

## **IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY USING VIRTUAL ROLE PLAY DURING PANDEMIC COVID-19 AT 117 JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL JAKARTA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research was aimed at improving students' speaking ability using virtual role play. It was a virtual classroom action research conducted at 117 Junior High School Jakarta. The respondents of the research were 36 seven<sup>th</sup> grade students. The data were collected by using observation and giving speaking test. The learning syntax was designed for three stages, namely preparation, implementation, and reflection. The learning process related with preparing learning, organizing dialog scripts, giving the scripts to the students by WhatsApp, practicing the dialog, and assessing learning outcomes. To get the data of the research, the writer implemented virtual classroom action research for three cycles. In the first cycle, the students were practicing short dialogue scripts, and for the second cycle the students were given dialogue scripts in form of drama. Then, at the last cycle, the students were making and practicing their own dialog scripts. After conducting the research, the result showed that in the first cycle, the active students were 58% in which the average score is 68. In the second cycle, the active students were 74.%, and the average score is 75. In the last cycle the active students become 86.%, and the average score is 82. Finally, it could be concluded that by using virtual role play the active students were increasing during pandemic, and the students were able to create and practice new dialogs.

**Keywords:** CAR, Virtual Role Play, Speaking Ability

### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa menggunakan permainan peran secara virtual. Ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas yang dilakukan di SMP 117 Jakarta.

Responden penelitian ini adalah 36 siswa kelas tujuh. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi dan pemberian tes berbicara. Sintak pembelajaran dirancang dengan tiga tahapan yaitu persiapan, pelaksanaan, dan refleksi. Proses pembelajaran meliputi persiapan pembelajaran, penyusunan naskah dialog, memberikan naskah kepada siswa melalui WhatsApp, lalu mempraktikkan dialog, dan menilai hasil belajar. Untuk mendapatkan data penelitian, penulis melaksanakan penelitian tindakan kelas secara virtual sebanyak tiga siklus. Pada siklus pertama, siswa mempraktekkan naskah dialog pendek, dan pada siklus kedua siswa diberikan naskah dialog dalam bentuk drama. Kemudian, pada siklus terakhir, siswa membuat dan mempraktekkan naskah dialog mereka sendiri. Setelah dilakukan penelitian diperoleh hasil bahwa pada siklus I siswa yang aktif sebesar 58% dengan skor rata-rata 68. Pada siklus II siswa yang aktif sebesar 74% dan skor rata-rata 75. Pada siklus terakhir keaktifan siswa menjadi 86.%, dan skor rata-rata 82. Akhirnya, dapat disimpulkan bahwa dengan menggunakan virtual role play keaktifan siswa meningkat selama pandemi, dan siswa mampu membuat dan mempraktekkan dialog-dialog baru.

**Kata Kunci:** CAR, Virtual Role Play, Kemampuan Berbicara

## INTRODUCTION

Nearly all schools from various parts of the country around the world use English as one of the subjects that is taught in formal schools. This indicates that English is a language learned for communication, and it is used in all activities, either in formal and non-formal situations. So English has always been a non-negotiable specialty in every school and all levels of education.

Even for international relation, the ability to speak English is very important in order the people can participate in all conversations. English in the international world is used very widely starting from entrepreneurs, employees, and officers in various companies both within the country and out of the country (Yopi,2021). It has four skills that have to be mastered by learners, and it becomes an absolute requirement for having a good job. So English is the most important language in this world and that is an undeniable fact. It can be seen that by virtue directly in the world of education and in the world of work, the ability to speak English is absolutely important. Even in reality, we can see that the teachers and parents think that the ability to speak English for their children is a must, and it must be mastered by their children from an early age.

Based on the importance of English as stated above, the researcher focuses on improving the teaching English in school during pandemic. The emphasis is on developing the communication skills of the students so that the ability to communicate using English is growing. However, during pandemic in which classes are conducted online, the teaching English is not so effective. By implementing roleplay, it is expected that the virtual class

becomes full of activities and interesting and not boring for students. Therefore, teachers need to create learning techniques to motivate students to learn.

In learning English, students' speaking skills are often encountered with several problems. One of the problems that is often found is about the local language being carried out so that their native language seems to become a hamper for making them able to use a foreign language. Based on the small interviews between the teacher as a researcher to his students, it was found that many students were very passive and even some were silent. After being traced, many students were embarrassed by their abilities, their lack of self-confidence, and other problems.

Arsjad in (Kuncoro,2017) said that in speaking skills there are several factors that support its effectiveness, namely linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic factors include accuracy in pronouncing sounds, duration, placement of stress, appropriate tone of voice, choosing the right words, and using effective sentences. While non-language factors include flexibility of speech, visual contact with listeners, appropriate movements and expressions, adequate volume of voice, fluency of speech and mastery of material.

Speaking skill as English proficiency is one of the abilities that must be mastered in learning English. The ability is to express opinions or thoughts and feelings to a person or group orally, either face to face or remotely. Harmer in (Lindawati,2017) further said that speaking is a form of conveying information by using words or sentences. It can also be interpreted that speaking means using language to vary depending on the speakers. He also stated that speaking is a natural communication tool between community members to express thoughts and as a form of social behavior. Furthermore, he stated that speaking skill is the ability to compose sentences for communication that occurs through sentences reflecting the different behavior of different people (Lindawati,2017).

For this reason, the researcher is interested in motivating students to be able to make sentences for oral communication. To do that, role play technique in teaching speaking will be used for students of 117 junior high school, Jakarta.

## **RESEARCH PURPOSES**

The purpose of the research is to improve the learning process by targeting:

1. To increase students' speaking ability in English.
2. To increase students' activeness

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

This research is a descriptive quantitative method. To get the data, the instruments used are a test and an interview. The data are about students' speaking ability and their self-confidence. In doing the classroom action research (CAR), virtual role play is implemented. It is conducted in three cycles during learning process of 7th grade

students of SMP 117 Jakarta. It is expected to make students more active and confident, so that their English achievement especially English speaking ability can be improved.

## **PROCEDURE OF THE RESEARCH**

In implementing the classroom action research (CAR), the procedures used are from Kemmis & McTaggart:

1. Formulating the problem and planning the action.
2. Conducting the actions and doing observation.
3. Reflecting the results based on the observation and the score.
4. Revising and re-planning for the next cycle, if needed.

## **INSTRUMENT OF THE RESEARCH**

To get the data of the research, there are two instruments used:

1. Test  
Test is used to know the improvement of students' speaking ability after doing the research.
2. Observation and documentation.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

The action research is conducted for 3 cycles. There are two kinds of data in this research, they are students' speaking ability and their activeness. The data are analysed quantitatively and qualitatively which are taken from a test and observation

## **PLACE AND RESPONDENTS OF THE RESEARCH**

The research is conducted at 117 Junior High School Jakarta. The respondents of the research are 36 seventh grade students.

## **FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM**

From the description above, the problems in this study are formulated as follows: There are several problems in providing English language learning that can be identified as subjects in this study, they are:

1. How is the students' speaking ability after using role play on online learning?
2. Can students' activeness be improved by using role play on online learning?

## **LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH**

In order to make these problems clearer and easier to understand, the researchers limit the problems for the use of the roleplay method in learning activities while teaching speaking at 117 junior high school.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **SPEAKING SKILL**

Speaking skill is one of the four English skills that is very important to be learned by students so that their communication skill can run well. Communication can happen between communicator and communicant. By having a good speaking skill can avoid misunderstanding between them. Therefore, speaking skill is a language skill that can develop students' lives; in other word, where and when students start listening, their speaking skill will also develop.

Harmer in (Lindawati, 2017) stated that speaking is a natural communication tool between community members to express thoughts and as a form of social behavior. Furthermore, he stated that speaking skill is the ability to compose sentences because communication occurs through sentences to show the different behaviour of different people.

Thus from above explanation, it can be concluded that speaking is how to express ideas, opinions, or feelings to others by using words or sounds to inform something according to what one want to convey by using several techniques. One of them is the Role Playing.

### **ROLE PLAYING**

According to Husein, in Hidayati (Alfi,2021) Role playing is a form of educational games that are used to explain roles, attitudes, behavior, and values with the aim of appreciating feelings, points of view, and values, the views and ways of thinking of others.

According to Sugihartono (Alfi,2021) the role playing technique is a learning process through development of students' imagination and receptiveness by students playing figures, both living and dead characters, so that students practice for appreciation and skilfully use the material being studied.

Meanwhile, Sagala (Nurhasanah,2016) explains that the role playing is a way of presenting lesson material by showing and acting out ways of behaviour in social relations. It is a technique in which its implementation to students by getting the task from the teacher and act it out in social situations containing a problem. Then the students can solve the problem that arises from those social situations.

Based on the information from the experts above, the various techniques that the researcher studied, the role playing technique is a very appropriate one since individual

students really do appreciate and use feelings for the roles they play in every scene. They play by using English as a language of instruction. With the role playing technique, students are expected to be able to play various characters, whether as friends, brothers, sisters, teachers, parents and so on according to their respective roles in various situations. If the role playing technique is well planned and well socialized to students, it will be able to foster a sense of responsibility and improve the ability of students to work together in teams with other students. The most important thing is that there will be a social attitude of respecting other opinions so that they are not afraid to make mistakes and dare to make decisions in every task in group work.

## **ROLE PLAYING TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING SPEAKING**

In this pandemic situation, educators are strongly demanded to be creative in carrying out English learning that is targeted to be achieved. Likewise in learning speaking, there are several techniques that can be used as alternatives in learning, and one of the most suitable techniques in learning speaking is a role play technique or role playing even though in practice the learning role is carried out virtually or online by using google meet.

Role-play or commonly referred to as role playing is a technique that invites students to imagine themselves in a scene or drama, or to play other characters using language that is appropriate to the context. According to Tychsen on wikipedia, a role-playing game (abbreviated RPG) is a game in which players assume the roles of characters in a fictional setting. Players take responsibility for acting out these roles within a narrative, either through literal acting or through a process of structured decision-making regarding character development. An actions taken within many games succeed or fail according to a formal system of rules and guidelines.

Meanwhile, according to ( Soleh et al, 2013 ) in learning speaking with the role play, it is stated that role play is a simulation of the behaviour of the person being played which aims to train students in dealing with actual situations; intensive practice of spoken language, and provide opportunities for students to develop communication skills.

in learning speaking using role play, it can be explained that through role play technique students can improve their ability to respect themselves or the feelings of others.

In this online class or virtual role play learning, researcher prepare scenarios and socialize the roles they will perform. The researcher then formed groups according to the number of players in the dialogue. In the division of this group of course the researcher also pays attention to the number of students so that all students get a role. The next step is to distribute the playing cards to each group so that it can be determined which group will appear first.

Before performing, the researcher asks the students to do exercises or simulations after the pairs first consolidated with the researcher. After being guided by the researcher, especially in terms of pronunciation, spelling, and intonation, the exercise activity can be done in pairs

by online or at home by each partner according to the dialogue given. After that several other couples are asked to appear to do their conversations.

It is possible that this role play is not purely communicative due to the limitations of time pandemic, but this activity is one way for students to be able and willing to communicate. Researchers sometimes also ask students to play free roles, that is, students are only given a form of spoken language and then they make up the scenario themselves. It could be done using their own role play in which they prefer because of several advantages. This provides opportunities for students to improvise by themselves using English which is commonly spoken in everyday life and motivates students to be more creative.

## **THE PURPOSES AND BENEFITS OF THE RESEARCH**

### **Research Purposes**

The purpose of this study is to determine the improvement of students' ability of 7th grade students from SMPN 117 Jakarta through active communication in English using the role playing. The implementation of the role playing learning model as one of the innovative learning models in which the learning process emphasizes the role of students in learning, and more the teacher only as a facilitator, mentor for his/her students.

There are several functions in using the role playing, namely:

1. Instilling an attitude of courage to students in communicating using English.
2. Instilling self-confidence of students.
3. Instilling a sense of responsibility of students.
4. Instilling a cooperative attitude between students.
5. Instilling an attitude of respecting the opinions and shortcomings of other students.
6. Instilling an attitude to learn to make decisions.

## **THE BENEFITS OF RESEARCH**

The results of this study are expected to be able to provide benefits to the 117 Junior High School Jakarta. The benefits that can be taken from this research are to increase and explore the creativity of students in learning English related to skills or expertise in communicating using English. It will of course be very beneficial for teachers of SMPN 117 Jakarta in particular and in other areas which are hopefully able to support learning English better, especially during a pandemic era.

## **THE RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Research Design**

As it is known that this research was carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic, and of course there was no face-to-face meeting with students in its implementation. Face to face with students, researchers use Google Meet. In this research, the researcher used a class action

known as Classroom Action Research (CAR). The classroom action research is a classroom learning research conducted by teachers/researchers to improve the quality and learning outcomes (2019). The technique used in this research is using a technical approach to role-playing virtual demonstration, which is carried out based on cycles:

### **1. The first cycle**

From the first meeting up to the third meeting, the researcher used google meet to provide direction and guidance on material that would be carried out by students. It was started by dividing students into groups, giving a dialogue model to all groups for examples of sentences or words that would be used in the materials.

### **2. The second cycle**

At the second cycle from the fourth meeting to the sixth meeting, the researcher with google meet began to provide consolidation of the sentences in the dialogue that would be used in the conversational dialogue in various pre-determined situations. The students are also asked to understand the sentences from the dialogue given

### **3. The third cycle**

At the third cycle, from the seventh meeting to the ninth meeting, students are invited to explore creative ideas of their minds to create a conversation that imitates someone and plays the characters in the dialogue via google meet. The students are allowed to find and change the conversation by staying at the core of the problem. Then, the students begin to present their work using Google Meet and guided by the researcher. Each group presented their conversational skills using google meet. After each group completes its presentation, then the other students are invited to criticize the results of the group's work that has made a presentation. Finally at the end of the meeting an evaluation and conclusions are made from the results of the students' work. The following are the steps that the researcher did with google meet/zoom:

1. First of all, the teacher socializes the competencies and objectives of learning and what methods will be used
2. The teacher forms groups
3. The teacher prepares the scenario
4. Teacher gives scenario via whatsapp message
5. Scenarios are studied by students in their respective homes
6. The teacher monitors the progress of students with their respective groups through whataspp groups
7. The teacher helps students if there is someone who wants to communicate something
8. The teacher provides guidance to technical matters regarding the given scenario

9. The teacher conducts an experiment in implementing a role play scenario in a zoom meeting with a whatsapp video with their respective groups
10. The teacher conducts an initial evaluation to all groups of the scenarios they are going through.
11. After being satisfied, the new teacher begins to carry out the assessment evaluation

## **LOCATION AND TIME OF THE RESEARCH**

This research was carried out at 117 Junior High School Jakarta, which is located on Jalan Pahlawan Revolusi, Pondok Bambu, Duren Sawit, Jakarta Timur. This research was conducted to 7th grade students totally 36 students. This classroom action research consists of 3 cycles in which each cycle consists of 3 meetings which were held in October – December 2020-2021

## **Scope of the Research**

This research is about the implementation of classroom action research model using a role play technique. The success of this research is measured based on the increase of students' speaking ability and their self-confidence. The learning outcomes were observed in each cycle taken from the learning outcomes during the online or virtual role performance activities.

The implementation of the role play technique has been determined by the researcher as a way of solving problems. In giving the materials based on basic competencies were given regarding several conversational themes that were carried out from chapters 1 – 4 of the revised 2016 edition of the English textbook “When English Rings a Bell ( Wachidah,2016).

## **Steps of the Activities**

The activities that were carried out by researchers using action research are as follows ( Arikunto, 2006 ):

1. Planning
2. Implementation
3. Process
4. Reflection

## **DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES AND RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

The data needed by researcher is students' speaking ability result. To get the data of learning outcomes using role playing is carried out by virtual class using zoom or google meet. There are two ways to get the data, that is, using a test to know students' speaking ability to know students' perception toward the implementation of classroom action research using role play technique. To get the data of the research it use speaking test.

Thus, the activities of students were observed by researchers with the aim of obtaining data on learning outcomes, especially the ability to speak using oral test. To measure the students' competency, the following criteria (Suharsimi, 2006) used are:

**1. Vocabulary**

- 5 = perfect/almost perfect
- 4 = there is an error but it does not interfere with the meaning
- 3 = there is an error and interferes with meaning
- 2 = many errors and interfere with meaning
- 1 = too many errors so difficult to understand

**2. Fluency**

- 5 = Very smooth
- 4 = current
- 3 = quite fluent
- 2 = less fluent
- 1 = not smooth

**3. Accuracy**

- 5 = very thorough
- 4 = careful
- 3 = quite thorough
- 2 = less careful
- 1 = not careful

**4. Pronunciation**

- 5 = almost perfect
- 4 = there is an error but it does not interfere with the meaning
- 3 = there are some errors and interfere with meaning
- 2 = so many errors that it is difficult to understand
- 1 = too many errors so difficult to understand

**5. Intonation**

- 5 = perfect/almost perfect
- 4 = there are some errors but they do not interfere with the meaning
- 3 = there are some errors and interfere with meaning
- 2 = many errors and interfere with meaning
- 1 = too many errors so difficult to understand

**6. Understanding**

- 5 = very understanding
- 4 = understand
- 3 = quite understand

2 = do not understand

1 = don't understand

**7. Choice of words** (Mutmaina, 2013)

5 = very varied and precise

4 = varied and precise

3 = quite varied and precise

2 = less varied and precise

1 = not varied and precise

To get the data about the students' speaking ability of 117 Junior high school Jakarta, the researcher used the following criteria such as:

1. Clarity in the pronunciation
2. Clarity in intonation / rhythm
3. Fluency

In addition to the three things above, the researchers also observed the group activities by paying attention to the following things:

1. Group cooperation
2. Group cohesiveness
3. Spirit
4. Decision making

The 4 points above will be the attitude value in the report card later.

**Documentation**

The documentation in this study are the results of the researchers' observations as long as students carry out online group discussions and group presentations, the results of student work and documents for increasing student scores.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Result of the Research**

To get the results of the research, teacher prepares a learning scenario and appoint several students to study. After the presentation is complete, each student is given a worksheet to discuss the performance of their respective groups student , delivery of competence, appoint students to act out the scenarios that have been studied, groups of students discuss the roles performed by actors, presentation of group results, inference guidance and reflection ( Zulfritri,2019).

**1. The Result of Students Speaking Ability**

After conducting the action research the student score are getting higher. From the first cycle, The average student speaking score is 68. The second cycle, the student speaking score is 75, and the last cycle, the student speaking score is 82. Its mean that after conducting action research Student speaking ability is improved.

## **2. The result of Student activeness**

After conducting the action research the student activeness are getting better. From the first cycle, The average student activeness is 68%. The second cycle, the student activeness is 74%, and the last cycle, the student activeness is 86%. Its mean that after conducting action research Student speaking activeness is also improved

## **3. The result of observation**

Based on the observation it can be concluded that the student behaviour is also improved. The Result can be seen below :

- A. Learners can feel how to understand each other for the activities carried out
- B. Students are given the freedom to express their dialogue
- C. Students can do creative ideas related to dialogue
- D. Learners are better able to solve the problems they face and coordinate in the implementation of role play scenes
- E. Students are better able to identify problems related to the dialogue given
- F. Students are able to evaluate the shortcomings of their friends
- G. Students are more expressive of the dialogue that is given
- H. According to students, the dialogue material with role play is embedded longer in the minds of students
- I. Students in practice even though through zoom smile a lot and enthusiastic and looks fun

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Role Play learning technique is a learning technique about role playing like a drama where in the role play technique there must be a fun element in the implementation of the learning process. In the implementation of role play, students are highly demanded to be creative and must be imaginative so that what they are aiming for can be achieved.

The syntax of this online Role Play learning model is Researchers do socialization and what competencies will be achieved first, then prepare learning scenarios divide all class members into groups, students study scenarios, students share roles on the given scenarios, group presentations, conclusion and reflection.

Based on the researchers have done, it is proven that learning using the role play model even during the pandemic and zooming in, it can still increase student speaking ability and their activeness. Its means that the students are able and willing to speak English.

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