

**DOING DRAMA IN ACTION: STUDENTS' INQUIRY  
PROCESS INVESTIGATION**

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**Abstract:** This study was intended to investigate the students' inquiry process reflected in doing drama activity. The study applied classroom ethnography. The writer spent seven weeks making ethnographic observations and field notes related to doing drama activity, noting what the students do before, during and after the activity. An in depth interview was conducted to 3 participants. The criteria of chosen participants was their performance during the project. They were considered to have more information. The interview aims to know how each phases fit into the overall context of the inquiry process. The findings show that the inquiry process in doing drama activities are reflected in group formation, selection of drama's title, making synopsis, devision of roles, rehearsal, costume and propery preparation, and drama performance.

**Keywords:** *Speaking Skills, Dramatic Activity, Students' Inquiry Process.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Ministry of Education and Culture (2016) further stated that the text in the genre-based approach is not interpreted as writing in the form of articles. The text in question is the realization of social activities and

social goals both oral and written. There is a shift in this approach, opening opportunities for students to be able to learn various things in various types of texts (including literary works) and their implementation in their daily lives.

Literary works here can be drama texts because in the process of teaching drama students can be free to express themselves with interaction through several dialogues. In doing drama activities, students can also engage with inquiry processes during learning instruction.

In learning a foreign language, each individual may have different interests, abilities, and motivations (Liu & Chen, 2015; Sansone et al., 2012; Tsai & Chang, 2013). As in the case of foreign language study, understanding and learning these distinctions may be investigated in order to produce and explain ideas. An interaction framework may convert into creative discourse, such as using theater to explore students' differences in learning a foreign language, for the examination of students' differences in learning a foreign language. Sharing thoughts and opinions among students and instructors can introduce performance outcomes, skills, and information during the investigation.

Inquiry is not merely searching for the right answer, but finding appropriate resolution for question and issues (Fauziati, 2014). Moreover, According to Harlen (2013), inquiry in education refers to

asking questions to seek explanation or knowledge. Teaching learning activities by including students in the teaching learning process is known as inquiry-based learning.

The Indonesian government has a responsibility to play in ensuring that inquiry-based learning is adopted in the classroom. It was said that the educational process should be founded on scientific principles, with inquiry-based learning being one of the techniques. This become the main characteristic of the 2013 curriculum. The learning activities that are appropriate with the student's characteristic consist of observing, asking, gathering informing, associating, and communicating.

Doing drama activity could be the solution to bridge the government demand about inquiry learning and speaking skill which foster pupils' socialization, critical thinking, problem solving and improve oral communication skills, by exploring different language styles and registers. Besides, students also lose their inhibitions, because, by playing a role, they are able to escape from

their everyday identity. Drama also has a significant role in developing students' social skills. Thus, learning cannot be understood outside of the social context and social interaction (Miller, 2011).

Drama pedagogy is a set of drama-based teaching and learning practices designed to engage students with the material they are studying (Lee et al., 2015; (Uysal & Yavuz, 2018). Teaching through drama have been explored by the researcher in the setting of primary students (Strakšienė, 2015) and secondary students (Certo & Brinda, 2011; Rothwell, 2011) and adult learners (Dawson et al., 2011). The study found that adopting drama as a teaching method can help students learn English more effectively. It not only aids in the acquisition of language, but it also aids in the development of literacy skills such as comprehending and learning about people's lives, cultures, and knowledge.

As it was stated that doing drama has a close relation with inquiry learning, we must understand first what inquiry is about. Inquiry is

about teaching and learning activity by involving students in teaching learning process. According to Harlen (2013), inquiry is the process of asking questions in order to get an explanation or information. Teaching and learning English speaking via inquiry may be mirrored in theatre activities because students have the opportunity to speak English with the drama script and communicate to discuss the play.

According to Magee and Flessner (2012), guided inquiry employs the 5E phases, which include engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate. It is a simple and effective teaching concept. This strategy uses this process to enable students to make their own definition from their understanding of a concept as follows:

- 1) Engagement: Teacher delivers one or more simple questions, but slowly drives them to more complex one.
- 2) Exploration: In this phase, students are divided into groups to have scientific experiment.

- 3) Explanation: Teacher explains by referring to text, journal articles, or internet source.
- 4) Elaboration: This phase includes making, comparing, and creating.
- 5) Evaluation: This phase focuses on accessing students understanding.

Inquiry based learning is divided into three types, those are guided inquiry, free inquiry, and modified inquiry (Spencer & M.W., 2012). In its relation to learning in the school, guided inquiry is quite suitable to design an instruction.

In short, inquiry can be conducted through experiential learning because inquiry values the same concepts, which include about engaging with the content or material in questioning, as investigating and collaborating to make the meaning. Vygotsky approached constructivism as learning from an experience that is influenced by society and the facilitator.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study applied qualitative in the design of classroom ethnography. (Creswell, 2012) stated that qualitative

research is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social human problem, based on building a complex holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detail views informants, and conducted in natural setting. The writer spent seven weeks making ethnographic observations and field notes related to doing drama activity, noting what the students do before, during and after the activity. In conducting observation, seven weeks were needed due to the fact that the data were obtained since the preparation stage, practice, performance, and assessment which need more than a month. An in depth interview was conducted to 3 participants. The criteria of chosen participants was their performance during the project. They were considered to have more information. The interview aims to know how each phases fit into the overall context of the inquiry process.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the observation and interview, the procedure of doing drama activity can be divided into 5 stages, they are: the theme of drama, group formation, Selection of Drama's Title, the duration of drama's performance, and Assessment. The details are described below.

**Table 1**  
**Inquiry Process Applied by the Students**

Phases	Students' Inquiry Process
Engagement	1) Group formation 2) Selection of drama titles (The students are exciting to give the questions to the teacher about drama and the teacher explained the procedure of drama, in the first is the students should make group formation and selecting the drama title.)
Exploration	3) Making synopsis 4) The division of roles (In this sections, the students should make synopsis according to the drama title and their investigating and observing with their group, the students taking notes to make the synopsis of drama and their using the daily experience to help them compare their ideas to their previous one to select the drama division of roles. The

	students select the drama division of roles is depend on the comparing the ideas with their group.)
Explanation	5) Doing drama rehearsal (In this stages, the students doing drama rehearsal. The students explaining their concept by their own language. The students give the explanation with evidences from their result investigation. The students comparing their ideas with their group about doing drama rehearsal. The students are active and creative to doing drama rehearsal.)
Elaboration	6) Costume and property preparations (In this sections, the students prepare the costume and property for doing drama performance. They are linking the conceptual definition and their experience. The students are explain about a new concept with their group. And they are sharing their understanding to their group. The students are creative to make a property of drama and they are prepare well about the costume of drama.)
Evaluation	7) Performing (In the last sections, the students are performing the drama performance in the hall of SMPN 1 Sumer. The students are demonstrating what they understand about their concepts of drama and how they apply their skills. After performing drama, the students are conducting a self - assessment. They are evaluation with their group and asking to the

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teacher about their drama performance.)

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The table above can be described as inquiry process applied by the students during drama activity. The explanation of each are as it follows:

### 1) *Group Formation*

In the process of group formation, the teacher asked students to make several groups. There are 25 groups of 8th grade students at SMPN 1 Sumber. Each group contains 10 students from 8th graders. Then, the students submitted the names of group to the teacher. The names of group were: Pewter, Malive, Amethyrt, Amber, Tawny, Ebony, Mustard, Magenta, Crimson Rose, Snuffy, Lyson, Velvet, Smooth, Guava, Pinklove, Cherry, Minsyu, Purple, Pumkins, Violet, Marsh, Star, Shines, Lights. Eventhough the students hade difficulty in choosing their groups, the interview results show that the students were so excited to make group formation, and there are

students having difficulty in choosing their groups.

### 2) *Selection of Drama Titles*

Title is an important part for doing dramatic activity. Title is the head of a writing is like a drama script. Title can describe the contents of the drama script. In the process of selecting the drama titles, the teacher asked students to choose the drama title according to the theme of drama "*If Fairy be the Miracle of the World, Tell it.*" Next, the students had discussion with their group to choose the drama title. Students search the drama title depend on their experience or they can also search the drama title in the internet. In the process of selecting drama titles, the students are enthusiastic to choose the drama title. They exchanged opinions with their friends. Last, they discussed the drama titles with their group. After choosing the drama titles, each group gave information about the drama titles to the teacher.

### **3) *Making Synopsis***

Synopsis is a summary or outline of the text that can describe the contents of the drama script. Synopsis usually can be used as a prologue for drama scripts. In preparing a synopsis, students are free to make a synopsis according to the chosen title. The stages of making synopsis are:

- a) Read the drama's text according to the chosen title;
- b) Note the main ideas contained in the script;
- c) Comprehend the story line in the script;
- d) Cognize the characters in the drama script;
- e) Write a summary or synopsis

In the process of making synopsis, the students exchange opinions with their friends. They had a discussion with their group for making synopsis well. The synopsis depends on the title of drama who had been chosen by the students. After the prepared synopsis is completed, it is read out by the representatives and

then discussed again with each group.

### **4) *The Division of Roles***

The roles or figure is another important aspect in doing dramatic activity. The roles or figure in the script of drama refers to someone who play the stories which is suitable with the character and personality in the script of drama.

In the division of roles, students discussed with the group to divide the roles that exist in the drama script. There are some students who choose roles based on their own desires and individual abilities. They volunteered to offer the desired role. There were also who are ashamed to propose that they want to be one of the roles in the drama script. In the process of division of roles, the students were active in selecting the roles of drama. The results of the interview shows that the inquiry process of students were reflected in the process of selecting the roles of drama.

### **5) *Doing Drama Rehearsal***

For a successful drama performance, rehearsal is really needed for doing drama. In the practice of drama sessions, for example, imitating the movements of people like laughing, crying, angry, dialogue reading texts. The main rehearsal session here is pronunciation, more precisely learning to read dialogue texts in English. Students continue to read the script of drama repeatedly. When their pronunciation is wrong, the teacher will correct it. Moreover, students have the initiative to learn pronunciation through an English dictionary application from the internet. The students' rehearsal the drama until 2 months accompanied by the teacher.

To schedule the drama rehearsal is accordance with the schedule of The East on Monday for class 8. The students were also free to gather on another day to carry out additional the drama rehearsal at school. In the process of doing drama rehearsal, the students were active in doing

drama rehearsal so that they are well prepared for drama performance. Furthermore, the students gave motivation for their friends if they did not come to doing drama rehearsal. The interview results show that the students gave respect to their friends in the group. They are well prepared for the drama performance, the drama rehearsal and all they need for drama performance.

### **6) *Costume and Property Preparation***

Costumes and property are needed to facilitate and reinforce the drama staging activities. Costumes refers to clothes that will be worn during the drama performance. It is required for the costumes to be in relation to the drama title/theme, or more precisely in accordance with their respective roles. Costume is the distinctive style of dress of an individual or group that reflects the need of drama script for example class, gender, profession,



ethnicity, nationality, activity or epoch.

Beside costume, property is also needed in doing drama. It refers to an object that is not moving and can be used on stage. Property can help in setting the story in accordance with the title/theme of the drama script, such as food, furniture, windows, chairs, tables, trees and so on. In addition, property is an object used on stage or screen by actors during a performance or screen production. In practical terms, a prop is considered to be anything movable or portable on a stage or a set, distinct from the actors, scenery, costumes, and electrical equipment.

The students were enthusiastic for preparing the costumes and property for drama performance. They even took the initiative to make swords from cardboard or cardboard that were cut into scissors and formed into swords. Besides, they made a tree from the cardboard and then draw it like a real tree. There are students who made the cardboard

teapots and glasses with colored manila paper. For the costumes preparation, the students are not required to rent costumes. But students are free to choose costumes by borrowing or shaping them from the clothes or pants they already have or they make them from other materials.

### **7) *Performing***

The drama performance was held on December 16th-17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in the hall of SMPN 1 Sumber. The audience were students of SMPN 1 Sumber and teachers. They prepared themselves outside the hall before the drama performance begins. The preparation starts from the costume worn and the property that has been made, the correct pronunciation dialogue in English and the movements they have memorized. Lots of surprises came when the students performed the drama. They really did their best performance. In the process of performing drama, imagination is very important due to the fact that the students must "act/pretend" to be someone else.

In pretending/acting, an actor must be able to display reasonable imagination and meaning. The results of the interview show that the process of teaching and learning English through doing drama can make students become active and more creative.

From the findings above, it can be reflected that doing drama applied 5E of inquiry learning consisting of Engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and assess are the steps, according to Magee and Ryan (2012). The stages of involvement the students' inquiry process in doing drama activity, based on the interview include group formation and drama title choosing. The teacher outlined the drama technique, and explained the steps for the pupils to form groups and choose a play title. The notion of involvement is as it follows: "The teacher asks one or more easy questions, but gradually leads them to more sophisticated ones." The instructor should convey the theme of drama at the engagement stage, and the

students should question the teacher how to do drama correctly. The instructor, on the other hand, delivers the drama technique.

Making a synopsis and dividing roles also reflect students' inquiry process in doing drama activity. The students created a synopsis based on the drama title, their investigation and observation with their group. The students collected notes to create a drama synopsis, and their use of everyday experience to compare their thoughts to their previous one in order to choose the drama division. The students decided on the drama distribution of roles after discussing their thoughts in their groups.

The next stage is exploration. It is defined as "a scientific experiment in which pupils are separated into groups." At this stage, the instructor should invite the pupils to form groups. Students should form a theatrical group to do the scientific experiment.

In the stage of explanation of the students' inquiry process is doing drama rehearsal. The students explained their concept by their own language. The students gave the explanation with evidences from their result of investigation. The students compared their ideas to their group about doing drama rehearsal. The students were active and creative in doing drama rehearsal.

The next stage is elaboration. This stage was reflected in the process of costume and property preparations. The concept of elaboration is "This phase includes making, comparing, and creating." It's about making, comparing and creating. This stage is similar with the concept of elaboration; it's about making, comparing and the students preparation of the costume and property for doing drama performance. They were about linking the conceptual definition and their experience. The students explained about a new

concept with their group and shared their understanding to their group. The students were creative to make the property for drama and they are well prepared about the costume for drama.

The last stage is evaluation. This stage can be reflected in the performance of drama itself. The students performed the drama at the hall of SMPN 1 Sumber. The students demonstrated what they understand about their concepts of drama and how they applied their skills. After performing the drama, the students conducted a self - assessment. They evaluated the performance with their group and asked the teacher about their drama performance. In the concept of evaluation is "This phase focuses on accessing students understanding."

Furthermore the biggest result in inquiry based learning is that students have longer memory retention. Thus, they could apply it in a new situation. If students try to discover and build their knowledge independently, they

can recall it and store it longer. They are also driven when they learn to seek out new information and digest it themselves. They want to be an independent student who follows their own path. Teachers, on the other hand, have the option of providing an extrinsic reward. Teachers must construct a learning environment that activates students' intrinsic recognition if they want their students to learn easily. Furthermore, the student's questioning process, which is portrayed in theater, is beneficial to speaking. Speaking is the most common and significant way for people to communicate with one another.

## CONCLUSION

The research shows the students' inquiry process in doing drama activity for learning English speaking. The students gain the self-esteem to use the language spontaneously through learning English by doing drama activity. The students had more opportunities to

practice their speaking. They performed in group to exchange and share their knowledge. Doing drama activity make students enthusiastic in the process of teaching and learning English.

The students' inquiry in the process of teaching and learning English speaking is reflected in doing drama activity: The findings show that the inquiry process in doing drama activities are reflected in group formation, selection of drama's title, making synopsis, devision of roles, rehearsal, costume and property preparation, and drama performance.

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