

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, significance of the research, scope of the research, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

Speaking English is considered as the most difficult language skill by students since they should have lots of vocabularies, pronounce them correctly, and use them in appropriate context. At the same time, speaking is one of the important skills that students need to have especially for students of vocational high school since it links to a great deal of their success in life especially in the work fields when they have graduated from the school. According to Nurlaelawati and Damayanti (2011), students especially students of vocational high school are expected to have the ability to speak since many companies that hire SMK graduates often complain about their English proficiency.

In this case, the students must study hard to master it and the teacher should create a good atmosphere in class. However, many speaking activities do not work in class because many factors prevent students from speaking English. They are afraid of making mistakes, of being laughed at by his or her friends and of having lack of confidence in their ability (Harmer, 2007).

It is in line with the result of preliminary investigation which I conducted in the class before conducting the research. There were still many students who were not able to speak English and were not active participants in the classroom, either because most of them have not had much vocabulary, or have not been confident to make contribution. They have not been highly motivated to put forward their opinion and ideas even to ask a question. The teacher has also not created sufficient opportunities for them to use English language in meaningful situation and has not provided the appropriate method in teaching English.

In teaching speaking, teachers should strive to improve their students' vocabulary and confidence by creating opportunities which will enable them to use the language within authentic context and learn in meaningful context (Brown, 2001). In addition, teachers should provide a good atmosphere in which students can get involved actively in teaching-learning process (Savignon, 1983). Therefore, teachers should apply various methods to teaching and learning such as co-operative learning, group work, and drama-in-education activities or Educational Drama.

Of all above mentioned speaking techniques, Educational Drama was regarded as a favorable technique in aiding vocational high school students to acquire and develop speaking skills since drama activities can be adapted to different level of proficiency and for different topics and they allow learners to experience autonomy in the speaking skill (Thornbury, 2005). Malan (1973) stated that drama-in-education aimed to develop students into confident and expressive speaker. Being confident, students can be willing to speak a lot. Thereby, by using Educational Drama, learning

is expected to take place better since it can provide enjoyable experience, create variety of activities and give more opportunities for students to get involved in learning and develop their skill (Mcnaughton, 2006). According to Ulas (2008), drama has significant function especially in improved speaking skill among the basic language skill.

It is with this background in mind, that this study aims to provide an outline of how the implementation of Educational Drama led to the overall improvement of the students' speaking ability in an English language proficiency at a Vocational High School in Bandung.

1.2 Research Questions

In line with the background above, there are two questions to be answered in this research. Those are:

1. to what extent can Educational Drama improve students' speaking ability?
2. what are students' opinions on the use of Educational Drama?

1.3 Aims of the Research

Particularly the research has some aims as follows:

1. to find out the roles of Educational Drama in improving students' speaking ability.
2. to find out students' opinions on the use of Educational Drama.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to provide theoretical, practical, and professional significance in English teaching and learning process.

a. Theoretical Significance

There is some research about the implementation of educational drama in teaching language. However, most of teachers in the school where this research took place did not know what it is. Therefore, this research is urgent to enrich the literature about Educational Drama in teaching language especially in teaching speaking.

b. Practical Significance

Practically, the results of this research are expected to be beneficial for both students and English teachers. For students, it will give more exposure and opportunities to them to be more active and not only to have new skills but also increase confidence and self knowledge, so that they are able to more effectively communicate with others and to enter more fully into a social situation. Meanwhile, for teacher this study helps him/her have more experiences of how to conduct teaching-learning process reflectively, develop teaching skills, and improve their professionalism in education. It can also help and inspire teacher to develop innovative and exciting methods and technique in teaching a language especially English language.

c. Professional Significance

Since this research uses Classroom Action Research, this research is expected

to develop networks of teachers especially English teachers engaged in action research to gain insight, develop reflective practice, effect positive changes in the school environment and on educational practices in general, and improve student outcomes. In addition, this research will be beneficial as a source of data for other researchers who would like to conduct a research in the same field.

1.5 Scope of the Research

The research focused on planning and applying Educational Drama to improve students' speaking ability. It used Classroom Action Research (CAR) which consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. It was conducted in four cycles. Each cycle consisted of two meetings. It also focused on finding out student's opinions on the use of Educational Drama. The subject of this research was students at first grade of a Vocational High School located in Bandung.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

There are some terms that should be clarified to avoid misunderstanding and misconception of the research. There are:

1. Classroom action research, in this research, is an action to observe instructional process in developing teaching speaking. This action includes several steps: planning, action, reflection, and evaluation

2. Speaking ability is the ability to communicate verbally before and after this research was conducted. It concerned to five aspects namely comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.
3. Educational Drama is drama which is used in classroom as a method to mediate and facilitate students in improving their speaking ability. It is not drama that is usually used on the theater or on the stage.
4. Students' opinions, in this research, mean thought or belief which they give related to their English speaking ability before and after this research conducted.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

The organization of the research paper is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction. This chapter discusses the reasons to conduct the research. This chapter also describes expectation of the research, clarification of key terms, and brief description of the whole part of the paper. The second chapter presents theoretical foundation. This chapter mentions some theories related to speaking and Educational Drama. The third chapter provides research method. This chapter encompasses the method used by the researcher. It also shows the participant and how the data are analyzed in this research. The fourth chapter provides findings and discussion. The fifth chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions of this research.

