

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a broad description of the research. It contains background, problem formulation, operational definitions, research objective, and importance of research.

1.1 Background of the Study

Students' engagement in the classroom presents important aspect of learning activity. For a successful educational trajectory, students must engage in schoolwork emotionally to feel they belong to the school community, both in teacher-student and peer relationships, and positively affect school work (Appleton et al., 2008). According to a study from National Institute on Deaf Education, students who exhibit a high level of engagement at school are more likely to achieve academic success, have a greater sense of connection with their school and have more favourable sense of social-emotional wellbeing (Sirunyan et al., 2020). Nurlisa et al. (2020) stated that when students are actively involved, the classroom interaction becomes lively and enjoyable. This engaging and enjoyable classroom experience enhance students learning outcomes. (Nurlisa et al., 2020).

Acquiring proficiency in listening and speaking represents a fundamental aspect of the educational curriculum for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Nevertheless, practical impediments often hinder the efficacy of this learning process. A study conducted by (Jaya et al., 2022) explained various challenges confronted by students, including reduced participation, reluctance, fear, lack of self-confidence, and other related difficulties. These obstacles stem from a lack of student engagement.

These challenges can be effectively addressed by deliberately selecting an appropriate and well-suited pedagogical methodology. A noteworthy approach for enhancing proficiency in listening and speaking skills is the utilization of role play as a learning technique. Role play is asserted to engender heightened

students' engagement throughout the learning process. It serves as a particularly pedagogical strategy, allowing students to actively practice and cultivate confidence, concurrently enabling them to apply English language skills adeptly in conversational contexts (Kadafie, 2022). Moreover, proponents posit that role play functions as an efficacious tool to augment student engagement within the classroom setting, fostering practical language comprehension and application (Kusnierek, 2015).

Numerous researchers have investigated the framework of students' engagement within the context of role-play in speaking classes. Three distinct studies conducted by various scholars have yielded nearly congruent findings. Specifically, role-play in educational practices demonstrates a propensity to elevate students' emotional engagement, foster enhanced self-assurance, cultivate a sense of camaraderie among peers, and elicit excitement from witnessing their peers and themselves actively participating. The correlation between robust emotional engagement and positive learning outcomes is underscored by Park (2003), who stated that actively engaged students exhibit heightened understanding, increased retention, heightened enjoyment and a greater capacity to appreciate the pertinence of required knowledge, in contrast to their passively instructed counterparts. Consequently, it is deduced that emotional engagement significantly influences student participation during class sessions.

The pedagogical approach used in the Professional Listening and Speaking class involves role play as a designated learning technique. This repetitive role-play activity is carried out systematically every week. The researcher conducted a pre-research observation on four students who were taking Professional Listening and Speaking class and asked their opinions regarding the role-play activity carried out once a week. The students stated that they liked the role-play activity but felt burdened and tired because it was carried out routinely once a week. This phenomenon states that the role-play learning technique is fun, but students feel a little burdened if it has to be implemented regularly. Based on this phenomenon and the relationship between role-play

learning technique and emotional engagement, the researcher will try to reveal in depth what students' emotions are when carrying out this weekly role-play activity. In some of the relevant studies mentioned above, the researchers raised the topic of overall engagement, which consists of behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement. However, investigations into EFL students' emotional engagement regarding role-playing as a learning technique are still limited. Therefore, to fill the gap in the research, this research will try to find emotional engagement in the Professional Listening and Speaking class.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem described above, the problem can be identified as follow: What are students' emotional engagement in Professional Listening and Speaking class in role play as learning technique?

1.3 Operational Definitions

1.3.1. Role Play

Role play is a learning technique that involves students' active participation behaviourally, cognitively and mentally. The activity is carried out by imitating the figures' characters and behaviour. In this course, role play can be done individually or in groups. The roles usually used as training materials are flight attendant, waiter in a restaurant, news presenter (news anchor, weather forecast, entertainment news), podcaster, and business and academic meeting. In Professional Listening and Speaking class, the activity procedures for this class begin with students being divided into groups, explaining what characters will be used as role-play material, making scripts and practising in groups. Then, each group will present their performance and last, each group will receive feedback from the lecturer.

1.3.2. Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement plays an important aspect of learning. The various feelings that arise when in class included in emotional engagement. Emotional

engagement refers to the degree to which an individual experiences involvement, satisfaction, and a profound emotional connection with a specific activity, content, or interaction. This construct encompasses both positive affective responses, such as enthusiasm, satisfaction, and a sense of belonging, as well as negative affective responses, such as boredom and disappointment.

1.3.3. English Foreign Language (EFL) Learner

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students are individuals learning English in a country where English is not the primary language spoken. EFL learners usually learn English in their home country through the formal education system, language schools, or self-study programs.

1.3.4. Professional Listening and Speaking

Professional Listening and Speaking is one of the courses that must be studied by English Education Department students at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya. As the name suggests, this course aims to improve comprehension of professional content, practice communication in specialized fields, assess their language skills, simulate real-world professional scenarios, and cultivate ethical communication practices to excel in English communication within diverse professional settings. The professional work taught in this course includes learning and practicing how to be news presenter, flight attendant, tourism, business and academic meeting, MUN and podcaster.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate in depth the emotional engagement of EFL students in the use of role-playing as a learning technique in Professional Listening and Speaking class.

1.5 Significances of the Study

1.5.1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study will expand EFL students' engagement in the use

of role play in Professional Listening and Speaking class as a learning technique to support students' emotional engagement in this course and enrich the literature on students' emotional engagement in the use of role play as the learning technique in Professional Listening and Speaking class.

1.5.2. Practical Significance

Practically, this study can be used as a reference and consideration to use role play as learning speaking and listening technique to engage students in the speaking and listening class.

1.5.3. Empirical Significance

Empirically, this research will provide insight into how EFL students view role play as a speaking and listening learning technique that could engage students in Professional Listening and Speaking class.