AL MIKRAJ
Jurnal Studi Islam dan Humaniora

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Developing Collaborative Communication Skills: A Role-play Approach for University Students

Engelina Salainti[1]

[1] Universitas Klabat; Indonesia
correspondence e-mail*, engelina@unklab.ac.id

Abstract	Speaking is one of the most important language skills for students. This allows them to communicate their ideas and thoughts clearly and effectively, participate in class discussions and activities, build relationships with classmates and teachers, and succeed in their studies. Several factors influence students to speak English, they struggle with the fear of making grammatical mistakes, limited vocabulary, and lack of self-confidence. This research aims to find out students' opinions about A Role-play in developing their collaborative communication skills, and how role-playing techniques improve students' speaking abilities. This research is field research with a quantitative approach using a questionnaire, and the data is analyzed using a Likert Scale. The results showed that most students agreed that the Role-Playing approach developed their communication skills, while fewer students were neutral.
Keywords	Role-play, Speaking skills, Students' perspective, Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Role play is a simulation method in which a person or group of students act out a certain character or situation. In role-play, players will act and speak according to the character they are portraying. Role play provides additional learning opportunities for students through interaction with other students in the classroom. Role-play can help the students practice their ability to speak and communicate effectively. Role-play is a method that helps the students to be creative, many students like to have fun and creative activities during their learning process, and role-play can help them to achieve that matter.

Role-play can help the students to practice their abilities effectively, especially in communication skills. It can be used to simulate a complex situation and help the students to find a creative solution. In role-play, we can get an interesting and effective learning method for any

topic, in the learning process. The learning process can be fun when applied to a role-play such as a game or theater because the students can interact with one another. The advantages of role-play are increasing the students' self-confidence, ability to speak or communicate, solve a problem, creativity, empathy, group work, critical thinking, and understanding of a topic. At school role play is usually done by acting out a role of someone. The students feel happy due to the fun activities in the classroom. Role-play is a useful method to develop certain skills and knowledge. Role-play can be used in several areas, such as education, Training, and fun activities.

In the world of education, especially in this modern area, learning in the classroom requires things that make students not feel bored, so that they can feel something that can make them like the lesson. English is one of the challenging subjects for students, but when students feel discomfort and difficulty in learning this lesson, they will feel bored and not care about this lesson, especially when learning about speaking skills, which requires communication skills. Communicating using English is not easy because English is not our mother tongue in Indonesia. many methods are used by educators so that their learning process is interesting, and can get good results where students can communicate using English, but the results are also not optimal. through the role-play method, students are expected to improve their communication skills using English. because role-play provides many benefits for students and teachers. Because the role-play method is one of the fun methods, the students like it.

Idham et al. (2022) said that students must master the skill of speaking to be able to communicate effectively in a foreign language. The fear of making errors and a lack of motivation are just a few reasons for students' difficulty in speaking. Role-playing is used to help students overcome speaking difficulties. He researched second-grade students at the University of Sumer's College of Basic Education, he determined the research about the efficacy of role-playing in teaching speaking. Using a quasi-experimental method, he divided the students into two groups that were involved in pre-test and post-test. 46 students participated, and the result indicated that there was an improvement in the student's speaking ability. The result showed the students thought that through the role-play method their speaking skills were improved or role-play affects their speaking skills.[1]

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[1] Idham, S. Y., Subramaniam, I., Khan, A., & Mugair, S. K. (2022). The Effect of Role-Playing Techniques on the Speaking Skills of Students at University. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(8), 1622-1629.

According to Ma (2020), role-play provides additional learning opportunities to students through interaction with other students in classrooms. Role-play is a very useful teaching strategy in helping students demonstrate what they have learned, especially in practicing it in real-life situations. In learning, students tend to be passive when the material is a little monotonous or boring, so they tend not to pay attention, but when using the role-play method, students will certainly play a more active role, because they directly practice it in a fun way. Therefore, role play is one of the tools in learning that can make students active, especially in communication skills.[2]

Today, technology plays a crucial role in facilitating the learning process. It offers numerous resources and methods to enrich learning both inside and outside the classroom, particularly methods like role-playing. According to Puspita (2021), effective education necessitates continuous evaluation, improvement, curriculum development, adequate facilities, and sound management practices. This includes embracing innovative methods and creative learning models. Teachers and students need a creative learning model to make the teaching-learning process fun. Role-play helps the teachers and students learn better.[3]

Role-play simulations have become commonly used active learning methods to teach about complex, dynamic political processes.[4] Students often encounter difficulties in acquiring a language that is not their native tongue, and they may struggle to put their knowledge into practice, especially when it comes to speaking. Challenges appeared to students when they learning English speaking skills, such as fear of making mistakes, lack of practice, cultural differences, and limited resources. Role-play can help students encounter these difficulties by practicing regularly and being active. Role-play is like having a conversation in groups, simulation, or playing a role. Choosing fun activities through a role-play can help students improve.

Wibawanti (2020) conducted research at a school in Bandulan she found out that the students encountered low achievement in English speaking ability. The students didn't have a

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[2] Ma, Z. F. (2020). Role play as a teaching method to improve student learning experience of a bachelor degree programme in a transnational context: an action research study. *Compass: Journal of Learning and Teaching*, *13*(1), 1-10.

[3] Utaminingsih, E. S., Puspita, M. A., Ihsandi, A., Intania, B. Y., Prasetya, A. T., & Ellianawati, E. (2023). A Systematic Literature Review: The Role of Character-Based Digital Literacy in 21st Century Learning in Elementary Schools. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, *9*(10), 829-840.

[4] Duchatelet, D., Spooren, P., Bursens, P., Gijbels, D., & Donche, V. (2021). Explaining self-efficacy development in an authentic higher education learning context of role-play simulations. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *68*, 100940.

strong motivation to learn English therefore, they could not speak in English. A role-play method was conducted to improve the students' speaking skills, especially in communication.[5] The implementation of role play made the students at SD Negeri Bandulan 02 more motivated to join the speaking class. The result showed that role-play can improve the students' speaking ability. Leading the students with questions and motivations, giving special vocabularies and expressions, providing a dialogue for role-play, and asking them to practice or perform the role-play could help the students gain their ability in speaking.

The role-play method became one of the methods that can improve students' speaking ability. Negara (2021) stated that the role-play method can improve students' speaking skills, increase self-confidence, and collaboration among students, and make the learning atmosphere fun and interesting. The role-play method helps the students to feel comfortable in learning especially in speaking. Using this method will help teachers and students encounter any kind of burdens they face while learning a language, especially English language which is not the mother tongue language for Indonesian learners.[6]

Mulyana (2020), said that 80% of students from the Faculty of Education majoring in English at Ibn Khaldun Bogor University agreed that the role-play method can be a fun method of learning to develop students' speaking ability. From their perspective, role-play led to a positive impact on the students' speaking skills which the students feel more confident, increasing their vocabularies, and better pronunciation.[7] Mehdiyev (2020) indicates that conducting the lecturers with effective approaches and methods is of prime importance for the acquisition of the necessary skills and competencies in the field of English language teaching. The teachers feel the role-play method could be beneficial for them. Teachers make the classroom more fun and interesting, which makes it easy to apply the lessons.

In the globalization era, the competition in the working world is getting tougher which demands students speak English fluently. Furthermore, the students should be prepared themselves to overcome this matter.[8] Teachers should challenge themselves and students to have

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[5] Wibawanti, I. T. (2020). *Improving Students' Speaking Skill Through Role Play* (Doctoral dissertation, Universitas Islam Malang).

[6] Negara, I. M. (2021). LITERATURE REVIEW: WHY USE ROLEPLAY METHOD IN TEACHING SPEAKING?. *Jurnal Ilmiah STBA*, *7*(1), 1-10.

[7] Mulyana, A. (2020). STUDENTS'PERSPECTIVE OF USING ROLE PLAY TO DEVELOP SPEAKING SKILL. *Journal of English Teaching, Applied Linguistics and Literatures (JETALL)*, *3*(1), 1-8.

[8] Arifin, E. L. (2021). Application of role playing techniques in improving the speaking ability of students. *Indonesian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, *4*(1).

good speaking skills. Research by Arifin conducted at MAN 2 Kuningan found that there were still many students who faced difficulties in speaking English, afterwards, he applied the role-play method and achieved that the KKM score of the students in learning was increasing. He concluded that the role-playing method can improve the students' speaking skills.

Role-playing games are extremely useful and can help students root their knowledge and learn a foreign language for professional purposes. Using a role-play method games or simulations in teaching students a foreign language needs special attention to how this method can be used in university students to encourage them to use the foreign language in a class maximally. Applying this to university students could vary depending on the level of difficulty and language skills of the students. Role-play is the appropriate method to teach speaking skills to university students.[9]

This study was conducted to identify the impact of role-play on the students' speaking ability. To overcome some difficulties faced by the students in improving their speaking skills in the classroom or outside the classroom.

METHODS

This study included 40 students from the English General Pre-Intermediate I class, which was taken randomly. There were 23 female students and 17 male students participated. 24 of them were majoring in Economics, 8 of them majoring in Computer, 6 of them majoring in philosophy, and 2 of them majoring in Nursing. The students were mainly from their first year of the 2023/2024 academic year. They were young adult students with an average age of 17 to 20 years old and some students were above 20 years old.

This study applied questionnaires. Data was collected by using questionnaires given to the students by answering the statements using the Likert Scale. The questionnaires consisted of ten items with closed-ended questions with a five-level rating scale according to Likert's Scale. A questionnaire is an easy and effective way to statistically see respondents' opinions on the top as all the students submit their responses. The questionnaire was analyzed using the mean and standard deviation for the close-ended questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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[9] Irkinovich, N. R. (2022). THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE-PLAYING GAME IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN A NON-LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY. *International Journal of Pedagogics*, *2*(09), 29-32.

The results of students' opinions on the use of role-play in improving their English-speaking skills are shown in the table below.

Table 1. Students' opinions on the use of role-play in class in improving speaking abilities.

No	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Levels
1	My English-speaking ability has improved	4.00	3.52	AGREE
2	I can speak English fluently	3.72	3.30	NEUTRAL
3	The role-play makes you feel more enjoyable and less stressful	3.97	3.52	NEUTRAL
4	I enjoy working with others during role-play activities	4.45	3.98	AGREE
5	The teacher empowers the students to independently communicate with others	4.50	4.00	AGREE
6	The role-play helps you understand how to speak English in different situations better	4.20	3.72	AGREE
7	The role-play helps you understand how to speak English in different situations better	4.47	3.99	AGREE
8	The role-play activity makes students fall in love with English-speaking	3.85	3.40	NEUTRAL
9	The role-play helps students gain confidence	3.97	3.52	NEUTRAL
10	The role-play helps my pronunciation	4.25	3.77	AGREE
	Total	4.14	3.67	AGREE

The table above shows the positive opinions among the students, about the use of role-play in improving their speaking skills. When we look at each of the 10 aspects, we find that the highest score is teachers empowering students to communicate independently with others. Which has an

average score of 4.50. The second highest score is "Role-play helps you understand how to speak English in different situations correctly" It reached a score of 4.47. The next highest score was on the statement "I enjoy working with others during role-play activities" which scored 4.45. The statement "Role-play helps my pronunciation" was the next highest score which reached an average of 4.25. The next statement that is still in the agreed position which reaches an average of 4.14 is the statement "My English-speaking ability has improved". The statement "Role-play makes you feel more enjoyable and less stressed" and the statement "Role-play helps students gain confidence" have the same average score of 3.97, although it is in the middle category between agree and disagree, this statement is at the positive level. on the statement "Role-play activities make students fall in love with speaking English" This statement reached the second lowest score of 3.85, this is the second lowest position because students generally come from other faculties where the subject matter, they enjoy more than English. The lowest score position is on the statement "I can speak English fluently" which achieved a score of 3.72. From the results of the lecturer's monitoring, it is likely that the students still feel that their English is not very fluent, although there has been an improvement. Although some statements are at a lower level, the overall average score still shows that the students are at the "Agree" level that role-play activities make students like speaking activities and feel relaxed when learning using role-play.

Concerning the perception of the use of role-play in English language classes to improve English speaking skills, this study showed positive results as indicated by the highest mean score of 4.47 and the lowest score of 3.72. The results showed that overall, the students were satisfied with the role-play technique. The results also show that role-play helps students cope with different situations and be able to cooperate with others. Although the students were not able to speak English fluently, the results of some of the statements emphasized the positive attitude of the students towards the use of role-play in teaching English language skills.

CONCLUSION

This study explores how the use of role-play in classroom learning can improve students' English-speaking ability. based on the results of the study, it is concluded that the use of role-play in the learning process to improve students' speaking ability is very effective because role-play can improve students' English-speaking ability. we can see that the impact of using role-play as a teaching method has a positive response from the participants. Where some students feel they are more confident, and they feel more eager to practice their English-speaking skills. it is found that

they have a better understanding of the use of expressions and some phrases through role-play. Role-play is a fun teaching method that can make students abandon the traditional way of learning. Using role-play in speaking class not only provides a fun activity but also increases the motivation to speak English with their friends. Teachers can practice this method in the teaching and learning process so that students and teachers can gain new experiences.

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