

DRAMA LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: DIGITAL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

This study analyzes the digital performance in drama learning at Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang during 2021-2022. Using interpretive qualitative methods, it explores lecturers' and students' experiences integrating digital technology into teaching and learning. James Paul Gee's 'interaction space' theory explains how digital environments create interactive spaces. The results show that using digital media like YouTube and Spotify boosts students' motivation, creativity, and digital drama production skills. Digital performance allows students to express ideas creatively through audiovisual performances and radio dramas, both online and offline. Despite challenges like limited internet access and outdated devices, students learn to manage roles in digital performances, enriching their learning experience. In conclusion, digital performance enhances drama learning quality. Integrating digital technology expands access and flexibility, encouraging 21st-century skills like digital literacy, collaboration, and critical thinking. This research recommends improving technological infrastructure and digital literacy training to support pedagogical innovation in higher education.

Keywords: digital performance, interaction space, drama learning, interactive multimedia, digital transformation

Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis kinerja digital dalam pembelajaran drama di Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang selama tahun 2021-2022. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif interpretatif, ini mengeksplorasi pengalaman dosen dan mahasiswa yang mengintegrasikan teknologi digital ke dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Teori 'ruang interaksi' James Paul Gee menjelaskan bagaimana lingkungan digital menciptakan ruang interaktif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menggunakan media digital seperti YouTube dan Spotify meningkatkan motivasi, kreativitas, dan keterampilan produksi drama digital siswa. Pertunjukan digital memungkinkan siswa untuk mengekspresikan ide secara kreatif melalui pertunjukan audiovisual dan drama radio, baik daring maupun luring. Terlepas dari tantangan seperti akses internet yang terbatas dan perangkat yang sudah ketinggalan zaman, mahasiswa belajar mengelola peran dalam pertunjukan digital, memperkaya pengalaman belajar mereka. Kesimpulannya, pertunjukan digital meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran drama. Mengintegrasikan teknologi digital memperluas akses dan fleksibilitas, mendorong keterampilan abad ke-21 seperti literasi digital, kolaborasi, dan pemikiran kritis. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan peningkatan infrastruktur teknologi dan pelatihan literasi digital untuk mendukung inovasi pedagogis di perguruan tinggi.

Kata Kunci: pementasan digital, ruang interaksi, pembelajaran drama, multimedia interaktif, transformasi digital

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to online learning, necessitating teachers and students to adapt to digital-focused learning. Digital performance in drama education is crucial for smooth learning and maximizing students' drama skills through digital media. Santoso et al. (2021) note the transition from traditional to digital models in education and drama learning. Digital media and interactive multimedia enhance engagement, comprehensiveness, and efficiency, increasing students' interest and understanding of drama content.

Pratama and Dewi (2020) found that drama learning at the university level often faces challenges like low creativity, student participation, and inadequate learning tools. Digital technology, such as interactive multimedia, online platforms, and Macromedia Flash-based media, has proven effective in improving student learning outcomes and drama performance skills.

Digital performances allow students to express their ideas and creativity through digital media, making drama learning practical and interactive. This digital media facilitates the organized and engaging development of students' drama-playing skills. It offers students the opportunity to convey their ideas and creativity, transforming drama learning from theoretical to practical and interactive. Despite previous research showing students struggle with understanding drama material and lack motivation for traditional lessons, innovation in digital-based learning is needed to enhance students' abilities and interest in drama, aligning with technological advances and current higher education needs.

Technology alters traditional teaching tools, impacting student-teacher interactions. Jenkins (2006) emphasizes the impact of digital technology on communication devices and the perception of traditional tools. Presky (2006) highlights students' control over their learning process and the use of body movements and performance in the drama classroom. Students also apply digital skills in the classroom, completing performance assignments digitally.

According to Mayer (2009) in *Multimedia Learning*, combining visual and verbal elements enhances students' understanding as visual stimuli provide more effective meaning. Gee (2007) in "What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy" suggests audio media creates immersive learning experiences by engaging listening skills. A multimodal approach combines various media like text, images, audio,

and video to enhance learning, engaging sight and hearing simultaneously. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) in “Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication” emphasize that multimodal learning improves concept understanding by providing simultaneous information from various sources. This supports multimodal learning efforts that utilize the simultaneous use of sight and hearing, aligning with Gee’s understanding of digital literacy that includes various modalities.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research adopts an interpretive qualitative method that focuses on the subjective aspects of social life and seeks to understand the way of thinking of the object being studied. The interpretive qualitative method aims to explore how social reality is formed, adhering to the assumption that to understand this reality, it is necessary to carry out a specific construction (Sugiyono, 2015). This approach was chosen to explore in detail how the digital performance in drama learning occurs in universities, including interaction spaces, the role of students in staging, digitalisation, and student involvement in creating performance videos and radio dramas.

The subjects of this study are individuals or groups that the researcher consciously determines. As a source of data or information, research subjects should meet specific criteria (Sugiyono, 2015). The research subjects comprise students who participated in digital-based drama learning within the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program during the 2021-2022 period in the Indonesian Drama Studies course four classes in 2021 and four classes in 2022. Every classes are 32 students in fifth semester, and the total number of students is 256. The research is conducted at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, where digital performance has been implemented in its learning activities. The data collection method involves document studies, which encompass lesson plans, digital materials, and digital performance recordings. The data is then analyzed qualitatively and interpretively. Data reduction is carried out to extract relevant information, after which the results are presented in the form of narratives and descriptive tables. Conclusions are drawn based on patterns and themes that emerge from the observation data and documents collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of research conducted from 2021 to 2022 regarding the

application of digital performance in drama learning within the Indonesian Language and Literature Education study program at the Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, utilising Gee's theory of "interaction space".

Digital performance in drama studies at universities creates a physical, virtual, or hybrid interaction space. Lecturers and students can collaborate through digital platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, and Spotify, even if they're not face-to-face. At the beginning of a meeting, the teacher explained the RPS (Semester Learning Plan), which outlines learning materials, media, teaching techniques, and assessment methods. The material was uploaded to YouTube. The learning method is a mix of offline and online activities, with 70% offline and 30% online. Online activities include Zoom meetings and Google Classroom.

Interaction in digital drama learning is primarily achieved through collaboration, including digital performances, exercises, and discussions of dramas. This collaborative and creative learning environment is customizable and inclusive. Digital drama learning focuses on the digital performance process, including script selection, analysis, exercises, audio recording and editing, audiovisual staging, and editing applications. The preparation to editing stages require four meetings. Spotify offers college students audio experiences like podcasts and recorded radio dramas, improving listening skills and expanding their imagination.

Digital performance studies reveal a complex relationship between "backstage" and "in front of the stage" in student interactions. This concept, proposed by Erving Goffman in his work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), refers to how individuals present themselves in public. "Backstage" signifies personal preparation and reflection, while "in front of the stage" involves active roles and public performances.

In digital drama learning, students often switch between roles on and off stage. During online rehearsals, they take active roles as characters, displaying expressions and movements. However, when the camera is off or between rehearsals, they engage in private conversations, introspection, or preparation. The "Intermediate Region" is a state where activities are neither entirely open nor hidden. Hogan (2010) in "The Presentation of Self in the Age of Social Media" suggests that the boundary between frontstage and backstage is unclear in the digital age. For instance, students connected online but not actively engaging in interaction are in a state of observation without direct participation.

The student classroom interaction is divided into groups with different tasks.

Students play roles like directors, actors, camera operators, editors, and uploaders, learning to record, edit, and upload. Not all students play a direct front-stage role. Some have backstage functions with equivalent responsibilities. This enhances the drama learning experience, teaching students to act in front of an audience and organize themselves backstage, understanding the transitions between the two in a digital context.

The following are the learning results of the Indonesian Drama Studies course:

Number	Year	Title	Link
1.	2021	<i>Tragedi Pohon Apel</i> (The Apple Tree Tragedy)	https://lnk.ink/tragedi.pohon.apel
2.	2021	<i>Gangga Sari</i>	https://lnk.ink/gangga.sari
3.	2021	<i>Sebuah Cerita Sedih</i> (A Sad Story)	https://lnk.ink/sebuah.cerita.sedih
4.	2021	<i>Baluembidi</i>	https://lnk.ink/baluembidi
5.	2022	<i>Jalan Asmarandana</i> (Asmarandana Street)	https://lnk.ink/jalan.asmarandana
6.	2022	<i>Kartu Pos dari Surga</i> (Postcards from Heaven)	https://lnk.ink/kartupos.darisurga
7.	2022	<i>Di Taman</i> (In the Park)	https://lnk.ink/ditaman
8.	2022	<i>Pengantar Tidur Panjang</i> (Introduction to Long Sleep)	https://lnk.ink/pengantar.tidur.panjang

Table 1. Video and recording results of digital drama staging

The digitization of drama learning is not only a short-term solution, but it also provides opportunities for sustainable innovation in higher education.

Student Engagement: A Digital Space for Interaction

This digital environment fosters communication, idea sharing, and active collaboration among students with similar interests. In class, students participate in creative processes, contributing to the learning process. Each class session is divided into two groups, which stage texts online. In 2021, students developed an audiovisual staging project using YouTube, while in 2022, they'll make radio drama shows through Spotify.

Digital platforms enable students to practice individually and in groups, exploring acting techniques, character development, and script understanding. Collaboration deepens through discussions, input, and work together, even from different locations. This encourages creativity in designing scenarios, using visual effects, and leveraging

technology for performance. Students upload their performances to online platforms and conduct virtual dramas, increasing confidence and providing practical experience in creating and presenting artworks in the digital age.

This digital performance aligns with higher education policies that encourage technology-enhanced education. By utilizing technology, the learning process becomes interactive, flexible, and relevant, resulting in graduates with academic abilities and adaptability to technological advances.

The digital performances in drama education at universities during 2021-2022, utilizing video media on YouTube and Spotify, align with James Paul Gee's (2024) theory of digital literacy and multimodal learning. Effective digital learning integrates various communication types to create meaningful, contextually relevant learning experiences. It also encourages active participation in collaborative learning environments.

YouTube and Spotify support drama learning in today's digital world. Video platforms like YouTube and audio platforms like Spotify offer opportunities for students to understand theory and experience drama practice directly through digitally provided performances. YouTube provides a wide variety of videos featuring drama performances from different categories and cultural backgrounds, allowing students to learn acting techniques by observing facial expressions, body movements, intonation, lighting, costumes, and stage design.

Digital performance not only increases student creativity but also strengthens critical thinking and collaboration skills. Digital media enables students to effectively record, edit, and present plays using video editing software, content-sharing platforms, and digital production methods, allowing them to analyze stories and think critically.

Digital skills are crucial in education today, as emphasized by James Paul Gee (2003). Gee's "new literacy" requires a deep understanding of technology and information presentation across digital media platforms. In theatre learning, students become active producers, making strategic decisions about aesthetics, stories, and production techniques. This enhances critical thinking, creativity, and cooperation.

Digital media offers students opportunities to record, edit, and present plays digitally, strengthening their media literacy skills. Gee's theory emphasizes the importance of digital literacy in today's era. Students learn teamwork, screenwriting, role distribution, production setup, and editing. This develops collective communication, project management, and problem-solving skills.

Challenges include limited internet access and suitable devices due to economic and regional disparities. Research by Nugroho and Laksana (2021) shows that 30% of rural students struggle with high-quality internet access, affecting online learning. Additionally, improving lecturers' digital media management skills is a significant barrier.

Many lecturers struggle with integrating modern technology into their teaching. Research by Sari et al. (2020) shows that 45% of lecturers face difficulties in this regard. To address these challenges, better infrastructure support is needed, including improved internet access and suitable devices. Additionally, teachers must be trained in digital literacy, including using learning software, interactive teaching methods, and virtual classroom management.

CONCLUSION

Digital performance in drama education at universities, particularly in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program at Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang, has significantly improved the learning process. Combining James Paul Gee's theory of "interaction space" with digital media like YouTube and Spotify creates an interactive, collaborative, and context-relevant learning experience.

Digital performance activities develop essential 21st-century skills like digital literacy, creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. Students actively participate as users and creators of digital drama content. Despite challenges like inadequate technology and adaptation to digital media, this approach offers creative solutions to meet evolving educational demands.

Effective digital education requires teaching skills in using digital media and adequate infrastructure. The application of digitalization in drama learning opens new opportunities for innovative teaching methods aligned with technological developments, resulting in highly accomplished graduates adaptable to the digital age.

Recommendations include interactive learning and engaging media in drama instruction, linked to technology, rather than conventional stage forms. Lecturers must also master learning media technology.

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