IMPROVING THE VIII C CLASS STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY BY USING ROLE-PLAY TECHNIQUE AT SMP NEGERI 11 JEMBER IN THE 2010/2011 ACADEMIC YEAR

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Abstract : This article is intended to describe the research result on the use of Role-play in improving the VIII C class students' speaking ability and students' active participation in teaching learning activity. The research problem was the students' experienced difficulties in speaking. It is hard for students to express their ideas orally. To solve this problem, the role-play technique was used to improve students' active participation and their speaking ability achievement. The research design was classroom action research and the primary data were collected by using reading comprehension test and observation. The result of the research showed that the use of role-play could improve the students' active participation and their reading comprehension achievement.

Key Words: role-play, and speaking achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Living in a society forces us to interact with others, and interaction among people in the world occurs by communication. English is a means of communication, and many people from different countries use it to communicate with others. Brown (2000:251) states that, communication may be regarded as a combination of act, series of element with purpose and intent. The main tool of communication is a language, and it is very important in our lives. Halliday, 1973 (in Brown 2000:250-252) notes some different funtions of language, such as the first is representational function, this is the use of language to make statement, convey fact and knowledge and also for explain and report something. Next is interactional function, that is to maintain social relationship. The third fuction is personal function, the fact that language enables its speakers to express their feelings and emotions. The last is imaginative function, the fact that language serves to create imaginary system or ideas. Telling fairy tales, joking, or writing a novel are all used of imaginative function.

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Considering its important role, in Indonesia education, English is taught as compulsory subject in both junior and senior high schools. In English language teaching (ELT), secondary students should practice all the English skill; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. One of the basic language skills in ELT is speaking that becomes very important in English for communication. By speaking with others, students are able to know how to express their ideas in English as a target language (TL).

The objectives of studying English is to have high English proficiency. However, there are many students experience difficulties in speaking. This can be seen from the interview result conducted in the preeliminary study on February 12nd 2011. In the interview, the teacher said that many students of class VIII C of SMP Negeri 11 Jember got less than average (mean) standard minimum passing score (70). The mean score was 64, 1 and only 37% of students who got more than 70. It shows that teaching learning process in the classroom not yet give optimum result. This happens because the teacher said that she seldom ask the students to communicate with their classmates. Therefore the teacher said in the preeliminary, the students in this class were passive.

Meanwhile it is the responsibility of the teacher to make the teaching learning process more interesting and meaningful. She should be able to solve some problems faced by the students in learning speaking for example: poor vocabulary, having feeling shy to speak English, being unconfident or being affraid of making mistake. Role play could be used as the alternative way to improve the students' speaking ability.

Role play is a pair or group activities intended to pretend to be someone else and act based on imaginary situation. Using role play would make the teaching learning activity more interesting and not boring because this technique gives students an opportunity to play the characteristic in front of the class contextually. Role play enables students to work in pairs or in groups, so that they can support each other. The quietest students could also show their speaking ability because all the student have turn to speak in front of the class. Role play is a good activity to motivate student to practice speaking English.

Role play gives a format for using elements of real-life conversation, such as repetitions, interuption, hesitation, distraction, change of topic, facial expression and gesture. It is recommended for pairs or groups of student at all level and proficiency. It helps students to follow language function such as greeting, asking and giving information, agreeing and

disagreeing, suggesting, giving direction, persuading and encouraging. In conclusion, role-play activities are able to promote students' speaking ability.

There are some procedures that should be done by the teacher in teaching speaking through role play. Littlewood (1995:49) writes some procedures of teaching speaking through role play. Firstly, the teacher asks the students to imagine themselves in a situation which could occur outside the classroom. This could be anything from a simple occurrence like meeting a friend in the street, to a much complex event such as a series of business negotiations. Secondly, the teacher asks the students to adopt specific roles in a given situation. The students may simplify their roles before they act as the character. The last, they are asked to behave as if the situation really existed, in accordance with their roles.

In conducting the role play activities, this research used cue cards as media. The researcher applied some of role play type arranged by Littlewood in teaching learning activity in the classroom. The topic of role play followed the speaking topic on student's textbook.

In this research the procedures of teaching speaking through role play were as follow:

1) The teacher prepared the materials of role play suitable with the level of the students.
2) In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher identified the aims and objectives for a role play. Students need to understand why they are participating in the role play and how it will contribute to their learning.
3) The teacher explained the context and procedure for a role play. It is to make sure that students familiar with the environment in which the role play occurs. Teacher also prepared students for the language they will use in the role play.
4) Teacher divided the class into some groups.
5) Teacher gave the students a card which consists of cue or information about the situation and the character to be played.
6) Teacher asked the students to discuss what the speaker might say and notes some vocabularies related to the topic of role play.
7) Teacher let the students try out the role play privately with their group.
8) Teacher asked the student to perform the role play by calling them group by group.

The teacher should choose the appropriate role play types for his students. The selection of types should be suitable with students' level. Sadow (in Rivers, 1987:34-37) notes, appropriate task for beginner students is kind of simple role play contains with simple dialogue. The character is not complicated and the story is not quite long. This activity intends to give a

chance for the students to articulate the new language fluently. Moreover, Sadow says, for intermediate and advance students, intellectually challenging problem-solving activities can be used on regular basis to promote interaction and divergent thinking. A good choice of technique will improve student's achievement in speaking ability.

The data analysis was used in this research is in the form of quantitative. The collected data from observation in each cycle was analyzed qualitatively based on the fact of the students' condition when the teaching learning process is going on. And the data from the students' speaking achievement test in each cycle was computed quantitatively.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research is Classroom Action Research. According to Elliot (1991:69) classroom action research is a study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it. Further, McMillan (1992) explains that classroom action research is a specific type of applied research with the purpose to solve a specific classroom problem or make a decision at a single local site. Because it goal is to improve practices immediately within one or a few classroom.

This classroom action research planned to be conducted in a cycle in which the cycle covers the activities of planning the action, implementing the action, class observation and evaluation, and reflection (Elliot, 1991). The researcher collaborated with the English teacher who teaches the VIII C class students of SMP Negeri 11 Jember. The collaboration is focused on identifying and defining research problem, planning the action, carrying out the action of the research, doing class observation and evaluation, reflection.

The supporting data were collected by using interview and documentation. Reading comprehension test was used to get the primary data in this research. The observation was done in each meeting of each cycle. In this research, the researcher used the indicators for observing the students' active participation during the teaching learning process. The indicators to be observed were students asking and answering questions, students' attention to the lesson and students reading the text of Indonesian Fables, also students doing the exercise individually. The indication of active students is

if three or more indicators reached, on the contrary, students were less active if less than three of indicators were reached.

In this classroom action research, interview itself had been conducted with the English teacher to collect the supporting data covering the curriculum used in the VIII Grade students, the materials that were used by the teacher to teach reading, the textbook that were used, and students' problem in reading activity. Then, documentation was also used to get the supporting data. This classroom action research was considered successful if it fulfilled the following criteria, at least 60% of the subjects of the research can reach the score of 70 or more for speaking test. And at least 60% of the students are active during the teaching and learning process.

The last activity in this classroom action research was reflection, the reflection is conducted to know whether the action on the cycle is successful or not. It was done to know the strength and weaknesses of action. In this stage, the researcher collaborated with the English teacher to do the reflection to reflect the results of observation and speaking achivement test in each meeting of the cycle.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The result showed that the students' participation in the teaching learning process of speaking increased from 31,4% in the first meeting and 52,5 % in the second meeting in cycle 1 to 71% in the first meeting and 76,3% in the second meeting of cycle 2. The result of observation showed that the action in cycle 1 still got a problem because the standard requirement of process monitoring had not been fulfilled yet. The failure in the first meeting might be caused by unfamiliarity of the students to the technique and the limitation of time. Meanwhile in the cycle 2 there was a significant improvement of students' speaking active participation. Most of them are enjoyed having the action of teaching English by using role play technique. All the students got the opportunity to practice the role play in front of the class. It means that role play technique in teaching speaking was interesting. The students were not bored, and it helped them to focus and give freedom on the speaking activity.

Based on discussion above, it was proven that the use of role play as teaching technique in speaking class could improve the students' speaking achievement as well as the students' active participation during the teaching learning process. This finding is in line with the

previous research finding of Septihapsari (2006) that the use of role play technique could improve the students speaking achievement. Role play gives the opportunity for the students to express themselves, share their opinion and use their imagination, and this will make the teaching learning activity more alive. It was supported by explanation from Al-Arishi (1994:338) that role play is increasing motivation, heightening self esteem, encouraging empathy and lowering sensitivity to rejection. By using role-play in the class, the teacher is building condition that students naturally enjoy in dialogues.

Based on explanation above, it could be summarized that the research objectives had been already fulfilled. In other words, the implementation of the actions, that is, teaching speaking by using role play could improve the students' speaking achievement and could active the students to be enthusiastically involved in the teaching learning process of speaking.

CONCLUSION AND SUGESTIONS

Based on the results of speaking ability test that was done in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, it could be concluded that the use of role play technique could improve class VIII C students' speaking ability in the 2010/2011 academic year. The result of the students' speaking achievement test improved from 65.8 in cycle 1 to 73 in cycle 2. In addition, the percentage of students who got ≥ 70 in the speaking achievement test also increased from 47.8% in cycle 1 to 70% in cycle 2.

Meanwhile, the result of the observation showed that the percentage of the students who actively participated in the teaching learning process of speaking by using role play technique also improved from 50% in cycle 1 to 70% in cycle 2. It means that the use of role play technique could improve the students' participation in speaking class.

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