PROJECT-BASED DRAMA LEARNING IN REDUCING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ANXIETY

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Abstract

Project-based Drama Learning (PBDL) is a learning model designed for both language learning and language teaching. In this case, PBDL gives a positive contribution to students' language engagement and development. It provides a natural context for learning English. They learn not only the language that existed in the drama or the novel they read, but also the spontaneous language they use when they are doing their project. Referring to the significant contribution of PBDL and the urgency in helping pre-service English teachers at the English Department, Mulawarman University to perform well in their speaking, therefore the researcher intends to replicate the implementation of PBDL conducted by the previous researchers in the researchers' English Drama course. The participants of this study were 27 students who enrolled in the researchers' English Drama Course. This study was experimental. Speaking anxiety questionnaire was used by the researcher to find out students' speaking anxiety level before and after the PBDL was implemented. Paired samples t-test was conducted to compare the level of speaking anxiety of students before and after PBDL was implemented. There was no significant difference found in students' speaking anxiety levels before and after the treatment. Further investigation using different design and instruments needs to be carried out in order to reveal the insignificant effect of PBDL in reducing students' speaking anxiety.

Keywords: *project-based learning, english drama, speaking anxiety*

A. BACKGROUND

Previous studies show that drama is quite effective in improving English language skills (Shokri & Philip, 2013; Bengtsson, n.d; Rew & Moon, 2013). Thus, it is considered as a method that has been widely practiced by teachers. The use of drama can be a motivation for learners in the learning process. According to Hismanoglu (2005), and Miller in Arzu (2008), learning through drama can improve reading ability and also students' oral abilities. In fact, drama in the educational field "consists in fostering the social, intellectual and linguistic development" (Dougill, 1987, p. 3) of the student. Moreover, drama activities allow the student to show his or her own feelings, personality, and creativity, (Maley and Duff, 1982) to be used in the language class. Dramatizing also allows students to express their emotions, thoughts, and feelings, which can vary depending on the communicative situation (Fleming, 2006).

PBDL is a learning model designed for both language learning and language teaching. In this case, PBDL gives a positive contribution to students' language engagement and development. It provides a natural context for learning English. They learn not only the language that existed in the drama or the novel they read, but also the spontaneous language they use when they are doing their project. PBDL is also a comprehensible procedure which can be used by teachers for teaching drama in English language teaching; every phase of PBDL offers language engagement covering the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening).

PBDL was designed and experimented to improve students' writing ability (Fiftinova & Zuraida, 2015). This was indicated by data in the form of an average score of students' writing achievement which increased from pre-test to post-test, from 42.90 to 56.28 In 2016, PBDL was experimentally applied with the aim of obtaining information whether or not the PBDL was able to improve students' reading ability. The results showed that PBDL could improve reading achievement as the students' reading achievement average score enhanced from 56,05 in the pre-test to 62,40 in post-test (Fiftinova & Hambali, 2016). It can be inferred that PBDL could be

an alternative for teaching literature (drama) in ELT.

Like writing, speaking is a productive skill but the nature of speaking differs from writing in many ways, such as grammatical, lexical and discourse patterns. In its simplest form, speaking can be defined as a productive and interactive skill (Carter & Nunan, 2002). From a psycholinguistic point of view, the process that the brain goes through in speaking is analyzed through an information processing model, which was developed by Levelt (1989), and it has four steps: conceptualization, formulation, articulation and self-monitoring. Conceptualization refers to a sort of pre-speaking stage in which the speaker plans what to say. This involves connecting background knowledge to the topic and the conditions in which the speech is made. During formulation, appropriate linguistic forms (words and phrases) are found and they are matched with the correct grammatical markers (affixes, articles, auxiliaries). In the stage of articulation, the speaker articulates every word by means of articulatory organs and in the last stage, the speaker checks the speech and correct mistakes by self-monitoring. This process is completed in a very short time so it is impossible for the speaker to control all the stages. Therefore, the successful completion of the stages depends on automaticity. In the case of foreign language learning, each stage might cause L2 speakers to have some difficulties due to a lack of automaticity (Carter & Nunan, 2002).

Knowing that communicating in a foreign language is a complex multi-faceted skill, therefore it is necessary to consider action to help students in improving their oral communication skills so that they can involve fluently in a different set of communication tasks. In relation to the adequate level of oral production skills in order to communicate smoothly, it is English teachers whose expertise can be taken into account to speed up students' language mastery as they are the agent of knowledge transfer. Conversely, if English teachers lack expertise and mastery of language skills themselves, the students may not be progressing well. According to Penny Ur, there are four characteristics of successful speaking activities. First, learners are talking a lot during speaking class. It implies that the lecturers are required to provide the activities in which the students inhabit the most time to talk. The second, the

participants have the same chances to speak. It infers that the classroom activities should not be dominated by active students.

English department is the department in the faculty of education which produces English teachers who are going to teach for elementary to secondary levels. Students in the faculty of education are generally called as the pre-service teachers. Problems related to oral communication can also be found in this group even though their major is English. Sayuri (2016) conducted a qualitative study involving the fourth-semester students of English Department. The result shows that the students faced some problems related to pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Additional findings from the questionnaire reveal that students faced other problems, namely not having self-confidence, shyness to speak, being afraid of making mistakes, feeling nervous, and having nothing to say. Next, there are some factors resulting in problems of speaking to the students, firstly less of reading habit, uneven participation and English practice both inside and outside the classroom, and confusion on applying grammar rules.

Referring to the significant contribution of PBDL and the urgency in helping pre-service English teachers at English Department, Mulawarman University to perform well in their speaking, therefore the researcher intends to replicate the implementation of PBDL conducted by the previous researchers and would like to find out the description of English Department students' level of speaking anxiety and whether there is any significant difference in pre-service English teachers' speaking anxiety before and after PBDL implemented.

B. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Project Based Learning in Language Teaching

Project-Based Learning is one of the approaches which support the scientific approach which means that there are some processes or steps in achieving the targeted result. According to Solomon (2003), Project-Based Learning is an approach that emphasizes learning that can be derived from long-term activities,

which are interdisciplinary, student-centered, and integrated with real-world issues and practices. Furthermore, he also remarks that Project-Based Learning provides the process which can develop the students" skills while working on a challenging project.

In a similar vein, Beckett & Miller (2006:5), Project-Based Learning can be defined at a general level and a more specific level. At a general level, it refers to "a language education approach that reflects student-centered learning within the framework of experiential learning" (Beckett and Miller, 2006:5). At a more specific level, Project-Based Learning is described as an approach that "promotes comprehensible input and output with emphasis on practicing listening and speaking skills and as a content-based approach with an emphasis on teaching language and content"(Beckett & Miller, 2006:5). Meanwhile, Duffy and Cunningham (cited in Tamim & Grant, 2013) state that project-based learning is "an instructional model that is based on the constructivist approach to learning, which entails the construction of knowledge with multiple perspectives, within a social activity, and allows for self-awareness of learning and knowledge while being context-dependent".

Figure 1 presents the procedure of PBDL. The steps of PBDL start with Critical Reading and Character Analysis. At this stage, students do silence reading and are asked to presuppose that there is an ideology that the author of the story built. The students try to question, analyze the text, interpret and finally conclude by providing valid evidence (Ozensoym 2011 as cited in (Karadağ, 2014).
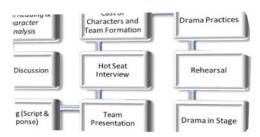

Figure 1. Project-Based Drama Learning Procedures

Some questions which can be used are: what is the author's motive writing the novel? What is missing in the text? Who is the author's intended audience? When was it written? Who is the author?. In the meantime, character analysis is a way of understanding characters in the story, leading to plot and the whole story comprehension. It is higher order thinking activities which stimulate the students' thinking and inference.

Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety is such a complex issue that researchers have been unable to agree on a concise definition (Zhanibek, 2001). Anxiety has been defined as "an emotional response to a threat to some value that the individual holds essential to his existence as a personality" (May, 1977, cited in Bekleyen, 2004, p. 50). In another definition, it has been called "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worries associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system" (Spielberger, 1983, cited in Horwitz et al. p. 27). Similarly, Scovel defines anxiety as an emotional state of "apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object" (Scovel, 1978, cited in Cheng, 2005, p. 8).

In the case of language learning, it has been observed that many people fail to learn the language, even though they are successful in other learning experiences. It is known that some people have an anxiety reaction against learning the language (Horwitz et al.,1991). It can be assumed that this anxiety reaction is developed gradually as learners try hard to make progress. When they feel that there is little or even no progress was made, they may have an anxiety reaction against learning the language. Woodrow (2006) identified a type of anxiety that is called situation-specific anxiety. This anxiety caused by the conditions of a particular situation (Wang, 1998). In relation to language learning, according to MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) situation-specific anxiety refers to apprehension caused by learners' inadequate knowledge of the language. In the same vein, Zhanibek (2001) argue that foreign language anxiety is considered to be situation-specific anxiety, because in the process of language learning, situation-specific anxiety may reappear every time the learner attempts to use the

language. Cases in which situation-specific anxiety can be observed are Public speaking, participating in class activities and written exams.

C. METHODOLOGY

One of the characteristics of a quantitative study is collecting numeric data from a large number of people using instruments with preset questions and responses (Creswell, 2012). In this study, a set of a questionnaire measuring students' speaking anxiety was used. The questionnaire was given to participants of the study, therefore a descriptive statistic including frequencies and percentages were used to describe and compare the responses of the subjects.

This study adopted the procedure of PBDL from the previous study (Fiftinova, 2018). The procedure which was implemented is shown in the following figure:
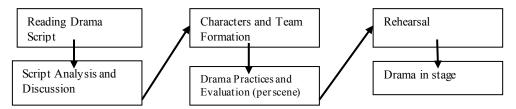

Figure 2 PBDL Plan

Setting or place of study is an English education program, FKIP, Mulawarman University. The course or class that is the context of the research is the English Drama. This course aims to provide students with theoretical knowledge as well as basic skills in drama, ranging from drama texts analysis to the production of theatrical performances. The sample of this study was the 6th-semester students who enrolled in the English Drama course taught by the researcher. To teach this course, the researchers acted as a lecturer who has become the lecturer for this course for 4 years. The time required for teaching with Project-Based Drama Learning was 21 hours. With the Credit System of Semester 2, in one week it takes 90 minutes assuming 1 credit equivalent to 90 minutes (face to face, training, and self). With the number of meetings of 14 meetings, the

teaching process takes 14 x 90 minutes or 1260 minutes or the equivalent of 21 hours.

In order to reveal students' speaking anxiety, data was collected from the speaking anxiety questionnaire. The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS), developed by Huang (2004), was adapted to accord with the purposes of the present study. The original scale had two parts. In the first part, the participants" personal information was collected. The participants were asked to respond to five items on their age, gender, time of starting to learn English, willingness to study English and experience of traveling abroad. The second part of the scale had 24 statements on speaking anxiety. It was in the form of a five-point Likert Scale, in which the responses ranged from one „strongly disagree" to five "strongly agree". Paired samples T-test using SPSS version 20 was applied for revealing the relationship of PBDL and students' speaking anxiety.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion of the data that were obtained from The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS). It has two sections for the research findings, presenting each of the two research questions in turn.

The Level of Speaking Anxiety among English Department Students

Descriptive statistics were used for analyzing the mean score of overall FLSAS before and after the treatment in order to explore the mean difference and interpret the level of students' speaking anxiety using a scale that was developed according to the average responses of the participants to the items on the FLSAS.

The descriptive statistics for the second part of the FLSAS for all 27 participants before treatment are given in Table 1.

Measure	No of items	Maximum	Minimum	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking Anxiety	27	3.50	2.50	2.90	2.94	.262

Table 1 Students FLSAS Average response before treatment

As shown in Table 1, the mean and the median scores (*M: 2.94, Mdn 2.90)* were more than half of the possible average response (2.94, 2.90 > 5.00/ 2), which also indicates a moderate level of foreign language speaking anxiety. In order to divide the participants into different anxiety levels, a scale was developed according to the average responses of the participants to the items on the FLSAS. In this scale, the participants whose average responses fell between the scores 1.00 and 2.49 (or answers considered to be closer to strongly disagree or disagree) were considered to be slightly anxious, those who scored between 2.50 and 3.49 (or answers considered to be neither agreeing or nor disagreeing) were considered to be moderately anxious, and those who scored between 3.50 and 5.00 (or answers considered to be closer to strongly agree or agree) were considered to be highly anxious. The next table illustrates the descriptive statistics before the treatment of the average responses of foreign language speaking anxiety of the slightly, moderately and highly anxious participants.

Anxiety Level	Maximum	Minimum	Mean
Slightly Anxious N= 0	-	-	-
Moderately Anxious N= 26	3.20	2.50	2.9
Highly Anxious N= 1		3.50	3.50

Table 2 Descriptive statistics for the FLSAS of the slightly, moderately and highly anxious participants

Referring to Table 2, the median average response is 2.9, which falls within the range of the moderately anxious participants according to the divisions made based on the scales. As shown in Table 2, the majority of the participants (26 out of 27) fall into the moderately anxious level. It indicates that the overall level of foreign language

speaking anxiety before the treatment is moderate. Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of students' responses after the treatment.

Measure	No of items	Maximum	Minimum	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking Anxiety	27	3.30	2.60	2.90	2.92	.180

Table 3 Students FLSAS Average response after treatment

As shown in Table 3, the mean and the median scores (*M: 2.92, Mdn 2.92)* were more than half of the possible average response (2.90, 2.92 > 5.00/ 2), which also indicates a moderate level of foreign language speaking anxiety.

The next table illustrates the descriptive statistics after the treatment of the average responses of foreign language speaking anxiety of the slightly, moderately and highly anxious participants.

Anxiety Level	Maximum	Minimum	Mean
Slightly Anxious N= 0	-	-	-
Moderately Anxious N= 26	3.30	2.60	2.90
Highly Anxious N= 1	-	-	-

Table 4 Descriptive statistics for the FLSAS of the slightly, moderately and highly anxious participants

Table 4 illustrates the median average response is 2.90, which falls within the range of the moderately anxious participants according to the divisions made based on the scales. All of the participants fall

into the moderately anxious level. It indicates that the level of foreign language speaking anxiety after the treatment is moderate.

Based on the descriptive statistics analysis before and after the treatment it can be concluded that the level of foreign language speaking anxiety of the English Department students is at moderate level.

The effectiveness of PBDL in Reducing Speaking Anxiety

In order to examine whether PBDL is effective in reducing the level of speaking anxiety, the comparison of the mean, standard deviation, mean difference, and t-test of FLSAS of pre-test and post-test were used as illustrated in Table 5 and Table 6.

The comparison between the mean scores of the level of FLSAS before and after the treatment is presented in Table 5.

	Mean	S.D.
Pre test	78.91	9.188
Post test	78.10	6.156

Table 5 Comparison of the mean score before and after treatment

As illustrated in Table 5, there was a slight difference in the score for pre-test (M=78.91, SD= 9.188) and post test (M= 78.10, SD= 6.156).

Table 6 presents the results from paired samples t-test

	Mean	S.D.	Mean Dif	T	df	Sig.
Pair 1 Pre-Post	.819	6.715	.81	.633	26	.532

Table 6 Paired Samples t-test for pre and post

According to the result shown in Table 6, the results of paired samples t-test revealed that there was not a statistically difference in the mean score for pre test (M=78.91, SD= 9.188) and post test (M= 78.10, SD= 6.156) conditions; t(26) = .633, p = .532.

According to Fiftinova et.al (2018), PBDL is a marriage between English Language Teaching and drama learning. Further, they add that there are stages of activities in the implementation of

PBDL: Critical Reading, Character Analysis, Class Discussion, Script Writing, Cast of Characters and Team Formation, Hot Seat Interview, Team Presentation, Drama Practices, Rehearsal, and Drama in Stage. The results of their study which looked at students' perception on the implementation of PBDL for English reading showed that students agreed that the implementation of PBDL facilitate their English learning. With regards to the results of this study, it seems that the implementation of PBDL was not effective in reducing the students' speaking anxiety. In addition, it was also found that students' speaking anxiety before and after the treatment was in the same level (moderate). Several points need to be noted in relation the findings of the study. Since the researchers, adopted the stages of PBDL in order to match them with the aim of Drama course itself, some stages from the original PBDL were not included in the PBDL designed by the researchers. The activities in each stage in this study may not exactly the same with what were implemented in the previous study as the goal of PBDL was different. Critical reading was highlighted in the previous study as the study focusing on English Reading. In the current study, students were asked to read to comprehend the drama script. Comprehending the script well was an important part in order to be able to perform well in the stage as in the end of the class the students gave performance on the stage publicly. The next stage which was not included in this study was script writing. The script that was prepared by the researchers and it was an available classic drama script. The researchers decided to use available script as a way to introduce and expose students to classic literature written by famous author in the world. The last point which was different between the previous and current study was team formation. Team formation in current study was based on the division in a drama; they were actor/actress, lightning, make up, costume and others. The class became one big group which was divided by several divisions with different responsibilities. This condition might give less chance for those who were not becoming the actor/actress to practice their speaking in public. Therefore, students' speaking anxiety was in the same level before and after treatment and there was no significant different in the mean score of students' speaking anxiety before and after treatment.

E. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study aimed to investigate the role of PBDL in reducing students' speaking anxiety. A total of 27 EFL learners were given a questionnaire – The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (FLSAS), adapted from Huang (2004). Based on the results of the FLSAS, the participants were also divided into three different levels of anxiety (slightly, moderately and highly anxious). A majority, the students are classified to have a moderate level of speaking anxiety. It was also revealed that there was no significant difference found in students' speaking anxiety levels before and after the treatment.

Considering the findings of the study, some suggestions can be made for further research. First, it was revealed in the present study that the students' speaking proficiency was not measured, another study can be conducted to investigate the relationship between foreign language speaking proficiency and foreign language speaking anxiety. This study only focused on the students' speaking anxiety from the perspectives of the students themselves. Therefore, future research may investigate both teachers" and learners" perspectives on foreign language speaking anxiety and its sources by using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and the results can be compared.

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