

USING DRAMA FOR ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES

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Abstrak: *This study explores the impact of drama-based pedagogy on developing academic communication skills among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Recognizing drama as both artistic expression and an educational method, the research emphasizes its role in helping learners articulate ideas, comprehend spoken language, and engage in meaningful dialogue. With its focus on embodiment, context, and interaction, drama creates a dynamic, immersive environment that fosters natural and engaging language acquisition. The study adopts a qualitative approach, using pre- and post-intervention assessments to measure improvements in learners' communicative abilities. Participant reflections and classroom observations offer deeper insights into their learning experiences. The findings reveal significant gains in speech clarity, listening comprehension, and appropriate language use in academic and social contexts when drama activities are integrated into the curriculum. Learners also reported increased confidence and participation, suggesting drama can reduce language anxiety and promote a more inclusive classroom atmosphere. Based on these results, the study concludes that drama is not only an effective language teaching tool but also a powerful means of fostering comprehensive communicative competence in ESL learners. It recommends incorporating drama-based methods into language education programs to enhance engagement and language development.*

Kata kunci: *Drama-based Pedagogy, ESL Learners, Communicative Competence, Academic Communication Skills, Language Acquisition.*

Pendahuluan

Academic communication skills are essential for the success of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, yet many face difficulties in expressing ideas clearly, interpreting spoken language in academic contexts, and participating actively in discussions. To overcome these challenges, this study explores the use of drama-based pedagogy—an approach that combines artistic expression with educational practice to create immersive, contextualized language experiences. Drama allows learners to engage in meaningful, real-life scenarios that enhance speaking, listening, and interpretive abilities while also reducing language anxiety, increasing self-confidence, and fostering classroom engagement. Although previous research has highlighted the general benefits of drama in language learning, this study specifically investigates its role in developing academic communication skills and communicative competence in ESL learners through integrated classroom activities.

Tinjauan Pustaka

1. Drama as a Contextual Approach in Language Learning

Drama provides an authentic and contextual learning environment, allowing ESL learners to use language in real-life situations. Through activities such as role-play, improvisation, and simulations, students can develop their speaking and listening skills in meaningful contexts. Bessadet (2022) emphasizes that drama-based approaches enhance students' physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development, while also fostering creativity and collaboration in language learning.

2. The Impact of Drama on Communicative Competence

The use of drama in language teaching has been proven effective in developing ESL learners' communicative competence. Komul (2023) found that drama-based instruction contributes to the improvement of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in EFL learners. By providing meaningful contexts, drama allows students to practice language holistically and strengthens their communication abilities.

3. Reducing Language Anxiety through Drama

Language anxiety is a major barrier for ESL learners, particularly in speaking. Drama-based approaches can help reduce this anxiety by creating a supportive and low-pressure learning environment. A study by Richard-Amato (1990) shows that creative drama deeply engages students, enabling them to overcome their fears related to second language acquisition.

4. Enhancing Learners' Confidence and Classroom Engagement

Participation in drama activities can significantly boost learners' confidence in using English. Nguyen (2023) found that applying drama-based activities in speaking classes improved students' performance in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and discourse management. This shows that drama not only builds linguistic skills but also increases classroom engagement.

Metode Penelitian

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach using a literature review and reflective practice to explore the role of drama-based pedagogy in enhancing academic communication skills among English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Data for this study were obtained through two main approaches; literature review and practical reflection. The researcher collected and examined previous studies, academic journals, educational articles, and books discussing the use of drama in English language teaching and learning. The researcher also developed reflections based on personal teaching experience, informal classroom observations, and simulated scenarios involving drama-based activities in academic English contexts. Finally, the data were analyzed using a thematic analysis method. The researcher identified and grouped recurring themes from the literature and reflections, focusing on communicative competence, learner confidence, language anxiety, and student engagement. These themes were interpreted to examine how drama-based strategies support the holistic development of academic communication in ESL learners

Hasil dan Pembahasan

The analysis revealed several key findings regarding the impact of drama-based pedagogy on ESL learners' academic communication abilities.

1. Improved Speaking Skills

Drama-based instruction promotes fluency, accurate pronunciation, and expressive language use. Bsharat & Barahmeh (2023) found that first-generation ESL learners significantly improved their speaking skills through structured role-plays and improvisational tasks.

2. Development of Communicative Competence

Komul (2023) emphasized that drama supports the integrated development of language skills by placing learners in authentic, communicative situations. This reinforces not just speaking but also listening, reading, and writing.

3. Increased Confidence and Reduced Language Anxiety

The supportive, low-pressure environment created by drama activities allows learners to take risks and express ideas without fear of mistakes. Richard-Amato (1990) and Nguyen (2023) noted that drama fosters emotional engagement and lowers anxiety, leading to improved confidence in language use.

4. Greater Classroom Engagement

Drama encourages active participation and cooperation. Learners become more involved, especially in group-based academic simulations like debates or presentations. Nguyen (2023) and Tseng (2018) highlighted how such activities increase student motivation and interaction.

5. Positive Learner Perception

Learners view drama as both effective and enjoyable. Tseng (2018) reported that students appreciated the chance to “use real-life English” and considered drama-based lessons more dynamic than traditional instruction.

The findings support the argument that drama-based pedagogy is an effective approach for developing academic communication competencies in ESL learners. This method not only enhances technical language skills but also creates a psychologically safe and engaging environment for learners. The improvement in speaking performance and overall communicative competence aligns with prior research by Bsharat & Barahmeh (2023), Komul (2023), and Ishak & Aziz (2021), who collectively affirm that drama creates rich opportunities for authentic language use. Furthermore, the reduction in language anxiety, as discussed by Richard-Amato (1990), and the increase in learner confidence reported by Nguyen (2023), emphasize the emotional and psychological benefits of drama. These elements are crucial for ESL learners who often struggle with fear of speaking and performance pressure in academic settings.

The study also reaffirms that drama-based activities increase classroom engagement. Tseng (2018) and Nguyen (2023) found that students were more motivated and collaborative during drama sessions, suggesting that this method fosters not only individual growth but also a positive classroom culture. Overall, drama-based pedagogy emerges as a powerful and holistic tool for enhancing ESL learners’ academic communication. It integrates language learning with emotional development, social interaction, and meaningful practice—core components of effective second language acquisition

Kesimpulan

The study concludes that drama-based pedagogy is an effective and holistic approach to enhancing academic communication skills in ESL learners. It facilitates improvement in multiple areas:

1. **Communicative Competence:** Students demonstrated better fluency, clarity, and appropriate use of language in academic settings through drama activities such as role-playing and academic simulations.
2. **Confidence Building:** The creative and collaborative nature of drama helped learners overcome fear of speaking, making them more willing to participate in classroom discussions.
3. **Reduction of Language Anxiety:** Drama provided a safe, low-pressure environment, allowing students to make mistakes and learn without fear, which significantly lowered anxiety levels.
4. **Classroom Engagement:** Learners became more active, motivated, and cooperative during drama sessions, improving classroom dynamics and interaction.
5. **Positive Learner Perception:** Drama was seen as a fun, meaningful, and practical alternative to traditional learning methods, increasing student motivation and satisfaction.

These findings reinforce the idea that drama is not just a creative activity, but a powerful pedagogical tool for language education, especially for fostering academic communication.

Daftar Pustaka

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