

PLAY AND SPEAKING ANXIETY TOWARDS ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to find out whether or not (1) there was a significant difference in English speaking achievement between the students who were taught by using role-play technique and those who were not, (2) there was a significant interaction effect of role-playing and speaking anxiety on English speaking achievement, and (3) there was a considerable difference in speaking performance between the students who have high and low levels of speaking anxiety. 57 out of 80 tenth graders of hotel accommodation of SMKN 3 Palembang were selected randomly as the sample. The 'Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale' and an oral test were used to collect the data. The intervention was conducted for sixteen meetings, two teaching hours in each. The findings showed the main difference between both groups was 4.6, which the experimental led the control group. Also, the two-ways ANOVA indicated that there was a significant interaction between role-playing and speaking anxiety on students' speaking achievement. The main difference score between low and high levels of speaking anxiety was 3.68, in which low-level speaking anxiety drove the upper level. It is clear that speaking anxiety plays an essential role in students' speaking performance

Keywords: Role-play, speaking anxiety, and speaking

INTRODUCTION

In an international relationship, English speaking ability is very crucial. Crystal (2003) states that English speaking ability is essential for traveling abroad, spending holidays, and joining sports competitions. It will help the traveler to communicate and avoid misunderstanding among native or non-native English speakers. Furthermore, White (2004) states that language is an integral part of learning, and oral communication has a crucial role in classroom teaching and learning. It means that speaking will help the teaching and learning process more productive and positive responses between students and teachers. It will help them to share ideas, make decisions, and understand the lesson. It shows that speaking English does not only participate in the work field but also in the classroom, especially in English class. This reality makes teachers and parents think that their students and children should master speaking ability.

Unfortunately, according to First (2013), Indonesian speaking skill was on the 25th rank out of 60 nations with the score 53.44. While, in Indonesia, Sunardi (2013) found that the mean score of students' speaking achievement at one of SMK Negeri in Pontianak, was 69.64 and Zulfikri (2010) found the mean score of students' speaking progress at one of SMK Negeri in Palembang was 67.37. It showed that Indonesian speaking skills are needed to be improved, especially in Palembang.

The students often have some problems in speaking English. According to Young (1990), speaking class tends to make the students feel nervous and anxious. Moreover, Aida (1994) found that eager foreign language students are less willing to participate in learning activities and have lower performance than non-anxious students. Furthermore, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) stated that students in foreign language classrooms generally report that speaking in the target language is the most anxiety-producing experience. The problem frequently found is that students' anxiety makes it difficult to speak English.

One of the objectives of teaching English at vocational schools is that the students can communicate in English both in oral and written forms (The Ministry of National Education, 2006). Based on the explanation of National Education System (SISDIKNAS) No. 20/2013 (The Ministry of National Education, 2003), the goal of vocational school education is to prepare the students to work in a particular field so that graduates of vocational high school be able to compete with others in business and industrial world. According to the Decree the Ministry of National Education No 420/044/ Disdikpora/ SMKN8/(2014), before entering the industrial business world, the twelfth graders should have had job training in line to their program. Hotel accommodation program has some specific terms usually used in their job training such as, taking and making reservation, hotel services, checking out food service. As the students of the hotel accommodation program, they need English to communicate with foreigners when they work in hotels. However, the students' speaking ability was still low. The teacher of English at SMK Negeri 3 Palembang reported that the students had some difficulties in speaking, such as lack of vocabulary, self-confidence, and a high level of anxiety. Moreover, in teaching English, the teacher did not focus on the specific skill the students need the most, speaking competence, but on English in general.

Based on the phenomena above, the researcher believes that it is necessary to improve the quality of the teaching and to learn speaking skills by applying an appropriate strategy. Many techniques can be used in education speaking; one of them is role play. Freeman (2000) states that role-plays are very important in CLT because they allow students to practice communicating in different social contexts and different social roles. Harmer (2001) states that role-play can be used to encourage general oral fluency or to train students for a specific situation. Rahimy and Safarpour (2012) found that role-playing seems to provide a sort of enjoyable environment for the learners to flourish in. In role-playing activities, students take a new identity and learn to use the foreign language for everyday communication. Role-play would seem to be an ideal activity in which students could use their English creatively, and it aims to stimulate conversations, allow them to practice and develop their speaking skills.

METHOD

This study was factorial design research. There were experimental and control groups. Both of the groups were given a pre-test and post-test. However, the treatment was given to the experimental group. The procedure was carried out in 30 meetings for two months from February to April 2015. Each session took two teaching hours (2 x 45 minutes). Getting the sample, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was distributed. The results showed that most of the students were at a high level of anxiety. Then, 57 the tenth graders of the hotel accommodation program of SMKN 3 Palembang were randomly chosen as the sample of the study and categorized into experimental and control groups. The data were obtained using a questionnaire and an oral test. The results of the oral test ranged from 5 – 20. There were three levels of speaking anxiety: 18-53 (low), 54 – 71 (moderate), and 72 – 90 (high). In analyzing the data, an independent sample t-test and two-way ANOVA were used to find out the students' speaking achievement between two groups, the interaction effect of role-playing and speaking anxiety on speaking achievement.

Table 1: Statistical Analysis

Variable	Mean diff. pre and post experimental	Mean diff. pre and post control	T-value and sig. between pre and post exp.	T-value and sig. between pre and post con	T-value and sig. post-test between exp. and con
Total	3.893	0.327	15.421 .000	3.272 .003	9.672 .000
Vocabulary	0.678 17.42%	0.19	14.717 .000	3.285 .003	6.388 .000
Grammar	0.75 19.27%	-0.017	7.180 .000	-.441 .663	10.138 .000
Fluency	0.696 17.88%	-0.086	7.415 .000	-1.983 .057	7.360 .000
Response	1.054 27.07%	0.276	17.730 .000	3.417 .002	7.169 .000
Pronunciation	0.714 18.34%	-0.034	9.045 .000	-1.440 .161	10.124 .000

The mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental group was 3.893, and the significance value was 0.000 (< 0.05). All the aspects of the variable also significantly improved. Meanwhile, in the control group, the mean difference between pre-test and post-test scores was 0.327, and the significance value was 0.003 (< 0.05). Only two aspects of speaking were significant: vocabulary (0.003) and response (0.002). The other elements which were not substantial: are grammar (0.663), fluency (0.057), and pronunciation (0.161).

An independent sample t-test was used to find out the difference in speaking achievement between the students who were taught using role-play strategy and those who were not. The results showed that the mean difference between experimental and control groups was 4.613, and the significance value was 0.000 (< 0.05). Therefore, it can be stated that the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted.

Two-way ANOVA was used to find out the interaction effect of strategy and students' speaking anxiety levels on their speaking achievement. The results showed that the p-value of teaching technique and speaking anxiety was 0.002 (< 0.05). It can be concluded that there was a significant interaction effect of the strategy and their speaking anxiety on the students' speaking achievement. Students' speaking achievement based on their levels of speaking anxiety can be seen below:

Table 2: Students' speaking score based on the level of speaking anxiety.

Variable	Level of Anxiety	Mean Score	Mean Difference Between Low and High	T-value and Sig. Between Low and High
Score Total	Low	13.667	3.6894	4.862 .000
	High	9.977		
Vocabulary	Low	2.417	0.553	2.953 .007
	High	1.864		
Grammar	Low	2.750	0.773	3.983 .000
	High	1.977		
Fluency	Low	2.750	1.023	5.201 .000
	High	1.727		
Response	Low	3.083	0.674	3.975 .000
	High	2.409		
Pronunciation	Low	2.667	0.667	3.056 .005
	High	2.000		

The mean score was 13.667 for the low level, then 9.977 for the high level of anxiety. The mean difference between low and high levels of speaking anxiety was 3.6894, with a p-value of 0.000. The aspects of speaking were also significantly different: fluency aspect with mean difference 1.023 and p-value 0.000, grammar 0.773 with p-value 0.000, response 0.674 with

p-value 0.000, and pronunciation 0.667 with p-value 0.005, and vocabulary 0.553 and p-value 0.007. It showed that there was a significant difference in speaking achievement between the students who had low and high levels of speaking anxiety. The significant differences between these levels was not only on the total score but also on the whole aspects of speaking.

DISCUSSION

There are two reasons why there was a significant improvement in speaking achievement in the experimental group. First, speaking activities by using role-play strategy investigated the progress of speaking success as the students practiced and performed a variety of contexts to meet the learning goals. It also provided a mask for shy students to involve in this activity. Second, it allowed students to practice more and decreased the students' anxiety to speak.

Role-play strategy was implemented in this study as one of the alternative approaches that the researcher believed to improve the students' speaking achievement. Role-play strategy is firstly introduced by Freeman (2000, p. 134), as an essential strategy in communicative language teaching because it allows students to practice communicating in different social contexts and roles. After the intervention using role-play, the mean difference between both groups was significantly different. The mean of the experimental group was higher. The results of this study were similar to the findings of Rahimy and Safarpour (2012), who found that role-play could significantly improve the students' speaking achievement.

The results (total and aspects) showed that the mean difference of post-test and gain scores between the experimental and control groups were significantly different. It indicates that role play in this study had an impact on students' speaking achievement. The improvement of students' speaking progress in this study was because this strategy focuses on giving the students more opportunities to speak, more choices in what they speak, more opportunities to be active. Then, it is teamwork activities in the classroom that made the students more enjoyable to practice with their friends in the group. However, the lowest improvement in the aspect of speaking was in vocabulary knowledge. It showed that they still lacked vocabulary knowledge. It was possible because they had difficulty in memorizing the words. Even though the treatment was conducted for 30 meetings (2 teaching hours per session), it indicated that the students need more time and practice to upgrade their vocabulary knowledge, especially for those with a high level of speaking anxiety. It influenced the students' performance, and it was challenging to develop the conversation. It was similar to the teacher (2014), who reported that the students had less vocabulary.

As explained before that in this study, the researcher took speaking anxiety levels as a moderator variable that might also influence the improvement of the students' speaking achievement. The analysis showed that there was a significant interaction effect between strategy and speaking anxiety on the students' speaking achievement. It indicated that there was a considerable difference in speaking achievement between the students who had low and high levels of speaking anxiety. The highest difference was on the fluency aspect. The students with low levels of speaking anxiety had better improvement than those with a high level of speaking anxiety. It was in line with a study conducted by Xiuqin (2006) that the more nervous the students are, the more mistakes they make.

CONCLUSION

Role-play strategy was sufficient to improve the students' speaking achievement of the tenth graders of SMK Negeri 3 Palembang. It could be seen from the progress they made after the treatment was accomplished. This strategy encouraged the students to have better speaking skills. Even though both experimental and control groups significantly improved their speaking achievement, the results of some aspects of speaking were significantly

different. The mean difference showed that the experimental group had more significant improvement than the control group. Role-play makes students more active to practice their speaking skills in several contexts. Nevertheless, the students still lacked vocabulary knowledge since they made the lowest improvement in this speaking aspect.

The level of speaking anxiety contributed to students' speaking achievement. The students with a low level of anxiety had higher achievement than the students with a high level of anxiety. It indicated that the higher the level of speaking anxiety the students have, the worse their speaking achievement is. Then, the lower the level of speaking anxiety the students have, the better their speaking success will be.

Some suggestions can be offered concerning this study. Firstly, it is essential to implement role play in the classroom to build the students' self-confidence and decrease the students' anxiety, especially in speaking skills. The students should improve their speaking ability by having more practice, those who have a low level of speaking anxiety should practice their speaking skills, and those who have a high level of speaking anxiety should practice harder to have the better ability. Secondly, to maximize the benefit of role-playing requires intensive teaching and learning process as well as a variety of role-play contexts. Next, the institution should pay more attention to the teachers' teaching skills by holding or supporting the teachers to attend some seminars related to English language teaching the school can enrich their knowledge and experience in ELT. Finally, the future researcher should find out the other variables such as self-confidence and speaking motivation, that may interact with the speaking strategy.

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