduction of the characters and their relationship.</p> <p>2. – Help SS further explore the psychology of the characters with the support of the text description</p> <p>1. Help SS to identify at least 4 main dramatic events of the story.</p> <p>2. Help SS analyze the cause and effects of the events and how they lead to the ending of the story.</p> <p>3. - Help SS understand the basic structure of a story.      – guide SS to analyze the structure of The Black Cat with the model.      – encourage SS to respond to the text and relate the meanings embedded in the text to their real experience</p> <p>1.- Help SS analyze the changes in the character of the narrator by comparing his character at the beginning of the story and the end of the story.      – Help SS trace how different events affect this character change.</p>	<p>Prose and Drama</p>
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	<p>going to write a biography of the narrator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS draws two photos of the narrator with his wife, one taken at the beginning of the story and another at the end of the story.</li> <li>- SS start to write a biography by describing the character of the narrator and his wife based on what they did in the story.</li> <li>- SS compare and contrast their character by listing the common features between them.</li> </ul> <p>4. Analyzing the conflicts          Activity: Completing a conflict chart</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS analyze the conflicts which build up in the story by referring to the incidents which show and develop the conflicts.</li> </ul> <p>5. Themes          Activity: Group Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS are given a list of themes and they are asked to think if any of the themes are conveyed in the story.</li> <li>- SS need to base their choice on the incidents which show the theme(s).</li> </ul>	<p>2.-Help SS compare and contrast the character of the two main protagonists in terms of their character development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Help SS to base their analysis on the incidents described in the story.</li> <li>– Help SS to make their analysis by using a chart showing unique and common features of the two main characters.</li> </ul> <p>- Help SS find out the conflicts between different characters in different events in the story.</p> <p>- Help SS find out the theme(s) conveyed in the story by looking at the incidents in the story</p>	
<p>Post-reading activities:</p>	<p>Post-reading activities:</p> <p>Activity 1: Evaluating the story</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS respond to the text by filling in an evaluation form of the story.</li> </ul> <p>Activity 2: Final project of Drama Performances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SS write a story and present it in drama performance (each team consist of 15 students)</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage the SS to respond to their text by stating their preferences and opinions.</li> <li>2. To enhance SS"s interests in reading and appreciating the short story.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To help SS to apply what they have learnt about short stories in creative writing</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Handbook English Literature: Prose and Drama</p>

## 2. Overall implementation of drama technique in English Literature Class

Before doing a play in English Literature class, the students should practice:

- Conversational skills of a character in a specific role (how to start, lead and finish a dialogue, how to express oneself even with limited knowledge of vocabulary and grammar);
- Nonverbal communication through mime, gestures, facial expressions and body posture (how to express the status of the character through body language, how to

express meaning through mime, how to understand and react to the body language of other cultures);

- Awareness of otherness (how to understand others' feelings and motives for acting, how to share others' attitudes);
- Self-awareness (how to gain confidence, how to become accepted and understood);
- Creativity (how to communicate in unpredictable situations, how to solve unexpected problems);
- Social skills (how to socialize, how to negotiate, how to approach people.

Table 2.  
 Steps should be taken into account by the participants of the drama

No	Stages	Activities	Explanation
1	Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating characters (who they are?)</li> <li>- Creating place (where they are?)</li> <li>- Creating the purpose of their communication – why they are talking together?</li> <li>- Creating content– what they are talking about?</li> </ul>	<p>Students are welcome to choose the characters they would like to play: judges, attorneys, a defendant, a bailiff, jury, witnesses for the prosecution and the defence, forensic experts, etc.</p> <p>They have to look into the case and thoroughly examine all the details of the crime: the characters, their state, place, time, conditions, reasons, etc. Then they have to work out the strategy of the defence /prosecution together with witnesses and a defendant; to think over possible questions for direct and cross examination, to prepare forensic expert examinations, physical evidence, etc.</p>
2	Production	Performing role-plays where learners in roles act as somebody else in an imaginary situation	<p>This stage of the role play is extremely important for it is the time when students have to show everything they had prepared during the first stage: awareness of peculiarities of the Anglo-American legal system, the protocol of the trial, features of judicial rhetoric, rules of conduct during the trial, etc.</p> <p>Besides, they should cope with excitement or quiver and demonstrate their ability to express themselves according to the role the play (intonation, tempo of the speech, mime, facial and body language and so on), to react and change the scenario if it's required by the invented storyline, to keep the situation under control.</p>
3	Reflection	Learners and teachers together are expected to provide feedback on the quality of performed role-plays	<p>Provides feedback on the mistakes and drawbacks that occurred during the previous two stages.</p> <p>Different ideas and thoughts related to the organization and performance of the trial are discussed, feelings and emotions are shared; suggestions for future drama activities are put forward. The results are summed up.</p>

Table 3.  
 Final Project of Drama Performance

No	Class/group	Time	Title of the Play	Awards
1.	3A/1	Day 1. Monday	Bendera Setengah Tiang	Best artistic Best drama script
2.	3A/2	Day 2. Tuesday	Bullshit Campaigning	Best Director Best Actress in a leading role
3.	3B/3	Day 3. Wednesday	Miss Ghost World	Best MUA and Costume Design Best drama performance
4.	3B/4	Day 4. Thursday	Ande Ande Lumut	Favourite Team

### 3. Questionnaire result

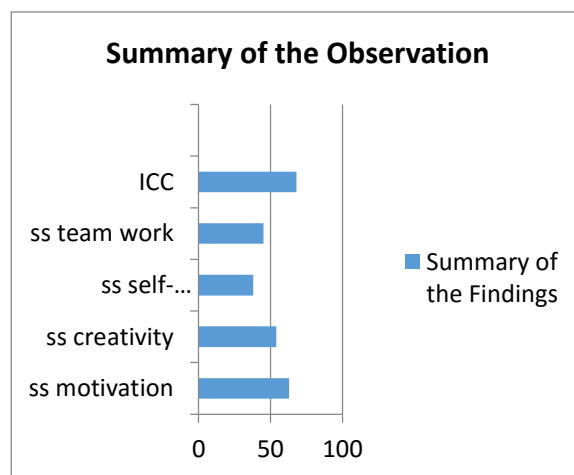
Another findings are the questionnaire related to students response in teaching-learning process. The writer used questionnaire sheet to acquire the students' opinion about the teaching learning process in English Literature class. From the questionnaire it indicated that most students give positive responses on the use of Drama technique. Here is the table of students' responses. The summary can be shown on the following chart below.

Table 4.  
 Students' responses of English Literature class

No	Questions	Yes	No
1.	Do you like English Literature class?	22	10
2.	Do you get bored with English Literature materials?	20	12
3.	Are you able to understand lecturer's explanation?	17	15
4.	Do you participate actively in English Literature class?	19	13
5.	Do you get difficulties in comprehending English Literature text?	21	11
6.	Is drama technique interesting?	24	8
7.	Do you think that drama technique difficult to apply?	23	9
8.	Are you motivated to use drama technique in your reading task?	19	13
9.	Do you cooperate with your peer to do the task with the technique?	22	10
10.	Do you give good response to the lecturer in English Literature class?	25	7

### 4. Observation Result

Chart 1.  
 Result of the Observation



Based on the writer's observation, the process of teaching and learning ran smoothly and successfully. According to the results of the survey conducted by all the participants enjoyed taking part in drama activities (100 % of respondents). The benefits of using drama techniques may be summarized as follows 1) increase of motivation (interest) (63 %); 2) opportunity to reveal student's creative potential (54 %); 3) opportunity to self-express (38 %); 4) ability to work in a team (42 %); 5) development of intercultural communicative competence (68 %)

### Discussions

One of the greatest advantages to be gained from the use of drama is that students become more confident in their use of English by experiencing the language in operation. The student-centredness inherent in all dramatic

activities also improves students' maturity and motivation, and the physical involvement contained in drama along with the concept of learning language through action is an effective variation on the method of Total Physical Response<sup>2</sup> and other holistic approaches to language teaching, where the learner rather than the language or indeed the teacher is at the centre of the learning process. Lazar (1993: 3) who says that Drama provides wonderful source material for eliciting strong emotional response from the students. In other words, by using this technique, we can stimulate the students' emotion or feelings. Since literature contains many and different values, the students may get themselves used to understand other's feeling.

### Conclusions

Drama bridges the gap between course-book dialogues and natural usage, and can also help to bridge a similar gap between the classroom and real-life situations by providing insights into how to handle tricky situations. Drama strengthens the bond between thought and expression in language, provides practice of supra-segmentals and para-language, and offers good listening practice. If drama is considered as a teaching method in the sense of being part of the eclectic approach to language teaching, then it can become a main aid in the acquisition of communicative competence. Drama activities facilitate the type of language behaviour that should lead to fluency, and if it is accepted that the learners want to learn a language in order to make themselves understood in the target language, then drama does indeed further this end. In addition, drama could always be extended and used as a starting-point for other activities.

Drama draws upon students' natural abilities to imitate and express themselves, and if well-handled should arouse interest and imagination. Drama encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into context, and by giving learners experience of success in real-life

situations it should arm them with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom.

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