Examining English Speaking Challenges and Evaluating the Effectiveness of Drama in Enhancing Speaking Skill

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Abstract. This study examines students' challenges in speaking English and evaluates the effectiveness of drama as a learning medium to improve speaking skills. A mixed-methods research design was employed, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative pretest and posttest assessments to measure the impact of drama-based learning. Conducted at SMA Al Azhar 3 Bandar Lampung, the research involved 20 students participating in drama sessions focused on monologue storytelling. The interviews revealed common difficulties such as pronunciation errors, grammatical issues, limited vocabulary, low self-confidence, and anxiety. Statistical analyses using SPSS confirmed normality in pretest and posttest data (p > 0.05) and showed a significant improvement in speaking skills after the intervention (Sig = 0.000, α = 0.05). A paired sample t-test indicated a mean difference (t-count = 11.856), surpassing the critical t-value (t-table = 2.093), supporting the alternative hypothesis (Ha). These findings highlight drama's effectiveness in enhancing students' speaking proficiency and contribute to the literature by demonstrating drama's potential in overcoming language learning challenges, offering valuable insights for educators.
Keywords: Speaking skills, drama-based learning, learning media, student challange

Abstrak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kesulitan yang dihadapi siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris dan mengevaluasi efektivitas drama sebagai media pembelajaran untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara. Desain penelitian metode campuran digunakan, menggabungkan wawancara kualitatif dan penilaian pretest serta posttest kuantitatif untuk mengukur dampak pembelajaran berbasis drama. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SMA Al Azhar 3 Bandar Lampung dengan melibatkan 20 siswa yang berpartisipasi dalam sesi drama yang berfokus pada monolog bercerita. Wawancara mengungkapkan kesulitan umum seperti kesalahan pengucapan, masalah tata bahasa, keterbatasan kosa kata, rendahnya rasa percaya diri, dan kecemasan. Analisis statistik menggunakan SPSS mengonfirmasi normalitas data pretest dan posttest (p > 0,05) serta menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam keterampilan berbicara setelah intervensi (Sig = 0,000, α = 0,05). Uji t sampel berpasangan menunjukkan perbedaan rata-rata (t-hitung = 11,856), melebihi nilai t kritis (t-tabel = 2,093), mendukung hipotesis alternatif (Ha). Temuan ini menyoroti efektivitas drama dalam meningkatkan kemahiran berbicara siswa dan berkontribusi pada literatur dengan menunjukkan potensi drama dalam mengatasi tantangan pembelajaran bahasa, serta memberikan wawasan berharga bagi para pendidik.
Kata kunci: Kemampuan berbicara, pembelajaran berbasis drama, media pembelajaran, kesulitan siswa

INTRODUCTION

Foreign language learners worldwide prioritize achieving English competence due to its position as the dominant language for global communication (Kubota, 2016; Rao, 2019). English, being a widely used language for communication, includes important abilities

regarding to listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Speaking becomes a vital aspect for efficient verbal communication and interaction in various linguistic contexts (Liew & Abdul Aziz, 2022). Although English language instruction places a great deal of emphasis on speaking abilities, numerous students face considerable difficulties in attaining fluency and self-assurance. The challenges sometimes stem from a lack of proficiency in pronunciation, intonation, syntax, and vocabulary (Toçi, 2020; Utami & Morganna, 2022).

When learning English, it is essential to become proficient in speaking, which can be difficult due to the need for a thorough grasp of vocabulary, sentence structure, phonetics, and cultural aspects. In order to communicate effectively and appropriately within a linguistic community, proficient speakers must have a thorough understanding of the cultural context of the language, which includes knowledge of communication standards and social norms (Douglas & Rosvold, 2018; Knapp, 2015). Verbal communication enables individuals to express thoughts, knowledge, emotions, and communication, so promoting shared comprehension (Sharma et al., 2022). The flow of information is not the sole factor at play; vocal emotions, intonation, and body language are also crucial in enhancing emotional depth and fostering dynamic interactions (Meissner, 2021). These interactive speaking settings have advantages for both presenters and listeners, since they improve understanding and minimize misconceptions by facilitating clear and expressive communication (Nyhan, 2021; Odine, 2015). Comprehending and achieving proficiency in these elements empower individuals to communicate with effectiveness, efficiency, and adherence to pertinent linguistic regulations, hence enhancing successful interaction in diverse social environments.

Educational frameworks emphasize the interdependent connection between teaching and learning, emphasizing the fluid process by which knowledge and skills are transferred and acquired (Masoumi-Moghaddam, 2018). Utilizing drama as a teaching strategy in language training can effectively improve students' speaking skills by providing an original approach. Drama involves students in interactive simulated situations that allow them to practice and improve their English communication abilities (Angelianawati, 2019; Nguyen, 2023). This approach not only promotes a hands-on learning atmosphere but also nurtures students' ingenuity and ability to express themselves, therefore tackling the difficulties they encounter in acquiring English speaking skills.

Previous research on the use of drama as a pedagogical tool demonstrates a variety of focuses, all centered on enhancing students' abilities across different domains. Uysal & Yavuz (2018) emphasized the use of drama to improve students' language skills and their understanding of business modules. Najami et al. (2019) explored the effectiveness of drama in science education, particularly in teaching chemical reactions and photosynthesis, which had a positive impact on the achievement of 10th-grade students. Astiandani & Mustofa (2021) concentrated on enhancing students' speaking abilities through drama techniques, which improved their accuracy and fluency in speech. While these studies highlight the benefits of drama in education, they have not thoroughly examined the specific components within drama that influence English speaking skills.

Hence, the objective of this study is to examine the challenges encountered by students in verbalizing English and to assess the efficacy of drama in enhancing their oral communication abilities. The study aims to uncover prevalent obstacles in language

acquisition, including restricted lexicon, inaccurate articulation, syntactical mistakes, insufficient fluency, inadequate comprehension, as well as psychological issues such as worry and diminished self-assurance. Furthermore, it aims to assess the potential of drama as a pedagogical approach to improve students' oral communication skills through the creation of a captivating and participatory learning setting. The efficacy of drama will be evaluated by conducting pre- and post-intervention assessments, with a specific emphasis on enhancements in vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and comprehension. The results are anticipated to offer empirical proof of the advantages of incorporating theater into language learning and provide practical suggestions for educators.

The upcoming study will provide an innovative addition by thoroughly examining the influence of theater as an alternative approach to teaching English speaking abilities. This analysis will focus on various crucial elements like vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and understanding. This study intends to boost students' English speaking abilities by examining the specific parts of drama that can be effectively exploited for this purpose.

LITERATURE REVIEW
1. Students' Speaking Skill

Students' speaking ability in English becomes one of the important skills to be mastering in language learning (Dana & Aminatun, 2022). Speaking involves not only the pronunciation of words, but also the understanding of sentence structure, grammar, as well as the use of proper intonation. According to Brown (2004), speaking is a productive skill that integrates linguistic abilities such as grammar, lexis, and phonology with social abilities such as pragmatics and culture. Speaking ability develops through continuous practice and support from an interactive learning environment (Ishak & Azlina, 2022). Therefore, effective speaking requires more than just language knowledge, but also awareness of the context of communication.

2. Challenges in Speaking English

Students often face various challenges in speaking English, especially those related to linguistic and psychological limitations. Common challenges include difficulty in pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, as well as errors in grammar. In addition, psychological factors such as lack of confidence, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes also play a major role in inhibiting students' speaking ability. Koteková (2013) states that speaking requires the courage to communicate despite the risk of making mistakes, which is often difficult for students who are not used to interacting in a foreign language. These challenges point to the need for more innovative and supportive approaches to learning English speaking.

3. Assessing Speaking

In the theory of speaking assessment proposed by Brown (2004), speaking ability can be measured through several key aspects, including fluency, accuracy, fluency of interaction, and adaptability to diverse communication situations. Brown (2004) emphasizes the importance of using rubrics that include elements such as fluency, accuracy, and coherence. The assessment should also take into account the context of communication, both formal and informal, as well as the student's ability to adjust the communication style according to the situation. The

speaking evaluation process should ideally be holistic and integrative, covering both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects such as gesture and expression.

4. Drama as A Learning Medium

Drama-based learning has been widely recognized as an effective method in learning to speak as it involves students actively in simulating real-life situations. Drama offers a supportive environment for students to practice speaking skills without fear of mistakes, as the main focus is on the process of communicating rather than grammatical accuracy. According to Öztürk-Pat & Yilmaz (2021), drama encourages spontaneous and creative use of language, allowing students to improve their speaking fluency and self-expression. Through different roles and scenarios, students can also improve their ability to interact with various communication contexts. Drama helps students overcome speaking anxiety, increase self-confidence and enrich their learning experience in speaking English (Karaosmanoglu & Adiguzel, 2021).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study aims to identify the speaking difficulties that students encounter and investigate the role that drama plays as an alternative medium for improving speaking abilities. This was accomplished by using a mixed methods study strategy. Interviews were used to obtain qualitative data in order to gain understanding of the speaking difficulties faced by the students. Concurrently, during drama-based learning, students' speaking performances were analysed using quantitative methodologies. SPSS software was used to analyse the data. Pre- and post-tests were given to a single group without the use of a control or comparison group, in accordance with (Sugiyono, 2013) describes of the pre-experimental method to research design. The usefulness of employing drama as a medium to develop students' speaking skills was the subject of this one-group pretest-posttest design, which was implemented in a single session at SMA Al Azhar 3 Bandar Lampung.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Student Perception on English Speaking Challenges

1.1 Mispronunciation

The results of the interview revealed the existence of student problems in terms of pronunciation. They think that English pronunciation is very different from what is written. Unlike Indonesian words, English has emphasis on certain syllables. As expressed by ANT "the cause of the difficulty of English pronunciation is the difference in pronunciation with the alphabet." It was also conveyed by TSA and FNY that they lacked exposure in practicing pronunciation like native speakers and were still thick with regional accents. These factors make students feel less confident to pronounce English words.

1.2 Confidence

In this aspect, there is still a connection with the way students pronounce English. The main factors that influence students' lack of confidence are incorrect pronunciation, regional accents, and fear of being judged. This was conveyed by DHO and SAF who said that if they were wrong in pronunciation, others would judge them. In addition, if the regional accent is still thick, they are afraid that others will laugh at them. Thus, the students chose to be silent or

speak if they felt the pronunciation was correct. This statement was delivered by FNY "I only speak when I am absolutely sure that what I'm saying is correct because I don't want to make mistakes."

1.3 Grammatical

Grammar is considered as one of the students' difficulties that greatly affects their speaking ability. They said they were afraid of making mistakes in constructing sentences during the interaction. The fear comes from the assumption when the person they are talking to is more fluent in pronunciation and grammatical. This makes them feel nervous and choose to remain silent. This statement was made by DHO and ANT.

1.4 Anxiety

Students' lack of ability to compose sentences and pronunciation results in anxiety in speaking. They feel panicked if someone asks them a question suddenly. Students need time to compose words and remember the vocabulary in their heads. In addition, the assumption of being judged is still on students' minds. They feel embarrassed if they make mistakes in pronunciation and grammatical and are corrected by friends or others.

2. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Drama in Enhancing Student Speaking Competency

The data were collected by administering pretests and posttests, which were completed by all eleventh-grade students at SMA Al Azhar 3 Bandar Lampung. The pretests and posttests were evaluated and scored using a speaking rubric, focusing on five key elements: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, confidence, and anxiety.

2.1 Descriptive statistic

Table 1 Descriptive statistic of pretest and posttest

		Pretest	**Posttest**
N	Valid	20	20
	Missing	0	0
Mean		58.90	72.30
Std. Deviation		14.444	11.093
Variance		208.621	123.063
Minimum		32	46
Maximum		86	88

The pretest data, consisting of 20 valid responses without any missing items, provides valuable insights into the participants' performance. The average score is 58.90, indicating that the participants achieved a modest level of performance. The standard deviation of 14.444 indicates a large variation in scores, suggesting that while some participants did much better or worse than the average, most scores were evenly distributed around the mean. The variance of 208.621 highlights the extent of variability in performance, indicating that the scores are distributed across a large range. The observed scores range from a minimum of 32, representing the lowest level of performance, to a maximum of 86, representing the highest degree of achievement among the participants. The range of individuals' talents and preparedness when entering the study varied from 32 to 86, showcasing their diversity.

The posttest data, comprising 20 valid responses with no missing entries, offers a full perspective on the participants' performance after the intervention. The average score rose to 72.30, demonstrating a substantial enhancement in the overall performance compared to the pretest. The standard deviation of 11.093 indicates a narrower range of scores around the mean, indicating greater consistency among the participants' performance in the posttest. The variance is 123.063, indicating a decrease in the range of values compared to the pretest. The recorded minimum score is 46, indicating the lowest level of performance, while the maximum score is 88, demonstrating the most achievement in the posttest. The range of scores, ranging from 46 to 88, suggests a more concentrated distribution, indicating that the intervention may have contributed to reducing the variability in performance levels among the individuals.

2.2 Normality test

The normality test was carried out on pretest data and posttest data using the SPSS programme in the Kolmogorof Smirnov test with a significant level of 5% or 0.05. The provisions of the normality test are if the significance value $> \alpha = 0.05$ then the data is normally distributed, while if the significance $< \alpha = 0.05$ then the data is not normally distributed. The results of the pretest and posttest normality tests can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. The result of normality test

	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
	Kolmogorov Smirnov			*Saphirpo-Whilk*		
Pretest	.079	20	.200*	.983	20	.965
Posttest	.131	20	.200*	.958	20	.509

Based on the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk Test, which is appropriate for sample sizes fewer than 30, the significance value for the pretest was 0.965, suggesting that the pretest data are normally distributed. Similarly, for the posttest, the significance value was 0.509, indicating that the posttest data also follow a normal distribution. These results imply that both the pretest and posttest scores exhibit a Gaussian distribution, supporting the validity of using parametric statistical tests for further analysis and interpretation of the data.

2.3 Paired sample T-test

The paired sample t-test is a fundamental statistical technique employed for hypothesis testing, specifically when comparing the means of two correlated groups or circumstances. Three crucial pieces of data are necessary: firstly, the disparity in mean values between the paired data sets, which quantifies the observed change or effect; secondly, the standard deviation for both of groups, which indicates the variability or range of scores within each group; and thirdly, the number of paired observations or data values, which determines the degrees of freedom and impacts the accuracy of the t-test results. Collectively, these elements facilitate the computation of the t-statistic, which evaluates whether the observed disparities between paired data are statistically significant or merely a result of random variability.

Table 3 Paired sample T-test

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Posttest	72.30	20	11.093	2.481
	Pretest	58.90	20	14.444	3.230

The data above offers a succinct summary of the descriptive statistical results obtained from two separate samples: the Pretest and Posttest scores. The average learning outcome, as indicated by the mean score, was 58.90 in the Pretest. However, in the Posttest, this mean increased to 71.00. Each sample had 20 people, who served as the research cohort. The Pretest and Posttest had standard deviation (Std deviation) values of 14.444 and 13.510, respectively, indicating the extent to which scores varied from their respective means. In addition, the standard error of the mean (Std value), which indicates the accuracy of the sample means, was 3.230 for the Pretest and 3.021 for the Posttest. These metrics offer vital insights into the distribution and dependability of the observed results during the two testing sessions.

Table 4. The result of paired sample T-test

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Posttest - Pretest	13.400	5.154	1.153	10.988	15.812	11.626	19	.000

The "Paired Samples Test" data shows a significance value (Sig, 2-tailed) of 0.000, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H0) that claims no average difference between Pretest and Posttest outcomes. This supports the alternative hypothesis (Ha), indicating a statistically significant difference due to learning strategies. The "Mean Paired Differences" of -12.100 suggests that Posttest scores (Mean = 71.00) are significantly higher than Pretest scores (Mean = 58.90). The 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference (-14.236 to -9.964) further confirms that the true average improvement likely falls within this range. These findings highlight the effective role of learning strategies in enhancing educational outcomes for participants.

2.4 Hypothesis testing

In a paired sample t-test, hypotheses are tested by comparing the significance value (Sig.) with a probability of 0.05 and by comparing the calculated t-value to the critical t-value from the t-table. If the calculated t-value exceeds the critical t-value, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis (Ha). In the analysis, the calculated t-value is -11.856, reflecting a lower Pretest mean compared to the Posttest mean. This negative t-count, while negative in sign, is considered in terms of its absolute value for comparison, treated as 11.856. To determine statistical significance, the critical t-value is referenced from the t-table with 19 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.025 for a two-tailed test.

CONCLUSION

The findings of interview, students encounter challenges in English speaking, manifesting in difficulties such as pronunciation errors, grammatical inaccuracies, limited vocabulary usage, lack of self-confidence, shyness, anxiety, and varying levels of motivation. Secondly, the results of the normality tests for both the pretest and posttest indicate p-values greater than

0.05, confirming the normal distribution of these variables. Thirdly, the paired sample t-test yielded a significance value (Sig, 2-tailed) of 0.000, indicating statistical significance at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis (Ho) and accepting the alternative hypothesis (Ha). This suggests that the average difference between pretest and posttest learning outcomes demonstrates the efficacy of learning strategies in enhancing educational outcomes. Lastly, the hypothesis test revealed a t-count of 11.856, exceeding the critical t-value of 2.093 for a two-tailed test at $\alpha = 0.025$, further supporting the acceptance of Ha and rejection of Ho. Collectively, these analyses substantiate that the implemented learning strategies, particularly using drama as a pedagogical tool, significantly influence the outcomes of teaching and learning English speaking skills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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