THE ROLE-PLAY APPLICATION AS METHOD OF TEACHING IN SPEAKING ENGLISH TO THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Article History	Abstract
	The paper is about "*The Role-Play Application as Method of Teaching in Speaking to the Students of Junior High School* was proposed to find out to what extent role-play was used in teaching speaking to the students of junior high school and what were obstacle experienced by the teacher when he implemented it in the classroom. English teacher in grade seven students of Islamic Junior High School of MTs Cilawu Garut was the main participant of this research. Qualitative method was applied as the primary scheme by engaging non-participatory observation and interview to gain the data. The result finding presented that the teacher broke principles in teaching speaking and some fundamental in practicing the role-play. Teachers also found problems such as the bottlenecks to deal with students whose pronunciation ability were poor, especially in pronouncing new words, to manage the noise during the performance of role-play. However, many expert believe that the use of role-play is very essential in communicative language teaching to bring English into the real-life atmosphere and the communicative competence. This study is expected to give contribution to the English teaching mostly in performing role play teaching methods of teaching. Furthermore, it is recommended for the next researchers to broaden study on the application of role-play out of the speaking domain but it can also be used in other communicative language teaching aspects.

Introduction

In Indonesia, Speaking English is considered as such a relatively problematic skill to master because English is still foreign language. To Tell the truth, English speaking ability is a skill that has been learnt by people since they were young or kids. However, teaching speaking in many junior high schools in Garut remained far from being productive. Frequently, students lack confidence to speak or even pronounce words. Of course, there are numerous factors behind this. These include unqualified teachers, laziness, mistake avoidance, boring class etc. Speaking is a compulsory skill that must be learned by students who are being part of the teaching-learning process of English class. Chaney (1998) as cited in (Kayi, 2006) stated speaking is primarily defined as developing and sharing process of meaning as well as articulating notions by using verbal and non-verbal symbols implementation, in numerous contexts. In accordance with the concept, (Thornburry, 2009, p. 2) stated that the main point to emphasize is that producing speech occurs in real time. Permendikbud No. 64 (2014) added that one the basic competences of teaching material in junior high school is adjusted with the needs of each program study to achieve the fulfillment of standard competence in the work fields. Therefore, students are demanded to use spoken language in real life situations for their future work fields.

To acquire the skill of speaking, students need to get used to implementing spoken English. This will certainly control the language fluency. This is similar to Richards (2006) who argues

building fluency is one of the CLT objectives (p. 14). Besides, the experience of language learning is prominent. In supporting it, students require some supporting learning activities which empower students to build their capacity to take part in verbal communications.

Based on direct and indirect observation, most students at the Junior High School lack confidence to communicate in English due their inability to pronounce words and poor vocabulary mastery. Many students cannot pronounce some popular offering expressions. Here, the teacher has a big responsibility to do his best in managing the speaking class to improve the student's speaking skill as mandated by the curriculum. One of the efforts to solve this matter is by using role-play techniques of teaching. Role-play is one of various techniques applied in the communicative language teaching to present English into the real-life scene and to build the communicative competence. Therefore, role-play seems to be a perfect activity to enable students to use their English productively (Hattings, 1993 cited in Dorathy, 2011). Its goal is to trigger a conversation situation and give the students an opportunity to express and develop their skills of communication.

Above all, this research is carried out to discover the application of role-play speaking teaching methods to the students and find out the barrier experienced by the teacher during the lesson at grade 7 students of MTs Cilawu Garut.

Methodology
This study focuses on the qualitative approach as a research method because this study would like to get in-depth understanding as regards to the role play implementation in improving a student's English-speaking skill. This research was carried out by discovering and paying careful attention to performance and action occurring in language setting during role play implementation of. This study used a descriptive case research method to obtain the data. Merriam (2009) argued that a qualitative case study is a proportional design to understand and depicts observation of phenomenon in education. Furthermore, when "description and explanation are needed rather than prediction based on cause and effect," a researcher can begin the non-experimental of descriptive research (Merriam, 2009). This objective is to observe phenomena without treating manipulation of subjects and the researcher takes things as they are. Besides, this study is not designed to prove that this technique is better than others as experimental study does. As Bromley (1986), cited in Merriam (2009) stated that the main purpose of using case study "is not to find the „correct‟ or „true‟ interpretation of the facts, but rather to reduce wrong conclusion so that one is left with the best possible, the most convincing, interpretation." The English teacher who teaches grade seven at MTs Cilawu becomes the main respondent.

The data taken from interview and non-participant observation was collected to find out the research questions. The observation was done in the classroom during the classroom activities and the interview was held every meeting by the end of the lesson. In this research, the observation was conducted to explore information for research question number one, to look at how the role-play is applied in the classroom. Observation distributes the researcher to explain the inference about the participants' perspectives, events, and all integrated processes that become the examining part and not well delivered in the interview or survey (Alwasilah, 2012). Every single thing that happened in the classroom was carefully recorded. Therefore, when the unobserved thing has happened, it is still probable to see it continually and to convince that everything is well documented and observed. Besides holding observations, the interview also was held. The purpose of the interview is to collect data that is hard to be explored through observation. Merriam (2009) declared that interview is necessary when the researcher cannot detect behavior, feelings, or how the respondents define the situation in their surroundings. Alwasilah (2003) stated that by holding interview, a researcher is capable of obtaining an in-depth understanding about a phenomenon occurred because (1) the researcher can explain the

questions again if the respondents do not understand about the questions, (2) the researcher can follow-up questions, (3) the respondents will keep answering because they will answer if they are questioned, and (4) the researcher can understand about things that had taken place to the respondents in the past and they target in the future. While semi-structured interview in this study was applied and addressed to the teacher. Specifically, when the questions related to what the teacher is trying to gain, the material that the teacher uses, how the teacher applies the role-play, the benefits of role-play implementation in the classroom, the bottlenecks that the teacher deals with in conducting the role-play, and how the teacher experiences the obstacle. Besides, this study followed-up interviews to confirm about the questions that were found during the lesson. Then, the interview process was recorded and transliterated to analyze the conclusion made by the respondent.

To gain the representative data, Descriptive qualitative data analysis was implemented. To get comprehensive analysis, coding and categorization, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing will be done. After gathering the observation and interview data, then coding for the consistency of each same phenomenon was done. After that, the codes were divided into groups and categories. To make it clear, the categories that have been stipulated by the research questions became the main point. Next, data obtained will be presented. Data display enables the researcher to current a full data set in the same pod and the data will be analytically organized to respond to the research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Moreover, Alwasilah (2012) said that by using data displays, the conceptions and interpretations of researchers will be clearer and comprehensible for the readers. The next phase is data reduction, a long process involving selection, focus, simplicity, abstraction, and transformation of the data to make them polished, focused, and more organized (Miles & Huberman, 1994). All the data had become the researcher's consideration. However, after the data reduction process, the unimportant data was deleted. Therefore, it made it easier to gather, collect, and get data that is really essential to research. The last page is to draw a conclusion. At this stage, an interpretation of the obtained data was finished after the data had been analyzed. Finally, when the data interpretations were completed, conclusions related to questions of the research were drawn. As a result the suggestions for further studies are described.

Finding and Discussion
Findings
The Steps of Teacher in Applying the Role-Play
This part focuses on elaborating the steps how the teacher applied the role-play itself.
The First Role-Play
The first theme explored through role-play was saying time. The students performed a role-play from the video about discussing time for visiting friends. Before performing role-play, the teacher explained the expression related time, including accepting and refusing the offering expression. After explaining the material, the teacher showed the video that contained the offering expression. Then, students were asked to write dialogue from a video. The dialogue was the conversation between two children via phone call that greeted each other and made a plan to visit their friend who was ill. While the teacher was showing the video, the students were asked to watch and pay attention carefully to the video. For example, the teacher said, *"Kalian perhatikan dari awal, nanti kalian mempraktekkannya berdua dengan teman kalian."*. The video had two sections. The first one was the full video conversation with captions and the last one was the full video with muted-sound conversation with captions. After the first video section had been played, students were asked by the teacher to read the dialogue on the last video section. While the last video section was being played, the teacher said, *"Kalian cuman…….. (One of the students was reading the dialogue)" "Nah, jadi yang ngomongnya cuman kalian."*. The students seemed confused because the teacher did not give instruction

about the sequence of video playing. The students said, *"Ooooh…."* while the video was showing some muted-conversations. Because the video contained the expression of *"What's up?"*, therefore the teacher explained that expression in detail in a meantime in order to know the similar expression because the students were asked to change it with the other expressions that had been explained. After 15 minutes explaining the expression of *"What's up?"*, the teacher replayed the first section of the video once. While the video was being played, the students imitated the dialogue and the teacher also imitated fine pronunciation. Then, the teacher paused the video that contained the time and offering expression and also requested students to open the textbook to look further at the examples of other expressions of offering. After giving the linguistic preparation, the teacher asked students to rewrite the script of the dialogue on the video in order to practice it in front of other students. Then the teacher said, *"Kalian tulis dulu percakapannya. Ibu ga bawa battery laptop, jadi ketika nanti mati, kalian udah ada teks nya. Nanti ke depan tetep. Sok, tulis dulu.".* The teacher paused the video repeatedly in every single sentence followed by explaining the characters on the video. Then, while students were writing the dialogue containing the expression of offering and time, the teacher emphasized how to pronounce the dialogue script well. The example was *"Can I speak to Sally, please?".* While the video paused the *"What's up?"* expression, the teacher did not forget to tell students to change the *"What's up?"* expression. It took nine minutes to copy the script on the video.

As students were assigned to work in pairs, the teacher asked each pair to perform the role-play in front of other students. When the teacher said *"Baris ini dulu ya?",* most of the students said *"Aaahh ibu belum siap".* The students were not ready yet to come forward and negotiate with the teacher to point to one another pair. Then, one of the pairs came forward and there were only three pairs who came forward.

Most of the students performed by reading the script on the video because the teacher asked for it. While performing, an unexpected situation appeared. The number of the characters on the video were three people. So, the last character was acted by the teacher. Moreover, only 1-2 pairs performed with good pronunciation and intonation. After all student's performance, the teacher did not do some follow-up activities like debriefing or asking the students' comments or opinions. However, the feedback was still explained to students after the student's performance.

The Second Round-Role-Play

The material for the second role-play was still saying time and offering expressions that had been studied, discussed, and assigned in a group to be performed in the second observation. That was an offering that had a theme to the students' work fields in its class program. In the pre-activity session, as usual the teacher greeted all students. The students seemed busy with its scripts. Few minutes later, the teacher directly asked students to perform role-play under the theme of offering expressions that had been determined to the scope of the students' work fields in the previous meeting. Before commencing the role-play activity, the teacher asked the students to rewrite the script of the dialogue and asked to hand it in to the teacher. It took 10 minutes waiting for the students to rewrite the script. For the students' performances, only few students performed role-play without reading the transcript and most of the students performed by reading the dialogue that had been made. It was because in the pre-activity the teacher allowed the students to perform the role-play by reading the script. However, there was a different mark between students who performed by reading the script and memorizing. In addition, only 1-2 groups performed naturally and showed fine speaking skill. The rest of the students seemed reluctant and shy. The others were not really satisfying in the pronunciation, intonation, and fluency because the students seemed less prepared. While the students were practicing the role-play, the teacher observed and gave feedback after each group finished the

performance. The feedback is mostly about students' low voices and pronunciation. Nevertheless, but the teacher did not give feedbacks related to students' performance in saying time and expression

From the teacher's implementation of both role-plays, the researcher discovered that in second round role-play, students had better preparation and performance because of one-week preparation for the students to make the dialogue. Therefore, students had better performance than in the first role-play even though all the performers read the dialogue on the scripts. Where the first role-play seemed too imposing to be conducted. The teacher forced the role-play performance in one meeting and it was also because of explaining another expression that was beyond lesson plan. Therefore, the performance of role-play here ran ineffectively because of concept. But the students seemed enthusiastic and followed the activity well.

Nevertheless, both role-play performances were not performed as real as possible. Teacher did not facilitate role-cards as students' media for performing the role-play but rather let students freely in making the dialogue and the teacher did not ask the students to use custom or properties though the second role-play was close enough to the real situation. Furthermore, the teacher was too kind by letting the students see the dialogue transcript during role play performance The feedback given by the teacher was not focused on the whole students' speaking performances but it was only the correction of mispronounced words.

Discussion

To justify a teacher's performance in managing role-play in the classroom, it should be discussed with applicable theory.

Teacher's Performance in Managing Role Play

Preliminary activity. This activity was only conducted in the first round of role-play. During the preliminary activity, the teacher carried out the lesson in vivid steps and executed the discussion in the class. Unfortunately, the teacher did not encourage students to use English. The teacher frequently spent his time using Indonesian in teaching. It is rather a misconception as Brown (2001) revealed that it is important to provide strong support in speaking strategies development to make students realize the language atmosphere. It can be gained by practicing the target language or at least starting from things around us such as how to ask for clarification or how to repeat something to the students by using English (Brown, 2001). Moreover, students will indirectly get actual examples as well as role how their teachers use English. In the first round of role-play, the opening activity was totally about expression types, these were about offering, accepting and refusing that the students might use when students feel the situation later. This opening activity is in accordance with Richards (1995) who declared that opening activities can use brainstorming or any task that builds related language, develops anticipations about the topic, and gets ready for a role-play by preparing situational concepts.

Showing the example of role-play video. After explaining, the students were asked to watch the video. Richards (1995) stated that the students watching or listening to native speakers performing the same situation can compare the differences between the way they express and perform language function needed in the role-play and how the native speakers practice it. This section was only conducted in the first round of role-play. The teacher began an activity of improving both receptive and productive skills. In the integrated part of speaking learning activity, it is important to "capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening" (Brown, 2001; p.275). In the case of role-play, receptive skill can be perceived as a student's learning model. It includes watching a video or listening to a conversation in line with the topic.

This is also similar to what Mc. Daniel (2000) said that he strongly recommended that teachers should prioritize supplying student's material before getting them to do the role-play performance because it is impossible for a teacher to expect students to perform a role-play without enough prior knowledge about the role-play.

Giving situation for the role-play. In the first round of role-play, the situation given was about daily activity from the video, it is in line with Livingstone's argument (1983) suggesting that role-play needs a situation/a context as the topic. The teacher can choose some situation from daily life, hot issues, a story in a book, or a movie. However, the situation of daily life given was quite inappropriate. The junior high school students should have acquired the situation which was relevant to the students' future life as Permendikbud No. 70 (2013) patented that the current English subjects should be adapted to 2013 curriculum demands, the science and technology development, and the needs of business and industry. Whereas, the second role-play, the situation given was about the theme of each group that had been decided by the teacher concerning the relevance of the students' learning target, though the situation was given in the previous meeting.

Performing the dialogue. In performing the role-play, students were given chances to prepare themselves by the teacher beforehand such as creating dialogue and practicing it afterwards. This principle of learning is similar to O'Malley and Pierce (1996; as quoted in Graves 2008) that in performing role-play, students have to prepare a dialogue script before practicing it. In addition, by experiencing enough rehearsal time, it can reduce worries, even though the rehearsal is only for a while (Brown, 2004).

Executing the role-play. In the first round of the role-play session, each student's pair showed role-play performance by looking at dialogue transcriptions from the video. The setting of preparation was not really compulsory because the setting can be watched on the video. Consequently, the student's performance was not as satisfying as the second role-play performance. It is because students are just reading role-play transcriptions from the video. Comparing the concept of Livingstone (1983) related to role-play, it is clearly stated that the role-play's performance practiced by the students are called reading aloud dialogue with meaning and out of role-play performance, this is a misconception. Nevertheless, this activity can be done in the preparation stage before holding the real performance of role-play. In the second performance of role-play, the majority of students were capable of acting as if they were real performers. They were also demanded to do the setting and factual preparation. In addition, the second role-play was kind of scripted role-play as Byrne (1986), quoted in Iman (2014) claimed that this type of role-play (scripted role-play) can be applied to train students how to pronounce words, phrases and sentences by memorizing but it will be out of reality to provide students rehearsal who utilize role-play as conversation technique. If a teacher instructs students to practice conversation by memorizing what students have written, it will be very difficult for them when students face spontaneous conditions in daily activity. The statement above was also found out in this research that students got the problems to anticipate spontaneous spheres in real life. It was proven by most students who still read the script in executing role-play.

Showing feedback and follow-up. The feedback was executed in both first and second role-plays. The feedback was directly provided after each pair of student's performances. In the way of sharing the feedback, the teacher actually did not point out exactly what mistakes students made. It is along the lines of Kodotchigova (2002) who strongly recommended that every mistake of a student should not be corrected one by one because the teacher regards that it

might make the students feel unconfident and reluctant to perform in another role-play session. Furthermore, the feedback given included self-correction (Liu & Ding, 2009) where students are provided the chance to watch second time performances and do reflection on the language used so that students may feel it easy to recognize the mistake. Then, the feedback was especially on the students' voices, pronunciations, and vocabularies. Meanwhile, the feedback was given to give students assistance so they will be more proficient in speaking English. From the finding's analysis, it is shown that the second role-play process simplified students to have better performance, though some elements of the stages as stated by Richards (1995) and Livingstone (1983) were not fully obeyed by the teacher. The factors could be (1) the topic that was something which gave students for their life in the future; (2) the much more preparation; and (3) the more feedback that were provided after each group role-play performance. This is in accordance with Ghufron (2009) that the topic and feedback were really prominent in creating an effective role-play.

The Difficulties Encountered by the Teacher in Implementing the Role-Play

The difficulties that the teacher generally had during implementing the role-play are facing the students who had lack ability in pronouncing, organizing the students not to be noisy during the role-play performance, and managing the time. In the role-play activity, there might be some students who found the difficulties in pronouncing new words because of their scantiness in receiving those new words. Whereas, pronunciation is very necessary in speaking activities such as role-play. As Brown and Yule (1989) cited in Nunan (1989) stated that pronunciation is related to a capability to convey meaning through words as pronounced by a speaker and a skill which generally needs to be learned and performed. Therefore, the mispronounced words can affect misunderstanding in conveying the dialogue in a role-play. However, the teacher had another way to solve this problem, that was the teacher gave the correct pronunciation, and then the students imitated what the teacher said.

The noise that the students made before and during the role-play performance was also a problem for the teacher. Islam and Islam (2012) also had same perspective in this noise problem. They stated that the noise usually appears during the role-play rehearsal before the students actually perform it. However, the teacher stated that the noise sometimes can appear in the performance session if the teacher and the students do not make any commitment before holding the role-play activity.

The last problem that the teacher faced was managing the time, especially in the phase of role-play preparation. Students usually needed enough time for preparation before practicing the dialogue and arranging the setting of performance in front of the class. This is similar to Livingstone (1983) who appealed that in preparing role-play, students have a lot of things to do such as understanding the language function, reading or listening to the model of the conversation, arranging the dialogue, and practicing the role-play before they finally perform it. Killen (2006) also mentioned that one of the challenges in implementing the role-play consumes an adequate time for practice, mostly in EFL classrooms where students are more accustomed to use L1 in the class.

Conclusion

This study concludes that role play can be a really useful and enjoyable experience of learning for both students and teachers if the principles of conducting this role-play technique are obeyed well. This role-play enables students not only to have more opportunities to act and hold interaction with their peers practicing English language, but also improving students' English speaking, listening, and understanding. Role play heats up the learning atmospheres and brings more energetic situations in the classroom. Here, students are given the opportunity to practice

the language in a more practical and more usable way. Therefore, students can be more aware of the advantages and practicality of English practicality. So, this technique is certainly a useful teaching method that should be tested and implemented by English teachers very often in the EFL classrooms.

There were some minor weaknesses done by the teacher that led to the ineffective and monotonous activity, though most of the principles were implemented. Those weaknesses were such as both role-plays were not performed as real as possible, the waste of time in giving linguistic preparation, and the rule that let the students read the scripts.

In addition, the problems were found by the teacher in the role-play implementation. From the results of the interview, the teacher faced three problems in executing the role-play. First, facing the students who were difficult in pronouncing new words. To overcome this problem, the teacher gave pronunciation corrections, and then students imitated what the teacher stated. Second, the noise that the students made before and during the role-play performance. To face this situation, the teacher was committed to the students and created some rules about what students do and do not do during the activity of role-play including remaining silent during role-play performance. Last, the management of time in applying the role-play. In the classroom, one meeting was not enough to conduct both explaining material and performing the role-play. To overcome this, there was no other way than being strict to the students to give time allotment to each group performance. However, this research did not investigate in depth concerning role-play activity. It is because of the limited role-play activities in the classroom. The teacher only gave two meeting observations in conducting the role-play this semester..

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