Students' Engagement in Learning English during the Practice of Teacher-In-Role

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Article History	Abstract
  Keywords: *Students' Engagement; Students' Opinion; Teacher-in-Role*	The method of teaching is considered as the factors to reach the objectives of learning English of the EFL students in Indonesia. The method of teaching that was used in this research was called Teacher-in-Role. Teacher-in-Role is one of the strategies used in the classroom that involves the use of dramatic activities and performances as strategies within classroom instruction to give more meaningful of students' life experiences, ideas and issues through imagined situation, with the teacher as facilitator, simulator or an actor on purpose of reaching the learning outcomes. This descriptive qualitative research attempted to find out how the students' engagement during the practice of Teacher-in-Role (TiR), and also to find out their opinions of using TiR in the classroom. There were 32 students involved in this research. The result of the study showed that the engagement of the student in the classroom during the practice of TiR were in positive nature, from the three indicators; behavioural engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. The results showed the students had positive engagement and seemed they had interest during activities in total three meetings of practicing the TiR in English lessons. The perception of the students also gave a positive impact toward the TiR in the classroom. In general the students were having fun and enjoyed the learning process by practicing TiR. Even though some students claimed that they have some difficulties speaking English due to the lack of vocabulary they have.

INTRODUCTION

In English Language Teaching, the purpose of the course is to reach the goals. However, to fulfil the objectives of learning, the teaching methods do not always work. The learners sometimes do not reach the confidence of using English in the classroom appropriately. The teachers are often trapped in assigning exercises on the textbooks and less practical practice. As a result, the English subject becomes uninteresting. One of the problems found in English Language Teaching, especially in Indonesia, is how to make the students engage in the learning process. The students are mostly less interested while they are studying English. To make the classroom activity more engaging, the teachers' ideas are required, such as, in choosing the right strategy or teaching method that is used in the classroom, to fulfil the objectives of learning and make students engaged and interested in the learning process. In line with curriculum 2013 that is applied in Indonesia, the learning process emphasizes on students' maximum activity to explore and to find about what the points of students' learn.

Dixson (2015, as cited in Mulia, 2020) explained that there are four students' engagement points as the basic theory of the study, they are behavioral/skills, emotional, participation/interaction, and cognitive engagement. Thus, the students' engagement itself combines when the students have a high interest in learning English. It means that students' engagement affect the students' outcomes in learning English. As reported by some studies, one of the problems in learning English for Indonesian students is the lack of interest and boring class situations (Mulia, 2020). In Indonesia, many EFL students do not get full experience while learning English. Some are caused by teaching methods used by the teacher in the classroom.

The teachers' role is to make or create the conditions where the students can feel the leadership, knowledge, competency and understanding that is grown around them (Aitken, 2013). Using drama as a teaching method is one of the teaching strategies that teachers can use in order to deliver the material to the learners. Drama in teaching, also called drama education, is different with drama on stage or drama performance. Drama education is done in the classroom and integrates with the lesson plan. In English Language Teaching, the drama education method can apply as a vehicle to help learners learn actively to use English in the classroom and make it relatable to real life. In using drama as a teaching method, it works on several dramatic conventions, including voice work, image theatre, and process drama strategies (Piazzoli & Kennedy, 2014).

In this research, the researcher focuses on the analysis of Junior High School students' engagement in learning English while practicing the Teacher-in-Role strategy. A really basic process to understand English for Indonesian students is improving students' engagement. In this case, teachers have a big role in enhancing their students' to learning English. Student engagement has primarily and historically focused upon increasing achievement, positive behaviours, and a sense of belonging in students so they might remain in school (Taylor & Parsons, 2011).

In learning English, students' understanding mostly depends on how teaching method works in the classroom. Teacher-in-Role is a part of drama education defines as a teaching method by using dramatic process to develop students' engagement while learning English. Teacher in Role can use to draw out effective responses from the

students (Baldwin, 2018). The teacher is able to directly participate in learning process by doing an act related to the subject of study.

Students' engagement is defined as the motivation and interest in the teaching and learning process. The involvement of the students during learning English shows the engagement of them to learn English, it is also related to behavioral, emotional, and students' activity in the classroom (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). Student engagement occurs when they are actively involved in the learning activity. Furthermore, engagement in learning English can occur depending on how the teachers handle the class.

Based on some previous research, a research was conducted by Maniam et al., (2019) in Malaysia stated that the use of Teacher-in-Role in primary school on Historical subject showed learners were mostly sitting and not paying much attention during teaching process when conventional teaching methods were used. During the Teacher-in-Role Strategy, the learners were interested, curious, and excited to see their teacher playing a 'role'. The learners were also courage to listen to the opinions and statements of their teacher and got into the characters. Learners can focus and actively participate in the lesson by producing mind maps based on the 'teacher in role' method.

Another research was conducted by Piazzoli (2012), In her research, she conducted the nature of the collaborative process between teachers and participants in drama education. In this research, It worked with three group of adult language learners, studying Italian as a Second Language (L2), and three group of teachers of Italian (L2) new to drama. The data showed to illustrate the main dramatic strategy of the form: 'teacher-in-role'. She introduces this strategy and put them in a theoretical context and discuss issues and implications when teaching to engage, rather than to entertain (Piazzoli, 2012).

Based on the explanation above, for students who are less motivated and less engaged, the teaching process will be useless then it will affect to the students' learning outcomes. The practice of TiR in English lesson in Indonesia is a new thing. Thus, this research was purposed on find out how the students' engagement and their opinions in learning English during the practice of TiR.

RESEARCH METHOD

In conducting the study, the researcher uses a qualitative research design. Qualitative data are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of human processes (Miles et al, 2018). Ary et al. (2010, p. 29) define qualitative research design as "the understanding of a certain event or natural social setting". Moreover, "qualitative research design presents description about situational setting and participants' activities in form of sentences rather than numerical data" (Ary et al., 2010, p. 424). This study aimed to gain knowledge and information about students' engagement during the practice of Teacher-in-Role in SMPN 12 Padang grade seven as chosen based on requirement of the research subjects. Furthermore, the researcher also investigated about their opinions toward Teacher-in-Role strategy. Considering the features of qualitative research design, the data gathered from the study are presented in form of descriptive analysis.

The instrument used in this research was observation sheet and focus group discussion guideline. The observation was conducted using Students' Engagement

Observation Sheet adopted from Student Engagement Class Observation Guide that was provided with codes of on-task and off-task activities based on student's engagement indicators by Stovall (2003). The indicators of engagement were also divided into three sub indicators by Frederick, et al (2004); behavioural engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. From the three sub indicators of engagement stated before, it is also divided into On-task and Off-task activities by Stovall (2003) and Frederick (2004). Focus group discussion guideline is used to obtain some opinions of the participants after the practice of Teacher-in-Role in the classroom. There are several questions in the guideline to be asked to the subject of the research and the moderator will use note taking to note that answers.

Based on the instrument of the research above, the observation is conducted with direct observation where the observer is involved with the participant as a teacher while practicing the Teacher-in-Role strategy in learning English. In this case, the researcher also conducts a video recording during the classroom observation to help the researcher in interpreting the result of the observation. In focus group discussion, the data will be collected by using note taking and audio recording while observer as a moderator asking some questions to the participants. The collecting data will be transcribed as material in analyzing data later.

Technique of data analysis in this research will be conducted in descriptive qualitative data. In this study, the researcher analyzed the data gathered from observation and focus group discussion. Qualitative data analysis contains a large amount of data. Therefore, the researcher should determine effective analysis pattern. Miles et al (2018) states in analyzing data in qualitative method, there are some steps to follow; (1) data condensation, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing/verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Research Finding

There were 32 students of Grade 7 purposively involved in the practicing of TiR method in English learning subject. The research was conducted in three meetings by using *Basic Competence 3*.7 in Indonesia curriculum 2013 about the descriptive text as the material. The TiR method was integrated into the lesson plan, where the imagined worlds are based on the problem based learning.

Students' engagement during the practice of Teacher-in-Role (TiR)
Behavioural Engagement

Measuring the behavioural engagement is based on the sub-indicators consist of on-task and off-task. On-task in behavioural engagement consists of listening or watching to the teacher explanation, sharing opinions, in-act with teacher or others students. Whereas, off-task consist of playing, doing work for another class, disturbing others (Stovall, 2003). The observation was done in an hour (2x lesson hours) in every meeting, starting from 8.30 to 9.30. In the first meeting, class was begun with the warming up questions. The questions were used to bring them to introduce the material. While teacher was giving the warming up questions, about twenty five students were quietly watching and listening to the teacher. Four students were playing or were not listening to the teacher and three of them were disturbing each other.

After giving the warming up questions, teacher was waiting for volunteer to sharing the opinion related to the questions. After about a minute, none of them gave the opinion, after that, six students were asked to answer the questions. After the warming up questions, teacher gave them video related to descriptive text, the video was about how people make a conversation in the "Lost and Found Centre", and how they describe a thing. During the video all of thirty-two students were paid attention to the video. After watching the videos, teacher asked about their opinions. Three students were volunteered to share their opinions, whereas four others were asked to share their opinions. During this session, there were three students off-task; two students were not paid attention to others opinions while a student was doing work for another class.

After the question about the video session was ended, teacher directed the students to do the Teacher-in-Role (TiR) and Student-in-Role (SiR) based on the "lost and found centre" situation as the imagined world. Teacher asked students as they are in the mall and lost something and need to go to the lost and found centre. First, in this session teacher was doing in-act as the officer in the lost and found centre, the scenario was lead by teacher by asking two students to be involved in the scenario. Teacher started the scenario as officer and started the dialogue first as the classroom was the imagined world. In this session all of the students paid attention to the scenario by teacher and students, the conversations were not transcript but spontaneous by students and teacher. After that, four others students recreated the scenario by describing others things with the same situation.

The practice of TiR in the first meeting spent about twenty minutes in total. In this session most of the students were behaviourally engaged, students were practically involved in in-task learning. First meeting of practicing TiR most of the students listened to the lesson, and twelve students shared their opinions during the lesson while six of them were off-task; playing, disturbing others, and doing work for another class.

In the second meeting, the session was similar with the first meeting, It began with warming up questions related to last meeting material, during this session there were eight students shared their opinions. After this, teacher gave explanation about definition, generic structure, and language feature of descriptive text and gave them example of descriptive text about animal. During this session there were four students off-task, and the others were listening to the teacher.

Next, directing the students to do TiR - SiR, teacher gave them some HOT questions first. This session also made them to create the imagined world, the question were based on Problem Based Learning where imagined world was the situation in the zoo, between zoo keeper and visitor. During this session about ten students out of five questions were sharing their opinion. Then, teacher asked them to arrange some descriptive text with picture and divide them into eight groups. This session were used to give them information for practicing Student-in-Role later. During the TiR and SiR every students in each group performed and in-act as they are the zoo keeper and visitor in the zoo. This session teacher acted as a visitor and asked every group as they are the zoo keeper and needed to explain about their own zoo and animal they got before. This session made them knowing how to describe an animal. TiR - SiR spent about forty five minutes, and all of students were involved in in-act activity and also listening and

watching, although during this about five students were off-task; playing and disturbing others.

In the third meeting, there was not much TiR – SiR activities, only short spontaneous in-act activity where six students played the role based on last meeting material, and recreated the same imagined world to remain them how to describe a thing. The rest time of the third meeting was spent by teacher to explain and to make sure the students understand the material of descriptive text.

Emotional Engagement

In emotional engagement, thirty two students were observed based on factors including how interested students are in the task and how much they value it (Frederick, et al, 2004). In this research, the emotional engagement was also observed during the classroom activities. Consist of sub indicators; On-task and Off-task. On-task activities consist of writing activity and reading the material and also how the students do the in-act activity. Off-task activities consist of being passive and listening to others. Measuring the emotional engagement were based on how interest them doing the task.

In the first meeting, there was only writing tasks at the end of lesson that only two students did not complete the task. It means that thirty students focused on their task while two others did not. In reading task, there were four students that volunteered to read their task and four others were asked to read it by teacher.

During the practice of TiR, in the first meeting none of students seems like they have confidence to volunteer their selves in-act with teachers and others students. There were only eight students doing in-act after asked by the teacher. In this session there were twelve students that listened to others topic and two students were being passive. It means that there were fourteen student off-tasks in TiR session, the rest of them were paying attention to the classroom activity. In total, the emotional engagement in the first meeting were not really good, half of them were not really focus on the classroom activities.

In the second meeting, the students were more active doing in-act, the task given were based on Problem Based Learning that was supported by giving some HOT questions that also leading them into *Imagined World* that was used to do TiR - SiR. The students were divided into eight groups and done the task given by teachers to arrange some descriptive texts. In this session, all of students were interested to do the tasks, although during this session eight students were passive in short time and also listened to others topic, but when it came to in-act activity they were all involved and interested to do the role. Overall, in the second meeting the emotional engagement showed positive nature while doing activity in the classroom.

In the third meeting, there was not much TiR – SiR activity, only short spontaneous in-act activity where six students played the role based on last meeting material, it means that they showed some interest and attention in learning English by using in-act activity.

Cognitive Engagement

Cognitive engagement can be displayed in terms of students' investment or effort they put into doing the tasks. In measuring cognitive engagement the observer observed during the classroom activities about the effort they put into doing the task and also they effort and willingness in asking opinion and sharing their opinion. It can be seen by the way how the students understand the teachers' instruction and the way they complete the tasks. The results showed that more than half students, about 18 students, could response the teacher's questions and about 20-25 students were able to do the tasks given by the teachers. There were only few students, about 5-6 students had difficulties to answer the teacher's questions and about 2 students could not complete the tasks. It means during the classroom activities in general especially during the TiR-SiR there were no obstacles for the students to comprehend the teacher's explanations and materials.

In the sub indicators of cognitive engagement, there were some students also asking and sharing their thought but the number were bigger in students that did not ask or share their opinions in the class. It means they were in some cases may found difficulties to express their ideas. But in the group tasks almost all of them confidently doing the in-act activity and also willing to complete their tasks. They found their confidence in doing some in-act activity with their friends.

Students' opinion of the practice of Teacher-in-Role (TiR)

There were ten questions that have been asked to ten students related to their opinions during the classroom activities. Focus Group Discussion was held by using Bahasa Indonesia to the students and translated into English by the researcher.

The questions No. 1 (*How excited are you in the classroom)* and No. 2 (*In your class, how eager are you to participate during activities on TiR?)* have related answers.

> *It is fun and also I like watching my friends doing in-act. We like to do the zoo keeper roles.* (Student 1,2,3,4,6,8,9,10)
> *We quiet shy to perform in the middle of class. But we like it.* (Student 5, 7)

Overall, the common answers were they were having fun during the classroom activities, and enjoyed the performances while doing in-act activity. But there was two students claimed that they were shy to do the in-act, but still enjoy it.

Students' responses to the questions No. 3 and 4 (*What are the most and least engaging activities that happen in this TiR class? Why?)* are that most engaging activities the students answer as follow:

> *When you ask to play a role. I learned how to act.* (Student 3)
> *Acting. We act different character.* (Student 7)
> *We used many expressions for our character.* (Student 8)
> *Acting.* (Student 9)
> *I played different role with my friends to express the story.* (Student 10.)

The data reveal that students enjoyed playing the role of the imaginative characters. Through the TiR-SiR, students were able to improvise activities that require students to alert, to listen, and express their understanding in giving responses.

On the other hand, some students said that it is hard while playing role because he did not speak English well and did not know what to say.

It is hard to perform because I don't know what I have to say (Student 5)

I can't speak English well (Student 1, 2)

Question No. 5 (*How do you know when you are feeling engaged in class during TiR?*), this question only one student gave answer and followed by saying agree by the rest of students.

I enjoyed and it seemed that we just playing in the classroom. (Student 1)

This question also has similar answer to the question number 8; *how do you feel with the amount of time you spend taking a role (Students-in-role) with your teacher or your classmates?* Overall, the common answers were they are having fun and enjoy it. It is shown by their responses described below:

It is fun and we really enjoyed it. (Student 2)

It's fun. I really enjoyed it. (Student 8)

For the questions No. 6 and 7 about *how do you feel to do the task (writing and reading) in the classroom?* The common responses were they claimed that they never done such as arrange the text in the group and competed each other in the other group to finish it.

It is like playing a game. (Student 1,2,3,4,6,8,9,10)

I have never done this kind of task before and it is fun. (Student 7)

The question No. 9 *(Overall, what do you think of TiR?)* and 10 *(Do you want to learn English with TiR in the future?)* The common responses showed that TiR were very useful for them, and they all agreed and said that they wanted to learn English with TiR method in the future. It is shown by their responses described below:

It helps me to be more confident to speak in front of many people. (Student 1)

Everything, playing a role, speaking to teacher and friends. (Student 6)

It helps me to be confident to speak with people. (Student 10)

It's awesome. (Student 5)

The drama was so amazing and it is memorable. (Student 9)

Discussion

The results showed that students have positive nature in the engagement aspect and also positive perception about the practice of Teacher-in-Role in English classroom activities.

In the behavioural engagement where the students were behaviourally engaged in the classroom tasks showed that while doing task more than half of them were get into the activities and actively learning in the classroom. It showed that they positively engage during the tasks of the classroom activities. In every meeting the researcher can conclude that the behaviour of the student during the practice of Teacher-in-Role showed that students get positively engage in behavioural engagement. Based on the observation result, all subjects of the research were seemed that they are really enthusiastic for learning English because they have a new experience by performing such as scenario with teacher and friends. During the TiR and SiR the result also showed that student behaviourally engaged and increased in every meeting. It means that students showed the passionate of the use of TiR in the classroom, they are actively

listening during the classroom activities and having fun during the performances of the scenario and imaginary world.

In the emotional engagement also showed there was improvement in every meeting especially during in-act activity that show students get focused on the lesson, although some of them sometimes get distracted in short time. It means that they showed some interest and attention in learning English by using in-act activity. They were emotionally engaged and get focus in every time the scenarios were begun. The observation result showed that they enjoyed to watch and to do the TiR and SiR activities. It can be concluded that during the TiR-SiR performances the students showed the positive emotion in learning English.

In cognitive engagement showed the positive nature as well, where the efforts of the students in learning and dong in-act activities in every meeting get higher. Also there were some students also asking and sharing their thought but the numbers were bigger in students that did not ask or share their opinions in the class. It means they were in some cases may found difficulties to express their ideas. But in the group tasks almost all of them confidently doing the in-act activity and also willing to complete their tasks. They found their confidences in doing some in-act activity with their friends. The students showed their willingness to learning the material by completing and performing the scenarios. It means that in cognitive engagement students were positively into the learning process and TiR method can give them stimulation to enjoy the English subject in the classroom.

In the engagement aspects which are divided into three sub indicators; behavioral, emotional and cognitive. All of the indicators showed the improvement and positive engagement in every meeting during the classroom activities. It is in line with Maniam et al., (2019) in Malaysia that also showed the positive and enjoyment during the practice of TiR in the classroom. Also, TiR as the part of drama education, this research has similar outcomes with Nanda and Susanto (2021) who uses drama education in teaching English to Indonesian students. In their observation, drama education contributed to building the students' abilities for social engagement and language comprehension. Those abilities were enhanced in drama activities with the involvement of the teacher in role play and as a facilitator. The result showed that drama education can be an alternative for teaching and learning and good tools for teaching pronunciation.

In the students' opinions of the practice of TiR also showed that they have positive review of practicing the TiR method in the English learning classroom. This method also allowed them to build their confidences in speaking English and having fun and enjoying the class during the lesson. They said studying English is more fun and encourage them to be more active in the classroom. Although there were few comments that indicate they have difficulties in speaking English, it only because of the limited vocabulary they have and the anxiety to perform.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the research deals with the answer of the statement of the study based on the findings and discussions. Learning English can be boring for Indonesian students, therefore teacher should have variety of method to deliver the

material to the student in order to increase their engagement during the lesson. Using Teacher-in-Role is one of the methods that is used in this research to find out about the students' engagement during the English lesson. The result of the study showed that the engagement of the student in the classroom during the practice of TiR were in positive nature, from the three indicators that had been observed; behavioral, emotional, and cognitive, students show the engagement were increasing in total three meeting of practicing the TiR in English lesson.

The perception of the students also gave positive impact toward the TiR in the classroom. In general the students were having fun and enjoy the learning process by practicing TiR. Even though, some students claimed that they have some difficulties to speak English due to the numb of vocabulary they have.

From the whole data, it can be concluded that students' engagement during the practice of TiR in learning English does not yet reach to full engagement but it has reached more than half of it. So, hopefully the result of the research can add useful information to be a help as a reference to improve students' engagement in learning English.

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