

ROLE PLAY TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE SPEAKING ABILITY OF ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS' AT SMA NEGERI 1 KAYAN HULU

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of role-play techniques in enhancing speaking skills and increasing student participation among eleventh graders at SMA Negeri 1 Kayan Hulu. The research was motivated by initial observations that students were reluctant to participate and lacked confidence in speaking activities. Role play was selected as the primary strategy because it offers students opportunities to practice real-life communication in a supportive and engaging environment. Employing a classroom action research design, data were collected through observations, interviews, field notes, and documentation. The findings confirmed the hypothesis that role play would improve both participation and speaking performance. Participation scores rose from 69 in the first cycle to 81 in the second, while speaking performance improved from 54 to 80. The study concludes that role play is an effective method for developing students' speaking abilities and encouraging greater classroom participation. It is recommended that teachers implement role play regularly using varied scenarios, engage in professional development, conduct periodic evaluations, and involve students in scenario creation to maximize the method's effectiveness.

Keywords: Role-play, speaking, teaching

INTRODUCTION

English has been known as an international language and is used as a second language in many countries because of its wide use in global fields such as business, technology, science, education, and entertainment. As an international language, English helps people from different communities around the world to exchange culture, information, and ideas. In Indonesia, English is considered a foreign language, but it is still very important for everyone to learn. English plays a big role in both education and other areas. In schools, English is a compulsory subject that students learn from elementary school to university, following the curriculum set by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Many parents also encourage their children to improve their English skills because speaking English is a key way to communicate.

Speaking was an action in which words helped to express ideas and information to a listener. Speaking was a natural behaviour that society frequently participated in. People were always doing things to communicate with others. This was the most important way for a speaker to express himself by language; speaking was a type of communication that took place in face-to-face interactions and was a component of conversation. Speaking includes not just the production of sounds but also the use of gestures and motions. (Saldaria & Cahyani, 2019; p.20) one type of oral communication is speaking, which involves using spoken language or a spoken tool to express information. Highlighted a core concept of effective communication.

Speaking was our way of conveying our thoughts, our feelings, our opinions, and others. Speaking was expressing what the speaker wanted to say or talk about, then the listener processed what the speaker meant. Speaking attempts to give conversation a voice, highlighting and giving it the respect it deserves (Grugeon et al, 2012;p.1). Speaking is one of the four skills,

namely: speaking, grammar, vocabulary, writing. Speaking is an activity in which we produce speech in the form of words and sentences orally to communicate with others.

Speaking is an important way of communication. People use almost constantly. Speaking is an important ability in English language learning as it is used for communication. Communication is a characteristic of human society (Akhter et al 2020; p.6027). As humans who live side by side and carry out social activities we need to express our thoughts, opinions, and feelings to interact in social life. Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages between individuals or groups, which includes the exchange of information, ideas, thoughts, feelings, or opinions. (Cherry, 1956 ;p. 6) Communication is exchanging habits and patterns of life based on established rules. Speaking is essential as a productive skill.

One of the greatest times for teaching students to talk is during English class. By participating in various kinds of delightful, easy-to-understand exercises that might help students improve their ability to speak. Role play is one activity that will be used to help students improve their ability to speak. (Rao as cited in Hussain 2017;p.15) stated Speech provides a great introduction to other language learning abilities. Speaking is a natural approach to learn foreign languages. Speaking is an important part of language learning.

The main purpose of speaking skills is to build effective communication, facilitate social interaction, and convey messages clearly and precisely to listeners. (Nunan cited in Bahrani and Soltani 2012;p. 25) stated that Success in language acquisition is measured by the ability for speaking in the target language. That is, the instructor must be able to understand the learning content in order to improve students' abilities, particularly in speaking, so that the aim may be achieved.

Speaking has five aspects: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Improving the abilities of students in these five areas requires both theoretical knowledge and practical work.

1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is an essential component of effective communication, and it applies to many aspects of personal and professional life. According to (Harmer 2001;p. 183), Teaching pronunciation not only makes students aware of different sounds and sound aspects and what they mean, but it may greatly improve their speaking. The speaker must be able to pronounce the words and produce physical sounds that convey meaning.

2. Grammar

Grammar is an essential component of language that contributes significantly to efficient communication. According to (Kay 1979; p.142) Theoretical linguists typically view grammar as an abstract technique that differentiates sentences from non-sentences in a language. Grammatical is highly crucial in speaking because if the speaker does not grasp the grammatical structure, he cannot speak English correctly.

3. Vocabulary

A rich vocabulary is a must for efficient communication and has an important effect on personal, intellectual, and professional achievement. According to (Hiebert & Kamil 2005;p.2), Vocabulary In general, vocabulary refers to the understanding of word meanings. Our limited vocabulary makes it difficult to communicate.

4. Fluency

Fluency is frequently described as being able to express oneself in a language with ease, flexibility, and proficiency. Based on (Oppenheimer 2008; p. 237), Fluency, or the ease or difficulty of processing information, is a key metacognitive signal for thinking. When speaking effectively, students should be able to understand the point or message.

5. Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to grasp and interpret information, whether spoken, written, or visual. It means making sense of the text, extracting meaning, and understanding the

underlying concepts or ideas. Comprehension is an essential component of efficient communication and learning in a variety of settings.

Role play is a useful tool for improving English speaking skills by allowing students to practice communication in various real-life situations. According to (Ladousse 1987; p.6) through role play, we can prepare students for conversation in any context. Role play allows students a simulated environment in which they may actively participate in discussions, use language skills, and practice communication in a variety of situations.

Role playing is a social or educational activity in which participants imitate certain roles and act out certain scenarios or situations. In the role play the individual plays a character identity or role that is different from himself. Role playing can be used in a variety of contexts, including education, theater, training, etc. This allows participants to engage more actively in the thinking and actions of their assigned roles. (Tompkins 1998;p. 1) defines role play: This classroom teaching technique encourages students to take an active part in learning English. The theory highlights role play as a teaching strategy which promotes active participation by students in the English learning process. Based on (Deneeve & Heppner 1997; p. 234) Role Play simulations consist of students playing specific roles in a group. Role play simulations can make learning more dynamic and interactive, helping students to retain information more effectively and apply it in real-world situations.

Role play is frequently used as a method of active learning because it immediately involves participants, allowing them to learn using direct experience rather than only listening or reading. (Hattings cited in Purnamawati et al 2015; p. 2) stated role play is a creative way for students to practice and improve their English communication skills, it simulates discussion environment. Furthermore, it permits students to be creative and quickly take on the role of another individual.

METHOD

Research design is a systematic framework or plan for planning and carrying out research. The research design involves method selection and data collecting strategies. Research design assists researchers in organizing their ideas and describes the operational specifics of the research.

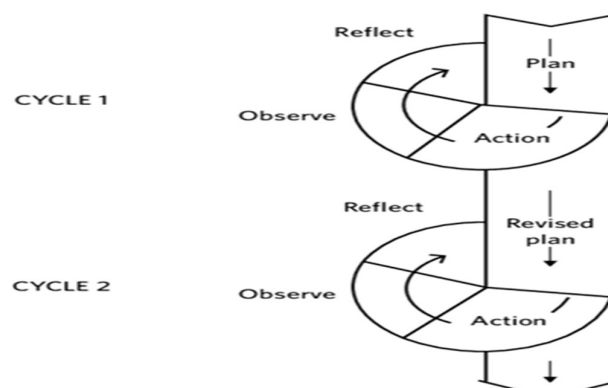


Figure 1. Classroom Action Research Cycle

The researcher uses Classroom Action Research (CAR) that contained of four stages, they are: Planning, Action, Observation, Evaluation or Reflection. (Based on Efron and Ravid

2013, p. 2) stated the terms action research are frequently used synonymously in the field of education since they both highlight the importance of practitioners in carrying out investigations in classrooms and schools. Cooperative action research has the potential to benefit workers while also improving services, circumstances, and functions in the situation. Based on the above statement, we can infer that Classroom Action Research is used in education to enhance the quality of instructors, administrators, students, the teaching-learning process, and specific community workers.

Furthermore, it produces better results when done collaboratively. According to (O'Connor 2006; p. 3) Teachers do action research in their classrooms or schools by designing a study based on their area of interest. To begin the CAR process, researchers or teachers must identify and study problems in a specific context. (Burns 2022; p.992), defined Action research combines action and research into one. Classroom action research works to enhance practice by evaluation and reflection.

Researcher choose CAR based on the problems that exist at SMA Negeri 1 Kayan Hulu in the Eleventh grade. To carry out research using the CAR method, there are four stages that must be passed. Adapted from Kemmis and McTaggart cited in (Burns 2022; p. 994) mentions that planning, action, observation, and reflection. The four stages are the elements in the formation of a cycle.

This research had 2 cycle and every cycle had 2 meeting to achieve expected goals. Data collecting techniques and instrumentation are the methods and instruments used to collect information or data for research purposes. The use of proper methods and instruments is critical for assuring the reliability and validity of the information collected. According to (Cohen et al 2018; p. 469) this stage provides a detailed analysis of data collection instruments, including their use, construction, strengths and weaknesses, working methods, and considerations for selecting the best option. In this research the researcher used the observation, interview, measurement and documentation to collect the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Result

This classroom action research was conducted over two cycles to explore and address issues related to students' speaking skill performance and participation in English learning activities. The research aimed to implement role-play as a teaching technique to foster more interactive and engaging learning experiences for students in Grade 11 at SMA Negeri 1 Kayan Hulu. Each cycle followed a systematic process that included planning, action, observation, and reflection. The progression from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 was guided by findings from the previous cycle, ensuring continuous improvement. The following sections describe the activities and outcomes of each cycle in detail.

Cycle 1

In the first cycle of this classroom action research, the researcher conducted the four standard stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The planning phase began with the creation of a specialized teaching module intended to guide students during the initial meeting of the first cycle. This module focused on "Asking and Giving Opinion," a common topic in English communication. In addition to the module, the researcher also designed observation tools to monitor classroom interactions and assist students in completing their tasks effectively. Another crucial component prepared during this phase was an assessment instrument, which aimed to evaluate students' comprehension of the lesson material and their speaking abilities.

During the action stage, the teacher—who was also the researcher—delivered the lesson to students while the collaborator observed the session. The observations were guided by a

checklist and field notes that had been carefully developed in the planning phase. These tools were used to monitor students' participation levels and their responses to the activities conducted. In the first meeting of this cycle, the teacher introduced and explained the topic of "Asking and Giving Opinion." The students engaged in activities where they practiced expressions and phrases related to giving and receiving opinions. The second meeting of the cycle was allocated for a speaking test. This test aimed to evaluate students' understanding and practical application of the content taught in the previous meeting.

In the observation phase, the collaborator played an important role by objectively recording student behavior, participation, and engagement levels using the observation checklist and field notes. The documentation from these tools provided valuable insights into how well the students were responding to the lesson and activities. The observer noted whether students were actively involved in discussions, showed interest in the material, and attempted to speak using the new expressions introduced.

The reflection stage involved a collaborative discussion between the researcher and the observer. Together, they analyzed the data gathered from the observation, interviews, and documentation. They also reviewed the students' test results and identified areas needing improvement. Although some students demonstrated a willingness to participate, many remained reluctant to speak up due to shyness or lack of confidence. Others were still hesitant to engage fully in the learning process. Overall, the results suggested that while progress was made, the students' speaking abilities and participation levels still fell short of the intended outcomes. This reflection guided the improvements planned for the second cycle.

Cycle 2

Following the analysis and evaluation of the first cycle, the second cycle was carried out to improve student engagement and skill performance. The researcher, working alongside the collaborator, refined the teaching plan by modifying the lesson module to incorporate insights and recommendations gathered from the previous cycle. This time, the revised approach allowed for more student-centered activities. Unlike in the first cycle where the theme for dialogue was predetermined by the teacher, students were now given the freedom to choose their own topics for the speaking activity.

The action stage of Cycle 2 consisted of two meetings. In the first session, the teacher reintroduced the topic of "Asking and Giving Opinion," emphasizing pronunciation and fluency. Students participated in guided pronunciation practice where their errors were gently corrected. Following this, the students were assigned the task of creating their own dialogues, which they would later present in front of the class. This method encouraged more creativity and independent thinking, giving students the opportunity to express themselves more freely.

During the second meeting, students performed their self-created dialogues as part of a speaking test. This test was distinct from the one conducted in the first cycle, primarily because the students had more control over the content and direction of their dialogues. Without a predetermined theme, students were encouraged to explore various topics that interested them, which made the activity more engaging and meaningful.

Observations conducted during these meetings showed a noticeable improvement in student involvement. Students were generally more enthusiastic and confident while participating in the speaking activities. Their skill performances during the test also indicated a positive shift. While some students still experienced difficulties—especially with pronunciation—the overall speaking skill performance was significantly better compared to the first cycle. Students responded more positively to the learning process and were more willing to participate actively.

In the reflection phase of Cycle 2, the researcher and collaborator reviewed the data once again. They noted that the adjustments made in this cycle, especially the implementation of role-play and increased student autonomy, had a substantial positive effect. The role-play

method allowed students to interact more naturally, reducing their fear of making mistakes and boosting their self-confidence. Despite the ongoing challenges in pronunciation for a few students, the general improvement in student engagement and speaking ability marked the success of the interventions made in this cycle.

This classroom action research was designed to address two primary questions: first, how the implementation of role-play activities could improve student participation in speaking activities; and second, how such a method could enhance the speaking skill performance of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Kayan Hulu.

Throughout the study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected through observations, interviews, field notes, test results, and documentation. These data sources provided a comprehensive picture of student progress across the two cycles. In the first cycle, the average score for student participation was 69, and the average score on the speaking test was 54. These figures were below the research's success criteria, which had been set at a minimum score of 75 for both areas.

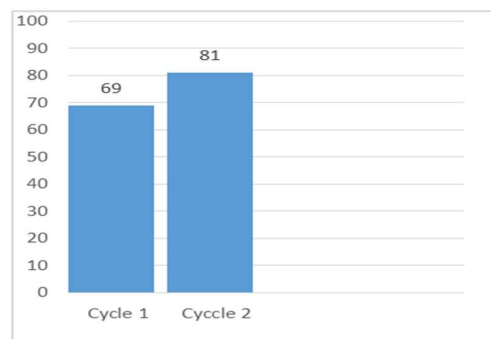


Chart 1. Students Participation in Each Cycle

Recognizing these shortcomings, the researcher implemented strategic modifications in the second cycle. These changes included allowing students to create their own dialogue scripts, placing a stronger emphasis on pronunciation practice, and using role-play to foster more authentic communication experiences. As a result of these enhancements, the average participation score rose to 81, and the average speaking score improved to 80. These scores met and even exceeded the expected benchmarks, confirming the effectiveness of the interventions.

Two visual charts were used to represent this progress: one showing the increase in student participation and the other reflecting the enhancement in speaking skill performance. These visual aids supported the claim that the use of role-play not only engaged students more actively in class but also significantly improved their ability to speak English with greater fluency and confidence.

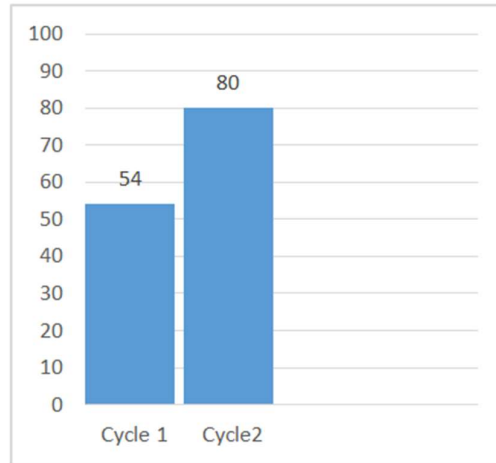


Chart 2. Students Speaking Performance in Each Cycle

Despite the overall success, some students continued to face challenges with specific aspects of speaking, particularly pronunciation. To explore this issue further, the researcher conducted interviews with six students selected based on their test scores—two high scorers, two average scorers, and two low scorers. These interviews revealed that all students, regardless of skill performance level, found the role-play method enjoyable and helpful. High-performing students appreciated the opportunity to explore topics creatively, while lower-performing students mentioned that the collaborative nature of role-play made speaking less intimidating.

2. Discussion

The findings from both cycles, along with student feedback, confirm that role-play can be an effective strategy to improve speaking skills. It offers students a chance to practice real-life communication scenarios in a supportive environment. Moreover, by involving students in the creation of dialogue scripts, the technique fosters autonomy, motivation, and active participation—elements that are often missing in traditional teacher-centered approaches.

This action research successfully demonstrated that role-play is an effective method to enhance both student participation and speaking skill performance in English language learning. Through carefully planned interventions and responsive revisions between cycles, the students at SMA Negeri 1 Kayan Hulu showed measurable improvement. While challenges such as pronunciation issues remain for some, the overall outcome indicates that role-play is a valuable pedagogical tool for teaching speaking in secondary schools. The research objectives were met, and the study was concluded after the second cycle due to the significant progress observed.

CONCLUSION

This research identified the challenges students face in learning to speak English, particularly in pronunciation and active participation during class. Many students were hesitant or shy about speaking English, while others demonstrated limited speaking abilities. To address

this, the researcher aimed to find an effective technique to engage students and encourage them to use English confidently in class.

The study was conducted over two cycles, each consisting of two meetings, and utilized both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was gathered through observation checklists, interviews, field notes, and documentation, while quantitative data was obtained through a speaking test.

The implementation of the role-play technique in class XIA at SMA Negeri 1 Kayan Hulu proved to be effective in enhancing students' speaking abilities. Role play not only improved students' confidence in speaking English but also helped them express characters effectively and interact with their peers in English. This technique made students more enthusiastic, active, and confident during the learning process.

The results showed significant improvement in students' participation and speaking performance. In cycle 1, students' participation averaged a score of 69, while their speaking performance averaged 54. By cycle 2, participation had increased to an average of 81, and speaking performance had improved to an average of 80. These findings indicate that the role-play technique was successful in boosting both participation and speaking skills.

In conclusion, the use of role play effectively addressed students' speaking challenges, enhanced their learning process, and significantly improved their confidence and communication skills in English.

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