



# Parental Perspective on Their Children's English Learning for Elementary Students through English Drama Performance

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## ABSTRAK

Pendidikan anak memerlukan dukungan dari konteks pembelajarannya, baik di sekolah maupun di rumah. Guru dan kepala sekolah memberikan instruksi dan bimbingan di sekolah, sementara orang tua memberikan dukungan yang sangat diperlukan terhadap pendidikan anak-anak mereka. Persepsi dan wawasan mereka terkait pendidikan anak sangat menentukan keberhasilan mereka. Penelitian kualitatif ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui perspektif orang tua terhadap pementasan drama Inggris anak-anak sekolah dasar dan bagaimana perspektif mereka sangat menentukan keberhasilan pembelajaran anak-anak mereka. Penelitian ini melibatkan 42 orang tua siswa sekolah dasar. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menggunakan kuesioner self-report dan wawancara semi terstruktur. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis fenomenologi interpretatif (IPA). Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa tiga pilar yang saling berkaitan penting untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran: siswa, guru, dan orang tua. Untuk mendukung anaknya, orang tua perlu menyikapi dan memahami bagaimana guru mendidik anaknya. Kolaborasi antara guru dan orang tua sangat diperlukan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa orang tua setuju bahwa pertunjukan drama Inggris meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris anak-anak mereka, meskipun ada komplikasi yang timbul dari kegiatan tersebut. Secara umum, orang tua menganggap pertunjukan drama bahasa Inggris sebagai bagian penting dari pengembangan keterampilan bahasa Inggris anak-anak mereka. Perspektif orang tua membantu guru bahasa Inggris menetapkan teknik pengajaran yang lebih baik untuk mencapai tujuan pembelajaran, meninjau, dan mempertimbangkan strategi pembelajaran yang sesuai untuk tahun ajaran berikutnya.

## ABSTRACT

Children's education required support from their learning contexts, both at school and at home. Teachers and principals provided instructions and guidance at school, while parents provided indispensable support to their children's education. Their perception and insight related to their children's education were critical to their success. This qualitative study aimed to discover parental perspectives on elementary school children's English drama performance and how their perspective was paramount to the success of their children's learning. This study involved 42 parents of elementary school students. Data was collected using a self-report questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Data was analysed using Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). The results show that three co-related pillars were important to achieve learning objectives: students, teachers, and parents. To support their children, parents needed to respond and perceive how teachers educate their children. Collaboration between teachers and parents was indispensable. The findings suggest parental agreement that English drama performance improved their children's English skills, despite the complication that came with the activities. In general, parents perceived English drama performance as an essential part of their children's English skills development. The parental perspective helped English teachers set a better teaching technique to achieve the learning objectives, review, and consider the appropriate learning strategies for the following school year.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Parents play an important role in their children's education by providing encouragement, support, and access to activities that lead children to discover their talents. Parental involvement in 'children's education starts at home where parents provide a safe and healthy environment, appropriate learning experiences, support, and a positive attitude about school (Anastasiou & Papagianni, 2020; Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). Previous study also stated the same thing that parental involvement can be defined as actions taken by parents to improve 'children's school achievement through collaboration with teachers and other school staff (McNeal, 2014). In other words, children will not be able to reach their maximum potential unless parents are actively involved in the educational process. Children need parents from time to time, especially in developing their talents. It is certain that before they learn the alphabet, they learn

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how to imitate what they see from other people. Other study stated that children learn about the social and physical world by observing people's acts. In this case, parents are the first models of children they learn because children behave, react, and imitate the same as their parents' behaviour (Wang et al., 2014).

It is the pinnacle of parents' responsibility to ensure their children's development and education as a whole, especially in physical and intellectual development, and to ensure their independence. It can be said that parents are responsible for developing growth, cognitive development, sociocultural development, physical development, and mental development in children (Ceka & Murati, 2016; Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019). Furthermore, parents provide not only primary needs but also secondary needs for their children, especially education. Previous argued that teachers aware of the importance of parental involvement should employ practical strategies to make parents more involved in education (Pakter & Chen, 2013). Teachers can request parent's presence at school is sent emails or by asking the parents to subscribe to the school's mailing list. These actions highlight the significance of increasing teachers' awareness of the importance of parental involvement. Additionally, other study emphasized the importance of teachers' beliefs and practices on the effectiveness of parental involvement (Calzada et al., 2015). Based on other study early childhood teachers' beliefs about parents. It has been found that teachers give importance to parental involvement in supporting children's academic achievement at home (Hakyemez, 2020). Thus, the balance of education at home and school shapes the actual progress of student learning.

Education will be more successful when students, parents, and teachers have a strong, positive, collaborative relationship. Previous study describe collaboration as a process of two or more parties working together to achieve a common objective and goal (Meier & Eleanor, 2015; Mislán et al., 2009). The role of parents in schools by giving them a voice through annual surveys can contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning. In a slightly more authoritative tone, previous study made a point to remind educators that they must fulfil their duty to assist the child in their education and ensure they get the best support (Loughran, 2008). It is believed that three success factors in learning objectives are students, teachers, and parents. All must work together and synergize well in developing children's potential. Previous study argued that good two-way communication between parents and teachers is necessary (Lin et al., 2022). In short, the more parents are involved in student learning, the better children will achieve learning goals. The statement is supported by study who added that the role of parents can have a very positive influence on the progress of a child in learning and development in general and parents' input can contribute to the development of the system at the school level (Mazmishvili N . Tavdgiridze L, 2019). Schools tend to highlight one-way contact, from school to home, but not vice versa. This causes parents to have fewer chances to share their thoughts and ideas about quality education. Parents' perspectives about school activities and projects have meaning to the teachers. However, it is a belief that parents, when it comes to their children's education, have the right to know whether their child's learning process at school is good or not. Parents need to pay attention to their children's learning process.

Nowadays, drama as one of the learning models become popular to be applied in classroom activity, especially in learning language. The studies of drama have been investigated by number of researchers. There are several study asserted that English drama can improve students' speaking and social spirit (Armia et al., 2019; Göktürk et al., 2012; Tombak, 2014). Furthermore, according to previous study drama activities produce greater authentic language output through direct interactive activities, which are very relevant for children (Alase, 2017). Other study stated that drama performances generated a greater output of authentic language through interactive learning (Piscayanti, 2014). There is study examined the effectiveness of using drama as learning and said drama learning provides students with a creative atmosphere where children will be more innovative in the language learning process (Buhur, 2019). Indeed, the researchers only focus on the benefits of drama performance so far. These studies prove that drama is an effective method to learning English because it provides an environment where children can flourish and develop their confidence.

This study is framed within the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky. This theory places the social environment as a primary and constitutive factor in the formation of knowledge and one's cognitive development. This theory is often used in research related to the parental perspective. In this study, perspective is specifically related to the interpretation or views of parents on the problem of using English drama performances for elementary school children. In a previous study examined parents' perspectives on the role and involvement in learning mathematics in children in England (Jay et al., 2018). Other study considered a similar problem regarding the perspective of parents in Ireland on the theory of adolescent mental health recovery (Kelly & Coughlan, 2018). Furthermore, other researched in Australia on parental perspectives related to parents' experiences in supporting children's emotional development (Chen, 2016). Next, other study investigated their research in Ethiopia about understanding parental engagement in early childhood education (Dighe & Jonathan, 2020). In South Korea, there is study considered the research related to Korean parental beliefs about ELT from teachers' perspectives (Linse, 2011). After that other

research declared research on parents' perceptions of their children's schooling in South Africa (Meier & Eleanor, 2015).

In the case of the students at Krista Merdeka elementary school, the authors aim to investigate whether or not the English drama has a good impact on students' learning experience. The standing point of perception will be taken from the parents' and what kind of support that the parents' are providing for their children in their English drama performances. The previous studies emphasized on the importance of parental support and how it affects their children's learning outcomes. However, these studies have not examined the role of adults such as teachers or parents in the learning process. By raising a topic regarding parental perspective from a different angle, the novelty of this study focuses on how parents consider their children's English learning through a drama performance project in which parents need to be more involved in the learning process to fill the gaps in the literature and to answer the presented research problems.

## 2. METHOD

This research was designed as qualitative research to get parents' in-depth perspectives on learning English through English drama performances (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This means that parents' perspectives on the performance of English drama for children will be observed, recorded, and then the main data for analysis. The authors first explained the purpose of the study to each participant and provided a questionnaire. The questionnaire was given via a Google survey link form which includes closed and open questions to obtain qualitative data given to a sample of 42 parents of 5th-grade elementary school students in Semarang. The instrument used in this research is the semi-structured interview to get more in-depth and accurate data that has not been obtained from the questionnaire. As Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012), the interview is an effective way for a researcher to check the accuracy of the impression that the researcher gets through observation. Therefore, the authors used interviews as a data collection technique in this study to investigate the problem and gain an in-depth understanding of the respondents. Next, the authors read the written data from the interviews and the transcript data from the video recordings to make relevant notations (Category Construction) to answer the research questions.

The data from questionnaires and interviews will be analyzed and combined in this study to find the research objectives. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) will be used in this study which aims to show experiences about how certain people, in certain contexts, understand certain phenomena. Usually, this phenomenon is associated with a significant experience, such as a major life event or the development of an important relationship. The main focus is on understanding subjective experiences and the meanings participants attach to their own life experiences. Hence, science analysis techniques are appropriate for assessing one's perspective (Hair et al., 2017).

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

A number of parents (90%) agreed and expressed that the children feel joyful about having English-speaking practice. However, a small percentage of parents believe that it is not good for elementary students because they worry that it will overburden their children. In a different angle, 3.6% of parents disagree with the drama practices because it takes so much of their children's time outside the regular school hours. The neutral parents (14.3%) convey that they are not enthusiastic enough of having an English drama movie project for elementary level, 14 parents (50%) agree that represents they feel enthusiastic of having English drama movie project for elementary level, and nine parents (32.1%) extremely agree that indicates they are quite enthusiastic of having English drama movie project for elementary level. The number of parents who feel enthusiastic is bigger than the other opinions. Thus, about 82.1% of parents are enthusiastic about having English drama movie projects for the elementary level.

In addition, it also shows the children's feelings about having an English drama movie project based on parents' perceptions that four parents (14.3%) are neutral, which implies their children are not delighted enough with having an English drama movie project, 14 parents (50%) agree that means their children feel delighted with having an English drama movie project, and 10 parents (35.7%) extremely agree that conveys their children are quite delighted of having English drama movie project. It can be said that about 85.7% of parents believe that their children feel delighted about having an English drama movie project. Furthermore, the time constraints of conducting an English drama movie project on parents' perceptions are investigated as well. It shows that 3.6% parents extremely disagree, that means having an English drama movie project does not disturb children's school schedules at all, and 39.3% parents disagree, which indicates having an English drama movie project is not upsetting children's school schedules, 12 parents (42.9%) are neutral that conveys having English drama movie project is worrying enough to children's

school schedules, and 4 parents (14.3%) agree that represents having English drama movie project is threatening children's school schedule. Therefore, about 57.2% of parents assume that having English drama movie projects for elementary students disturbs the children's school schedules. Then, the effectiveness of the English drama movie project in improving students' speaking ability on parents' perceptions shows that 46.4 % parents agree that represents English drama movie project is effective in improving students' speaking ability, and 14 parents (50%) extremely agree that indicates English drama movie project is quite effective in improving students' speaking ability. Indeed, about 96.4% of parents consider that English drama movie projects are effective in improving students' speaking ability, especially at the elementary level. Moreover, it reflects on parents' perceptions of the continuation of the English drama movie project for the elementary level in the following academic year. It is found that 3 parents (10.7%) are neutral which means the English drama movie project for elementary level should not be continued as the student's project for the following year, 18 parents (64.3%) agree that conveying English drama movie project for elementary students should be gone on as the annual students' project, and 7 parents (25%) extremely agree that indicates English drama movie project for elementary students must proceed as the students' project for every year ahead. Hence, about 89.3% of parents believe it is a great idea to recommence the annual English drama movie project for elementary students.

In addition, parents have positive perceptions of English drama performance because it improves children's English skills. It boosts their confidence, improves their social knowledge skills, and encourages them to explore boundless potential within themselves. However, despite the positive reviews from the parents, there were a few parents who thought that English drama project is too complicated and consumes the children's time. They could not spend their time to play or spend with their family because they have to rehearse. The ways parents support their children to conduct the English drama performance are not the same. Some parents encouraged the children to keep moving and support their financial needs, while other parents helped the children to prepare all the properties, stage decoration, and makeup. In a more personal context of supports, parents provided private guidance to practice drama at home. The various types of supports were necessary for the children's preparedness and development. Parents toward also give their perceptions of the importance of parental involvement in having English drama performances. A number of parents believe that children still need to be guided and directed until they are in middle school, which means parents should be fully involved in children's projects since it is reckoned that parental involvement grows children's spirit. Besides, parents also agree of the importance of parental involvement but parents should not totally 100% involve on the children projects because it gives children opportunity to be more independent and confident.

## Discussion

The notion that environment is a critical element in the formation of knowledge aligns with the findings above. The discussions propose that cognitive abilities such as learning and problem-solving are developed through social interaction during childhood. Culture and environment play a large role in cognitive development. Social interactions with others are believed to help a child learn and develop (Barnett, 2019; O'Byrne et al., 2018). Based on the results, it is found that parents give their different perceptions on the English drama performance for children. The school children in this study have two kinds of environment help them develop their skills; the school contexts and the home contexts. Both environment are co-dependent to create successful learners. Parents believe that English drama performance makes children more confident since it positively impacts their children's learning. It is supported by what who mentioned that using drama helped to develop confidence, emotional intelligence, and content knowledge in the middle school classroom (Water, 2021). It means the support from the parents becomes one of the pillars of success in the children's learning. As the closest individuals in the children's life, parents offer financial, emotional, and support in their learning that can foster learning. The children's confidence grew because of the practice, and their parents support their well-being (Mardiani, 2021; Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019). Attention to small details given by the parents in terms of the children's improvement indicates that they are actively involved in the activities. It is in line with the study state that drama helped the students relax and become less anxious around each other and lower their affective filter enough to get some vocabulary benefits from the drama activities (Afandi et al., 2019). The drama activities also motivates the students to focus more on their regular classes. It means drama creates an atmosphere of fun learning at class in which children can play while learning. The drama performance keeps students active in learning situations. Students' self-confidence and motivation increase.

Furthermore, the benefit of conducting drama performance to improve the students' learning skills comes in many shapes and forms. The anxiety level, which plays a major role in communicative skills in FL classes, decreases. The students have better skills to manage their stress level and anxiety related to performing in public. Because their English skills improves, they handle themselves better in terms of

nervousness, public skills, and confidence to speak up (Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020; Alfonso-Benlliure et al., 2021). Additionally, because they have practices with their peers, they have the opportunities to speak with their friends beyond what is written in the drama script, creating a friendly and communicative environment to foster students' growth and confidence. Thus, it is proven that applying English drama performance in classroom activities can improve children's confidence.

Parents consider that English drama performance gives a good impact on children's socialization. It is believed that when children play with others, they learn skills that serve them for their whole lives. Children develop skills like sharing, problem-solving, and setting boundaries through interacting with their peers. They develop empathy for others and learn how to recognize other people's emotional states. The quote emphasizes that children's social skills improve in English drama projects. It is similar to what stated by previous study additionally, working in groups generally gives students social skills such as being a group member and communicating with others (Lindsey & Colwell, 2013). In addition other study in the grouping process, the participants reached the level where they had the feeling of safety to throw themselves into drama together and they got the experience of multi-level communication between people, fearlessness to be themselves and to throw themselves into a role because they did not need to be afraid of being embarrassed (Lähdesmäki, 2016). Hence, it is said that English drama performance helps children to improve their social skills.

Furthermore, parents are convinced that English drama performance improves language skills. It is proven that drama is an effective way of helping students to learn languages including English as a Foreign Language (EFL), as it uses active teaching and learning styles likely to motivate and sustain the attention of a wide cross-section of pupils (Birhan et al., 2021; Putri Ningrat et al., 2018). Activities can include role-play, drama games, improvisation, group discussion and individual or pair work. Previous study argues that creative drama activities could improve speaking skills (Göktürk et al., 2012). It means that activities like role-play could positively affect students' attitudes towards the course, and a positive attitude could enable students to succeed in the follow-up speech tasks. This means the contribution of drama performance to language education is good. It provides the ability to express what children are feeling, improve vocabulary, and pay attention to stress, intonation, and speed while speaking. Besides, it improves listening, speaking skills, and understanding as well. Moreover according to previous study drama is seen as an effective way to improve young learners communication skills while enabling them in a creative and authentic atmosphere (Buhur, 2019). Indeed, the use of drama for young learners develops participants' language skills, especially the communicative ones such as interactions and conversations, and yields higher proficiency levels as it motivates them to become more engaged in the learning process. Additionally, the study asserted that the drama technique successfully enhances speaking skills and is one of the appropriate teaching techniques for improving students' speaking ability since it brings different significance (Armia et al., 2019). Indeed, it is believed that English drama effectively improves students' speaking ability.

Apart from those beliefs, parents suggest that English drama performance seeks children's boundless potential. Every child has unique character strengths and abilities that allow them to express their individuality in a social environment. It is what makes them special. As parents and teachers, we begin to notice differences in our children when they are quite young. Moreover, parents accept that English drama performance brings happiness of learning. Previous study stated that students positively perceived using drama in speaking class (Göktürk et al., 2012). It means that having English drama to improve students' speaking skills brings happiness to the students. The composite of drama activities with learning a language brings about a fun, enriching, and purposeful experience. Getting through a class in an unfamiliar language can be daunting for students who struggle with the English language. Hence it is essential to make learning as fun and easy as possible. Nothing motivates learners as much as fun does because it comes from genuine interest from within instead of pressure from others. Students are much more likely to pay more attention to the learning process if they love it.

Parents assume that English drama performance enriches students' knowledge since it provides children in different ways of learning. Learning many new things improves cognitive abilities and makes us recognize ourselves better, find passion in ourselves, add life experiences, and be more creative. There are many new things from learning a language. It will encourage children to be more curious. High curiosity can make the children happy to learn and have a lot of knowledge and experience. There is a strong connection between language and culture and the teacher can help present the English world to the class. As previous study state language and culture are married, and learning a language cannot be divorced from cultural learning (Miccoli, 2003). Cultural elements can be explained and understood through short skits and drama activities. Including familiarity with these cultural learning points helps to bring a stronger relationship between the language and its meaning. Cultural awareness is easily communicated through drama. It is sure that in learning with drama we automatically learn about other cultures as well, which means children get more knowledge in this case (Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020; Yao et al., 2022).

On the other hand, few parents maintain that English drama performance robs children since it takes too much time and is too complicated. Students lose much time outside to finish the project. They should have more time with family to share and friends to play. Likewise, Students in elementary school should not be burdened with many tasks. The complicated project potentially affects health problems, such as children getting more exhausted due to lack of rest. Additionally, it has an impact on the loss of children's enthusiasm for learning because children feel pressured and stressed. Richard Walker, an educational psychologist at the University of Sydney said, The data shows that in countries where the majority of children spend more time doing homework, they score lower on a standardized test called the Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA. Indeed, too much homework and projects do not help children get good grades in school, but it makes their test scores drop. Nevertheless, parents present different thoughts on the significance of parental involvement. It is first considered that parental involvement improves students' confidence in conducting the school project. As previous study state Children who are confident in school and feel in control of school outcomes may push parents to become actively involved in school (Ishizuka, 2019). It means, Children will be more motivated when they observe their parents take an active interest in school. The number of parents who figures out that parental involvement makes the better result of studies since it plays a major role in improving children's learning. Children whose parents are involved in their learning do better academically and behaviorally at school. Similar findings in which connectedness was found to be greater among students, students from a two-parent household, students who performed well in school, those who were active in extracurricular activities, those who had a large number of friends, and those with positive parental involvement in their school (Fawley et al., 2020). Besides that, parents suppose that parental involvement forms children's independence. The parents' role should not be fully involved in children projects. It is to give some space to children to explore more what they experience through the English drama project. English drama project does not only require children to play the drama but it gives children a different atmosphere of learning English. It brings children to try new things around and seek the boundless potential they have.

This study focuses on how parents give their perspective on English drama performance at the elementary school level. In fact, a number of studies believe that drama for the school learning model is beneficial, but actually, a number of parents do not reckon it since drama takes a long time and it robs students' time. Indeed, teachers should consider the aspect of sharing with parents related to the learning model the teachers will take. The implication of this study on the literature is is expected to provide a new perspective for teachers on how important the perspectives and involvement of parents in achieving the targeted learning objectives are so that teachers can review and consider whether the learning model that has been given to students so far is good and feasible to be re-applied in the following school year. Moreover, it is expected for the other researchers to examine further related parental perceptions, especially to develop some new novelties found in this research. In the field of English education research, this study contributes to the notion that children need to actively engage in the English language with their peers, teachers, and friends outside of the classroom. This notion encourages independent learning, collaborative learning, and personal growth in English speaking; by assigning drama performances to the students, teachers can develop a new learning strategy that is fun, challenging, and engaging.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Parents have different perceptions, support and guidance of English drama performance for elementary students. The majority of parents support the idea of applying English drama to elementary students since it improves their children's English skills albeit there was a small number of parents who disagreed with the English drama because it was considered as complicated and tiring for elementary school students. Furthermore, the ways parents support their children to conduct the English drama performance are not the same. They encourage the children by giving some positive words to keep moving, supporting their financial needs, preparing all the properties, stage decoration, make-up, and giving private guidance in practicing drama at home. Besides that, a large number of parents feel that parental involvement in children's school projects is important since it improves children's confidence, creates better results for children's learning, and forms children's independence.

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