

THE INFLUNCE OF USING ROLE PLAY TECHNIQUE ON STUDENT SPEAKING ABILITY IN GRADE 7 AT SMP NEGERI 7 PEMATANG SIANTAR

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to find out the effect of using Role Play Technique on students' speaking ability at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar. This research used a quantitative approach with a true experimental design. The population of this research was seventh grade students consisting of two classes, namely the experimental class (VII-2) and the control class (VII-3), with a total of 64 students. The sample was taken using a total sampling technique. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test. The experimental class was taught by using Role Play Technique, while the control class was taught by using the conventional method. The data were analysed using SPSS version 27.0. The results of the research showed that the mean score of the experimental class in the post-test (73.38) was higher than the control class (65.97). Furthermore, the hypothesis testing showed that $t\text{-count} = 52.531 > t\text{-table} = 1.671$ at the significance level of 0.05, which means that H_0 was rejected and H_1 was accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of using Role Play Technique on students' speaking ability. The use of Role Play Technique is effective in improving students' speaking performance at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar.

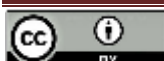
Keywords: *Role Play Technique, Speaking Ability, Experimental Research*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Background of Research

English is widely used as an international language in various aspects of life, including education, technology, business, and social interaction. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) from junior high school to higher education. In learning English, students are expected to master four main skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, speaking is considered essential because it enables students to express ideas, opinions, and feelings in daily communication.

Speaking involves not only correct pronunciation but also the appropriate use of



vocabulary, grammar, and fluency to convey meaning effectively. According to Brown (2001), speaking is an interactive process in which learners produce and respond to information during communication. Therefore, speaking ability is an important indicator of students' communicative competence and plays a significant role in their academic and social development.

However, speaking remains one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners, particularly at the junior high school level. Students often face difficulties such as limited vocabulary, inaccurate pronunciation, weak grammar mastery, and low self-confidence. These problems may lead to anxiety and fear of making mistakes, causing students to become passive and reluctant to speak during English lessons.

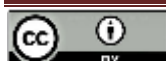
Based on preliminary observation at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar, it was found that many seventh-grade students experienced difficulties in speaking English. Most students hesitated to speak and tended to use their mother tongue during classroom interaction. This condition indicates that their speaking ability still needs improvement.

One factor that may influence this problem is the teaching technique applied in the classroom. Conventional teaching methods often limit students' opportunities to practice speaking. Therefore, it is necessary to implement an interactive teaching technique that encourages students to participate actively. One appropriate technique is role play, in which students act out real-life situations. According to Ladousse (2004), role play can improve students' fluency, vocabulary, and confidence, as well as create a more relaxed learning atmosphere.

In addition, role play is in line with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes meaningful communication in language learning (Harmer, 2007). Through role play, students can interact with others, express ideas, and practice speaking in real contexts. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of role-play technique on the speaking ability of seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar using a quasi-experimental research design.

The Problem Of the Research

Based on the background of the study and the research gap described, the research question of this study is: How does the use of the role-play technique affect the speaking



ability of seventh grade students at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar?

The Objective of the Research

Based on the research question above, the objective of this study is: To investigate the effect of using role-play techniques on the speaking ability of seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

English Speaking Ability

English speaking ability is a productive skill that enables individuals to express ideas, feelings, and information orally in communication. It involves not only pronunciation but also vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts. Brown (2001) defines speaking as an interactive process of producing and responding to information, while Harmer (2007) and Nunan (2003) emphasize its role in expressing ideas and responding effectively in social interaction. Therefore, speaking ability can be seen as a combination of linguistic competence and communicative skills.

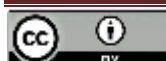
The objective of teaching speaking is to help students communicate clearly, fluently, and confidently. Students are expected to express ideas, respond to others, and participate actively in conversations (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2007; Nunan, 2003). In developing speaking ability, several factors play important roles, such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, content, and comprehension. These elements are interconnected and must be developed together to achieve effective communication.

To improve speaking ability, students need continuous practice and interactive learning. One effective technique is role play, which allows students to practice speaking in real-life situations. Through role play, students can interact with others, express ideas, and improve their fluency and confidence. Therefore, role play is considered an appropriate technique to enhance students' speaking ability.

Teaching Speaking

Speaking instruction is a learning process aimed at developing students' ability to express ideas, opinions, and information orally with fluency, accuracy, and confidence. The main objective is to enable students to communicate effectively in various situations. According to Brown (2001), speaking involves important components such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and appropriate communication strategies.

Effective speaking instruction requires active student participation through meaningful activities. Harmer (2015) states that activities such as discussions, dialogues, role play, and



presentations help students use language naturally and appropriately in different contexts. In addition, teachers play an important role as facilitators by creating a supportive learning environment and providing guidance and feedback to improve students' speaking performance (Richards, 2017).

Various techniques can be applied in teaching speaking, including conversation, group discussion, role play, and spoken presentation. Among these, role play is considered effective because it allows students to practice speaking in real-life situations, increases confidence, and reduces anxiety (Ladousse, 2004). Therefore, speaking instruction should focus on meaningful interaction and continuous practice to help students develop their speaking ability effectively.

Role play

Role play is a teaching technique in which students act out different roles and situations to practice communication in a meaningful context. Harmer (2007) states that role play allows students to simulate real-life interactions and use language naturally in communication. Through this activity, students learn to express ideas, choose appropriate vocabulary, and respond spontaneously. In addition, role play helps reduce students' anxiety because they speak as characters rather than as themselves, which increases their confidence in speaking English.

Ladousse (2004) explains that role play can improve students' fluency, creativity, and interaction skills. Students are encouraged to express ideas, respond to others, and use appropriate language in different situations. Similarly, Brown (2001) emphasizes that role play promotes communicative language use, as students focus not only on grammatical accuracy but also on delivering messages effectively. This makes learning more meaningful and enjoyable for students.

Role play also provides several benefits for students' speaking development. It helps improve fluency through spontaneous responses, increases self-confidence, and reduces fear of making mistakes. In addition, it supports vocabulary development and helps students understand how to use language appropriately in context (Nunan, 2003). As a result, students become more active and engaged in the learning process.

In classroom practice, role play can be implemented through activities such as dialogues, simulations, and problem-solving situations (Harmer, 2015). The teacher acts as a facilitator by preparing scenarios, guiding students, and providing feedback. Therefore, role play is considered an effective technique to improve students' speaking ability, confidence, and interaction in English.



Teaching Speaking by Using Role-Play Technique

Role play is a teaching technique closely related to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes meaningful interaction in language learning. Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that CLT focuses on communication as both the goal and the process of learning. In line with this, Nunan (1999) explains that role play helps students improve speaking ability, reduce anxiety, and create a more enjoyable learning environment. Through role play, students can practice using English in real-life situations rather than memorizing rules.

In classroom practice, the teacher acts as a facilitator by providing situations and assigning roles to students. Students are required to interact, express ideas, and respond to others based on the given context. This process encourages spontaneous communication and helps students use appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures (Dauliy, 2023). In addition, role play increases students' confidence, participation, and motivation, as well as develops their critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Harmer, 2015).

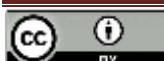
Therefore, role play is considered an effective technique in teaching speaking because it creates an interactive and supportive learning environment. It not only improves students' speaking ability but also helps them develop social and communicative skills needed in real-life situations.

Previous Research

Several previous studies have examined the use of role-play technique in improving students' speaking ability. Putri and Sari (2019) found that students taught using role play showed better improvement in pronunciation, fluency, and confidence compared to those taught using conventional methods. Similarly, Rahmawati (2020) reported that role play increased students' motivation and reduced their anxiety, making them more active in speaking activities.

Furthermore, Hidayat and Nurhayati (2021) revealed that role play significantly improved students' speaking ability through real-life communication practice. Siregar (2022) also found that students taught using role play achieved higher speaking performance in terms of accuracy and fluency. In addition, Maulana (2023) concluded that role play effectively enhanced students' confidence and helped them overcome fear of making mistakes in speaking English.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that role-play technique has a positive effect on students' speaking ability, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence. It also reduces anxiety and encourages active participation in classroom



interaction. However, most previous studies were conducted in different contexts and settings.

Therefore, there is still a gap in research related to the implementation of role-play technique for seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the effectiveness of role play in improving students' speaking ability in this specific context.

III. THE METHOD OF THE RESERCH

The Research Design

This study applied a quantitative approach to examine the effect of the role-play technique on students' speaking ability. Quantitative research is used to test relationships between variables through systematic data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2012).

The study employed a quasi-experimental method using a pre-test and post-test control group design. This design was selected because the researcher used existing classes without random assignment (Sugiyono, 2017). Two groups were involved: Class VII-2 as the experimental group and Class VII-3 as the control group at SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar.

Both groups were given a pre-test to measure their initial speaking ability. The experimental group then received treatment through the role-play technique, while the control group was taught using conventional methods. After the treatment, a post-test was administered to both groups to measure the students' speaking ability. The data from both tests were analysed to determine whether the role-play technique had a significant effect on students' speaking performance.

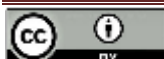
Data and Source of Data

The data in this research were primary data obtained from students' speaking scores through pre-tests and post-tests. According to Suharsimi Arikunto (2010), data are the results of research in the form of numerical or factual information collected during the research process. In this study, the data were quantitative, consisting of students' speaking scores before and after the treatment.

The population of this study consisted of all seventh-grade students. The sample included two classes, namely class VII-2 and class VII-3, with a total of 64 students. Class VII-2 was assigned as the experimental group and was taught using the role-play technique, while class VII 3 served as the control group and was taught using conventional methods.

According to Sugiyono (2013), data sources refer to subjects from which the data are obtained. In this study, the data source was the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar, from whom the data were collected directly through pre-tests and post-tests.

Technique of Collecting Data



The data in this research were collected through three main stages: pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the research to measure students' initial speaking ability.

After the pre-test, the experimental group received treatment using the role-play technique, while the control group was taught using conventional methods. According to H. Douglas Brown and Heekyeong Lee (2020), role play provides meaningful and interactive practice that can improve students' fluency, vocabulary, and confidence. The treatment was conducted in several meetings.

Finally, a post-test was administered to measure students' speaking ability after the treatment. The results of the pre-test and post-test were used to determine the improvement of students' speaking ability.

Technique of Analyzing Data

The data were analyzed by comparing the results of the pre-test and post-test to determine the improvement in students' speaking ability. According to Donald Ary et al. (2010), data analysis is used to interpret data and draw conclusions from the research findings.

Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27.0. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores, were used to describe students' speaking performance. In addition, inferential analysis was applied through an independent samples t-test to determine whether there was a significant effect of the role-play technique on students' speaking ability.

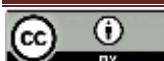
Before conducting the hypothesis test, normality and homogeneity tests were carried out to ensure that the data met the assumptions for parametric testing. The level of significance used in this research was 0.05.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data Analysis

This study aimed to examine the effect of the Role Play Technique on students' speaking ability at the seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar. The research involved two groups, namely the experimental class (VII-2) and the control class (VII-3), consisting of 64 students in total, with 32 students in each class.

The data were collected through pre-test and post-test and analyzed using SPSS version 27.0. The statistical procedures included descriptive statistics, normality test, homogeneity test, and hypothesis testing. The pre-test results indicated that the mean score of the experimental class was 53.97, while the control class obtained a mean score of 50.97. This



finding suggests that both groups had relatively comparable speaking ability prior to the treatment.

Following the implementation of the treatment, the post-test results revealed a noticeable improvement in both groups. The mean score of the experimental class increased to 73.38, whereas the control class reached 65.97. In terms of percentage, the experimental class showed an improvement of 35.96%, which was higher than the control class at 29.42%. This result indicates that the Role Play Technique contributed more effectively to students' speaking development compared to the conventional method.

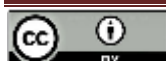
The results of the normality test showed that all data were normally distributed, as the significance values were higher than 0.05. In addition, the homogeneity test yielded a significance value of 0.166 (> 0.05), indicating that the data were homogeneous and met the assumptions for further statistical analysis. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing using the Paired Sample T-test showed that the t-count value was 52.531 with a significance value of 0.000. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. This result confirms that there was a statistically significant effect of the Role Play Technique on students' speaking ability.

Based on classroom observations, students in the experimental class demonstrated higher participation and confidence during the learning process. They were more actively engaged in speaking activities and showed better fluency compared to students in the control class. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Role Play Technique is effective in enhancing students' speaking ability.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

This research was conducted to determine the effect of the Role Play Technique on students' speaking ability at the seventh grade of SMP Negeri 7 Pematangsiantar. Based on the results of data analysis, research findings, and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Role Play Technique was effective in improving students' speaking ability. This can be seen from the increase in the mean score of the experimental class from 53.97 in the pre-test to 73.38 in the post-test, while the control class improved from 50.97 to 65.97. In addition, the improvement in the experimental class (35.96%) was higher than in the control class (29.42%), indicating that the Role Play Technique provided a greater impact compared to conventional teaching methods. Furthermore, the results of hypothesis testing showed that the t-count value was 52.531 with a significance value of 0.000, which is lower



than 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted. It means that the Role Play Technique has a significant effect on students' speaking ability.

Suggestion

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher proposes the following suggestions.

1. Suggestion for Teachers

Teachers are recommended to apply the Role Play Technique in teaching speaking. This technique can create an interactive learning environment and help students improve their confidence, fluency, and pronunciation in English speaking activities.

2. Suggestion for Students

Students are suggested to be more active and motivated in speaking activities. By participating in Role Play activities, students can practice English in meaningful situations and improve their speaking skills as well as their confidence.

3. Suggestion for Future Researchers

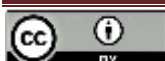
Future researchers are suggested to develop this study by applying the Role Play Technique to different skills, educational levels, or combining it with other teaching methods in order to obtain more comprehensive research results.

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