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## Radio Drama in ESL Learning among Engineering and Business Students in UiTM Kampus Pasir Gudang

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### Abstract

A radio play is a dramatized acoustic performance. Radio drama feature lacks a visual component, mainly depends on speech, music, and sound effects to let the listener imagine the characters and story. There are many studies done on the effectiveness of role-playing, theater, and drama but not many studies done on radio drama. The purpose of this study is to investigate the students' opinions on the effects of radio drama on their language skills. As many as 96 respondents who have been involved in this study are requested to answer a questionnaire regarding the effects of radio drama on their language skills. The study employed quantitative method analysis. Statistical analysis was also conducted to find out the significant difference between two main variables in the study namely business students and engineering students. The findings of the study show that majority of the students from both groups believed that radio drama application in ESL learning brings good effects to their language skills; writing, speaking, reading, and listening. The students believed that it has helped them to enhance their creativity, range of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar skills.

**Keywords:** Radio Drama, ESL Learning, Language Skills, Teaching Methodology

### Introduction

Malaysian students' lack of communication skills has become a national issue. For a nation to produce global communicators graduates, ESL knowledge is critical. English is extremely important in terms of employability, particularly for job interviews in global corporations and workplace communication (Rido, 2020).

It is critical for language learners to be exposed to the target language as much as possible through hearing, speaking, reading, and writing. Students should be exposed to English regularly to help them to overcome their deficiencies and improve their fluency and competency in learning the language (Zoubi, 2018).

During this endemic era, most of the learning institutions in Malaysia have taken the initiative to minimise close contact in the classroom. To avoid being exposed to the Covid virus, many classes are changed to virtual classes. Resulted of this, many educators have turned to having learning activities using the online platform by using online games such as Kahoot, Quizziz, and many more. To cope with speaking practice, educators must assign activities that require them to work together with no or less physical contact. Thus, most educators would resort to giving out recording tasks to the students as it is easier.

One of the speaking activities that can be conducted with less physical contact is radio drama activity where the author's cognitive world is projected onto the listener's imagination in the form of a radio play. In contrast to stage dramas which always accompany with visual and audio elements, radio dramas rely on words to accompany the action. Language virtually serves a poetic rather than a dramatic purpose in radio drama. Lyricism creates sentiments, whereas drama is centered on action. In this way, radio drama resembles poetry more than theatre as the listeners must use their imagination to understand and appreciate the radio play.

Radio role-play activities employ the task-based approach (Ellis, 2003). Radio drama works with texts, recordings, and audio input. The use of radio drama in a language classroom opens up a wide range of options, perhaps best shown by the continuum of drama techniques in L2 instruction (Kao & O'Neill). The advantage of radio role-play is that individual role-plays, improvisations, and scenarios can be recorded, transcribed, adjusted, rehearsed, and performed (Zdarek, 2013)

### **Literature Review**

Constructivism is the process of learning via inquiry, research, and self-study (Kapur, 2016). They improve their critical thinking and information analysis skills as they build their knowledge. Constructivists promoted a learning approach in which students are at the centre and the instructor serves as a guide. Active learning approaches are a trademark of constructivist classrooms (Kapur, 2016). Experiments, problem-solving, reflection, and conversation are all ways for students to learn.

In teaching and learning, the term "student-centered learning" (SCL) is widely being used in literature. This notion by Hayward has been credited as early as 1905, and Dewey in 1956 (O'Sullivan, 2003). SCL appears to be the learning concept that emphasizes the student's choice in their education and the shift of role between the students and the instructor (O'Neill & McMahon, 2005). This method includes active learning, in which students solve problems, answer questions, formulate questions, discuss, explain, debate, or brainstorm during class. It also promotes cooperative learning, in which students work in groups on problems and projects under conditions that ensure both positive interdependence and individual accountability (Jony, 2021).

### **Radio Drama in ESL learning**

Radio drama is not a new form of entertainment and learning activity. BBC Learning English Drama, Obla Air, and British Council Podcasts are just a few of the websites dedicated to making and recording radio dramas in English. With the use of sound editing applications like Audacity and others, radio drama can be produced anywhere. Producing radio drama necessitates the creation of a script. After that, the voice actor must read the texts with proper pronunciation and tone. The ability to effectively communicate the script's message will aid listeners in comprehending the story and bringing it to life.

Furthermore, radio plays promote collaboration since they typically feature more than one character, and students must work together to fulfil activities like creating scripts, allocating roles and characters, rehearsing, providing sound effects, and performing the tale as a whole. 2022 (Chan & Tang)

### **Previous Research Concerning Radio Drama in ESL learning**

A study done by Maiullo (2018) found that radio drama supports student engagement in a low-stress atmosphere that emphasises speaking while also integrating reading, writing, and listening abilities. In his study, Mauillo taught a few lessons on radio drama, including how to introduce emotions, read with emotions, introduce storyline and character, write a radio drama script, and perform the radio drama. This activity has been shown to work well in big groups, but it can also be customised to function well in smaller groups. Students have become engaged in the construction of their own radio drama as a result of this group work exercise.

Another study by Chan & Tang (2022), on the effectiveness of radio drama competition to boost motivation, self-confidence, and cooperation in language learning for primary and secondary school students in Hong Kong. It was found that radio drama competition had a positive impact on increasing motivation, collaboration, and confidence in language learning. Based on the findings of an interview and survey conducted on two competitions in consecutive years, students had positive feelings about their experience in both years. According to both students and teachers, this competition has improved collaboration and teamwork, confidence, and communication skills among the students the most.

The same conclusions were reached by (Zdarek, 2013). According to the interviews done, students who participated in radio role-play felt it to be both pleasant and beneficial. The strategy has been successful in getting them to speak and assisting them in becoming more proficient. Radio, according to Zdarek (2013), has a lot of potential and power that needs to be exploited.

### **Method**

#### **Research Design**

Through the quantitative analysis, this study focuses on two research objectives:

RO 1: To find out the students' opinion on the effects of radio drama on their language skills.

RO 2: To find out is there any significant difference between business and engineering students on the effects of radio drama on their language skills.

#### **Population and Sample**

The population for this study was part 1 students of UiTM Cawangan Kampus Pasir Gudang in the same semester. There are only two types of students in UiTM Kampus Pasir Gudang namely business and engineering students. 6 classes (112 students) were involved in this study. The returned questionnaires were only 96 among 112 part 1 students of UiTM Cawangan Kampus Pasir Gudang on that particular semester.

#### **Instrumentation**

One learning period was required for the instructor to explain to the students on the characteristics of radio drama and what are the process involved in producing a radio drama.

Few examples of radio drama were also given to the students as a reference. The theme given was 'hope and dream'. The time limit given was 7 minutes per production. The students needed to work in a group, minimum of 3 students per group to discuss on the script and recording. The instructor also suggested Audacity, a sound editor application for them to edit their recording. However, the students were free to choose any platform for sound recording and editing. They were given a month to complete the task. The instructor acted as a mentor in helping the students in finishing their task. After the radio drama submitted, they were given a questionnaire to be answered.

### Questionnaire

A set of questionnaires consists of 26 questions has been distributed. There are 4 sections; Section 1: Demographic questions, Section 2: Radio Drama effects on English Language Skills, Section 3: Effects on Affective Domain after Radio Drama participation, and Section 4: Radio Drama through Open Distance Learning. There are 20 Likert scale questions and 6 open ended question.

### Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was administered to the target population by lecturers. One learning period was required for the survey to take place. The questionnaire was administered using Google Form for easy access and data collection. The link to the google form was distributed using Whatsapp application.

### Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaire and the test were subjected to descriptive statistics, involving the analysis of percentages and means to answer the research questions. This research employed the utilisation of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 18 for data analysing.

## Result

### Demographic Data

**Table 1:** Respondents Demographic Data

Type	Frequency	Percent
Business	41	42.7
Engineering	55	57.3
Total	96	100

Table 1 demonstrates the respondents' demographic data. This study was employed on 96 respondents from UiTM Kampus Pasir Gudang with 57.3% are from faculty of engineering and 42.7% comes from faculty of business.

**Figure 1:** Percentage of Practices Taken before Submitting the Radio Drama

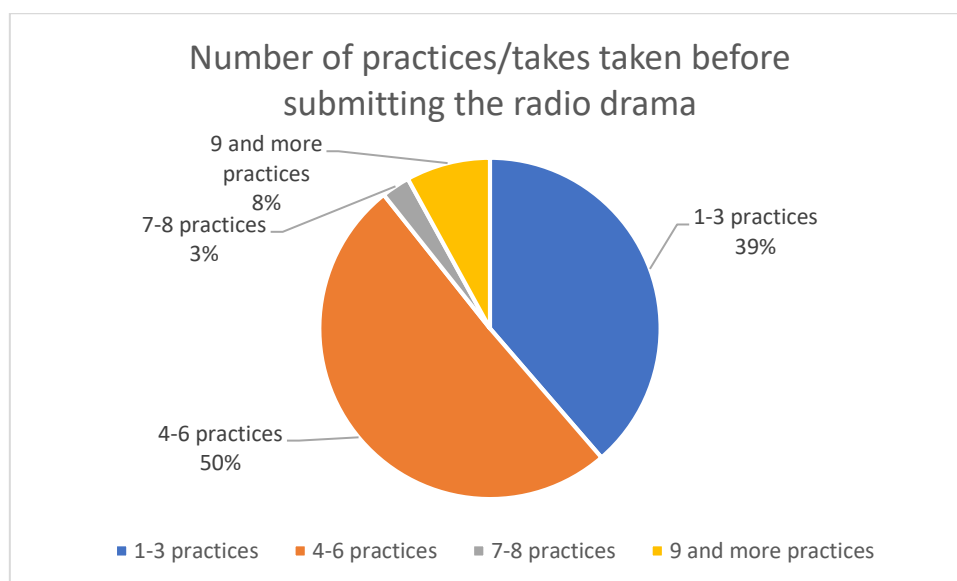


Figure 1 shows the number of practices or takes taken by students before submitting their radio drama. Majority of the students did 4 to 6 practices (50%), followed with 1 to 3 practices (39%), 9 and more practices (8%) and the least practices done is between 7 to 8 practices (3%).

**Table 2:** The effects of radio drama on the respondents' language skills

Item	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Indicator
8	Improve my English language skills in general	4.38	.70	Agree
9	Improve my reading skills	4.32	.72	Agree
10	Improve my speaking skills	4.42	.63	Agree
11	Improve my listening skills	4.33	.69	Agree
12	Improve my writing skills	4.03	.82	Agree
13	Improve my grammar knowledge	4.17	.75	Agree
14	Improve my pronunciation skills	4.42	.64	Agree
15	Improve my vocabulary skills	4.22	.70	Agree
5	Enhance my creativity	4.29	.74	Agree

Based on Table 2 it can be seen that the mean scores for all the items related to radio drama effects on skills are above 4.0 value which indicates that majority of the respondents agree that radio drama was able to help them to improve their skills. It is also agreed by the respondents that radio drama enhance their creativity skills.

The highest mean recorded are on item 10, and 14 indicating that the respondents agree that radio drama improves their speaking skills and pronunciation skills (M = 4.42, SD = 0.72 & 0.64).

**Table 3** : Engineering and business students' opinion on the effects of radio drama on their language skills

Item	Statement	Business Students		Engineering Students	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std Deviation
8	RD helps improve my Eng. language skills in general	4.195	.7148	4.509	.6631
9	RD helps improve my Eng. reading skills	4.220	.8220	4.400	.6266
10	RD helps improve my Eng. speaking skills	4.390	.6276	4.436	.6314
11	RD helps improve my Eng. listening skills	4.146	.7267	4.473	.6341
12	RD helps improve my Eng. writing skills	4.146	.7267	3.945	.8907
13	RD helps improve my Eng. grammar knowledge	4.244	.6626	4.109	.8090
14	RD helps improve my Eng. pronunciation skills	4.317	.6099	4.491	.6631
15	RD helps improve my range of vocabulary	4.098	.7350	4.309	.6631
5	RD helps enhance my creativity	4.268	.7080	4.309	.7667

\*RD Radio drama

Table 3 shows the comparison of means between business and engineering students' perceptions on the effects of radio drama on their skills. It shows that both respondents from the faculty of business and engineering agree that radio drama has helped them to improve their language skills and enhance their creativity. Engineering students seem to show higher mean score on all items compares to business students except on item 12: improve writing skills and item 13: improve grammar skills.

#### **The Effects of Radio Drama on Language Skills Relationship between Different Faculties**

To find out is there any significant relationship between faculties on the effects of radio drama, the anova analysis has been conducted and the data is shown as below.

**Table 4:** Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the effects of radio drama according to different types of students

		Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Enhance Creativity	Between Groups	.039	1	.039	.071	.791
	Within Groups	51.794	94	.551		
	Total	51.833	95			
Improve language skills	Between Groups	2.316	1	2.316	4.926	.029
	Within Groups	44.184	94	.470		
	Total	46.500	95			
Improve Reading	Between Groups	.765	1	.765	1.492	.225
	Within Groups	48.224	94	.513		
	Total	48.990	95			
Improve Speaking	Between Groups	.050	1	.050	.126	.723
	Within Groups	37.283	94	.397		
	Total	37.333	95			
Improve Listening	Between Groups	2.502	1	2.502	5.492	.021
	Within Groups	42.831	94	.456		
	Total	45.333	95			
Improve Writing	Between Groups	.948	1	.948	1.393	.241
	Within Groups	63.958	94	.680		
	Total	64.906	95			
Improve Grammar Knowledge	Between Groups	.427	1	.427	.758	.386
	Within Groups	52.906	94	.563		
	Total	53.333	95			
Improve Pronunciation	Between Groups	.710	1	.710	1.728	.192
	Within Groups	38.624	94	.411		
	Total	39.333	95			
Improve Range of Vocab	Between Groups	1.051	1	1.051	2.178	.143
	Within Groups	45.355	94	.483		
	Total	46.406	95			

Table 4 shows the significant differences between faculties on language skills and creativity. From the table it is found that there are no statistical differences between engineering and business students on most of the skills ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, there is statistical differences recorded between the group where engineering students do perceive radio



drama to be helpful in improving English skills in general ( $p < 0.05$ ). Another statistical finding also found on item 11: radio drama helps me improve my listening skills ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### Discussion and Conclusion

This paper highlights the students' opinions on the effects of radio drama on their language skills. Based on the findings, the respondents from the faculty of business and engineering agree that radio drama has brought positive effects on the respondents' language skills such as reading, speaking, listening, writing, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and enhancing their creativity. This study also found that there are no significant statistical differences between engineering and business students on most of the skills except for the perception of 'radio drama helps improve English skills in general' and 'radio drama helps improve their listening skills.

This study contributes to the literature by expanding the body of knowledge on students' perceptions on the use of radio drama in learning language. With the positive feedbacks given by the ESL learners in this study, it can be concluded that both engineering and business students do believe that radio drama helps them to learn English language, enhance creativity, grammar, speaking, writing, listening, reading and vocab.

Engineering students must master the English language since they must read a lot of material to keep up with their engineering knowledge, and most engineering references and literature are written in English (Hutomo, 2021). Meanwhile, English is a requirement for business students who want to continue to thrive in numerous domains of the global economy. Almost all the world's leading corporations prioritise the use of technology in their operations, which are conducted in English. As a result, if someone wants to work in huge firms, both multinational and worldwide, learning and mastering English is the most important factor to be considered (Rafafie, 2021). As a result of this discovery, radio drama is an excellent alternative for ESL educators to use in their classrooms. The students' high number of practises or takes to complete the radio play is also necessary for them to quickly learn the second language (Brown, 2017).

The finding of this study is similar with Zdarek's (2013) study where it was found that the students who were involved in radio role-play perceived it as enjoyable and beneficial where it has able to get them talk and help them become more fluent. The adaptable radio drama activities presented in this article definitely promotes student collaboration in a low-stress environment that encourages speaking and integrates reading, writing, listening, grammar and enhancing creativity as suggested by Maiullo (2018) in his study.

According to the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015 to 2025, the 9<sup>th</sup> shift of this blueprint is to embrace the full potential of globalized online learning. The findings of this study may assist ESL educators in improving the quality of course delivery in encouraging Malaysians to pursue life-long learning and moving towards globalized online learning where learning can take place anywhere and anytime. It is critical for educators to be able to come up with activities that are appropriate for language learners while also employing technology in order to achieve the goals of being a leading education hub through globalized online learning. By achieving this, it will be able to enhance the Malaysian education brand and increase prominence for Malaysian higher learning through effective course delivery (Malaysian Education Blueprint 2015-2025 (Higher Education), 2015).

This is also in line with the Education 5.0 goal, which is to foster philomaths, or people who enjoy learning. The use of radio drama in language learning promotes the idea of Education 5.0, which emphasises learners' control of their learning. Education 5.0 moves

away from scheduled curriculum and toward seamless learning, freeing learning from the constraints of academic weeks and location. (2019, EDUCATION 5.0@UiTM, Navigating the Future, UiTM Academic Compass).

It is critical for English educators to use technology to assist students in practising the targeted language in this technological age. To be one of the world's most competitive countries, Malaysia must improve and grow its education system in accordance with Industry Revolution 5.0.

To sum up, this learning method has received positive feedback from the Business and Engineering ESL students in UiTM Kampus Pasir Gudang in improving their English language. The findings also revealed that radio drama serves as a suitable task to enhance students' creativity. Despite its positive contributions, the study also has a few limitations. The first limitation is this study does not really measure the students' improvement on the targeted language. It is best for a pre and post-test to be conducted on students' language skills as to measure their real improvement. Another limitation is there are some factors not taken into consideration such as learners' learning styles, motivations, learning strategies and other external factors. Therefore, the authors suggested further studies to be conducted from the above perspectives.

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