IMPROVING THE SPEAKING ABILITY OF THE THIRD SEMESTER STUDENTS OF STIT URWATUL WUTSQO JOMBANG THROUGH ROLE PLAY

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Speaking is an essential means of presenting communication among human beings and people usually judge an individual in the way of he or she speaks. Therefore, people should be able to communicate successfully and acceptably. Furthermore, speaking is related to success in life, since it occupies an important position both individually and socially. According to Nunan, to most people, mastering the art of speaking is the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in terms of the ability to perform a conversation in the language.[2]

Basically, speaking is about making meaning. As we begin to speak we also learn that speaking enables us to participate in social situations and interact with other people. As speakers, we can ask for things that we want, get other people to respond our request, express who we are as individuals, socialize with those around us, verbalize things that go on in our imagination and exchange information with other people.

Speaking, as one of the four skills, should be developed in the teaching of English because, according to Richards and Renandya, learning speaking is very important for students. For many students, learning to speak is priority due to the needs.[3]

In line with Richards and Renandya, Harmer explains that a learner will be considered to have mastered the target language when he is able to use the language in speaking. Besides, the growth of English as language for internal communication has made the teaching of speaking skill becomes very important.

However, speaking is considered difficult. As Lindsay and Knight say that speaking is complex task, since it involves putting a message together, communicating and interacting with other people and learners need a lot of practice to develop this skill. According to Huda the oral communication is an important skill required for English language teachers, but it is the most difficult skill to develop.

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[1]Dosen STIT Urwatul Wutsqo Bulurejo Jombang.

[2]Nunan D, *Language Teaching Methodology : A Textbook for Teachers* (Englewood Cliffs : Prentice Hall, 1991), 39.

[3]Richards JC dan Renandya WA, *Methodology in Language Teaching : An Anthology of Current Practice* (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2002), 201.

The teaching of speaking in Indonesia has been implemented since secondary school. However, the result is not maximized yet. Many graduates of senior high school are not able to speak well. It is revealed by some research relating to the students' speaking ability. For example, Budiharso states that the majority of SMA graduates are not able to communicate in English accurately and fluently. Syamaun also says that his students' speaking ability was poor. Moreover, he explained that from 35 students only 3 of them could respond to questions orally. In line with Syamaun, Amin states that there are some evidence in which many senior high school graduates who have studied English for six years or even more are still unable to communicate in English orally.[4]

The reasons cover some monotonous techniques which are implemented in some school, the students' motivation to study is low and the students do not have enough vocabulary.

The students' low motivation is due to the boredom of the monotonous use of teaching techniques and their anxiety to make mistakes especially in grammar and pronunciation. Another causal factor is that they do not realize the benefit of mastering the speaking skill.

The inappropriate teaching technique used by the teachers might also cause the students' low speaking ability. The teacher's inappropriate use of teaching techniques which result in the students' boredom in learning is due to the teacher's limited mastery of teaching techniques for the teaching of speaking skill. Due to the limited mastery of teaching techniques, the teacher, most of the time, leads to involve the students in teacher-centered classroom in which the students are treated as passive recipients who are required only to respond to the teacher.

Another example of the inappropriate use of a teaching technique is the use of drills and repetition throughout almost the whole session of the speaking class. This technique is resourceful when it is used as the preliminary activities of speaking classes for a short period of time, i.e., for approximately five minutes. But if the teacher uses these techniques monotonously, it will cause the students' boredom.

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[4]Widiati U & Cahyono BY, "The Teaching of EFL in The Indonesian Context : The State of the Art" dalam *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan,* No. 13 (3) Tahun 2006, 269.

As a teacher, the researcher had observed the teaching and learning process in her classroom. The problems she found were (1) the students' speaking ability was low (2) most of the students did not seem to be motivated and involved in speaking class.[5]

The low students' speaking ability could be identified by the fact that only few students who could replay the teachers' spoken well. Some of them just kept silent and most of them were reluctant and lazy during speaking class. Besides, the students' speaking score was low.

Meanwhile, their low motivation could be seen from the fact that many students were reluctant to participate when the subject was speaking, when the teacher asked them to speak English they just kept silent, the teacher then tried to make example of conversation and guided them how to pronounce.[6] However the students were still reluctant to practice the conversation. The teacher then analyzed those problems by asking some questions (i.e. Why don't you speak English? Why are you reluctant to practice the conversation? *etc*). Their answers varied, such as they were afraid to make mistakes and were not confident to speak because they were ashamed to be laughed at, since they could not pronounce well, that they were lazy and bored because of the monotonous technique. The others said that they were poor in grammar and did not have enough vocabulary.

The further real data were gained from a preliminary study conducted on the 5th to 12th September 2010. The researcher found that most of the students were not involved in the teaching and learning speaking. They liked to sleep or went out from the class or absent when the subject was speaking. The researcher then made an informal conversation with them about the reasons. Some of them said that they preferred grammar than speaking because only few students who actively involved when speaking subject, some of them said that they came to STIT Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang to avoid English, and most of themsaid that they were afraid of making mistake and were shy to be laugh at

Based on the observation checklist most of the students revealed that the lecturer always used inappropriate technique. The result of preliminary study showed that the students' speaking ability was not satisfactory and it was categorized as poor based on the range score of STIT Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang.[7]

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[5]Lindsay C & Knight P, *Learning and Teaching English : A Course for Teachers* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2006), 57.

[6]Nurul Huda, *Language Learning and Teaching : Issues and Trends* (Malang : Universitas Negeri Malang, 1999), 72.

[7]Gebhard JG, *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language : A Teacher Self – Development and Methodology Guide* (Michigan : The University of Michigan Press, 1998), 49.

Taking the problems into account, the researcher decided to find the activities which were appropriate with the students' need, interesting, relaxing, fun and were able to involve them, and which could help them to get over their apprehension in the classroom.[8] As Gebhard says the teacher should create activities to get the students involved in interacting in English. In addition, the use of appropriate strategy can attract the students' attention toward the presented material and make the students participate actively in the learning activities.[9]

One way to solve the problem above is by applying a teaching strategy that offers practices in speaking and at least it can reduce the students' apprehension in teaching and learning process. The researcher tried to implement role play as strategy to improve the students' speaking ability to the third semester students of STIT Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang.

According to Blatner, role play is the best way to develop the skills of initiative, communication, problem solving, self-awareness and working cooperatively in teams. Larsen-Freeman state that role plays, whether structured or less structured, are important in the communicative approach because they give learners an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles. A role play is a highly flexible learning activity which has a wide scope for variation and imagination. Moreover, Ladousse explains that role play promotes interaction in the classroom and increases motivation. In this case sharing of responsibility between teacher and the learner in the learning process takes place.

Considering the effectiveness of role play, some researchers had conducted the research in the teaching of speaking using this strategy. For example, Nizar says that role play can increase the speaking ability of the eleventh year students of SMAN 1 Tumpang Malang. Moreover, he explains that the result of the research showed that role play is effective to be used in increasing his students' speaking ability. The criteria of success he had made were reached since his students were actively involved during the teaching and learning process. They were also able to express their ideas, opinions, and feeling well in their performance without being worried to make mistakes. Besides, they were not shy any longer, and could use the language to function correctly. In addition, they were able to work in groups cooperatively. Siwu says that her students' speaking ability improved through role playing strategy. Furthermore, she gives explanation that the findings of her research showed that role playing strategy is effectively applicable to improve the students' speaking ability of

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[8]Ladousse GP, *Role Play* (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2004), 7.
[9]Manoppo AL, "Using Language Game to Improve the Speaking Ability of the Second Year Students at SLTP 5 Manado," unpublished thesis (Malang : The State University of Malang, 2004), 5.

SLTP Negeri 5 Tahuna. The students were actively involved and responded to the conversation better during the teaching and learning process than before implementing this strategy.

In line with Siwu, Angelasto, a university teacher in China, on his research of the application of role-playing in teaching the speaking skill to his EFL university students, finds out that this technique can help inactive students. He finds that the role-playing is proven to be entertaining for the students, it provides a way for the teacher to make the reticent students more active and it is fun.

Based on the importance of speaking, the strength of role play, some researchers' experience, and positive findings of the previous studies, the researcher focused her research on the implementation of role play to improve the EFL speaking ability of the third semester students of STIT Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang.

A. Method

This research was designed as classroom action research, because it is used to overcome problems confronted by the researcher as teacher in her classroom. According to Suyanto and Sukarnyana, action research is one of strategies to improve the quality of education through more effective classroom practice.[10] It is an inquiry which is carried out in order to understand, to evaluate and then to modify, in order to improve educational program.[11] This action was intended to improve the students' speaking ability through role play. The researcher was helped by a collaborator who observed everything happened during the implementation of the strategy.

In conducting the research, the researcher followed a number of steps. The steps included preliminary study to analyze and identify the problems as the preparation, followed by planning the action, implementing the action, observing, analyzing and reflecting. The researcher conducted the research procedure that follows the Kemmis and Mc Taggart's procedure.

Planning was focused on how to set up a teaching and learning strategy to be used to overcome problems confronted in the class during the preliminary study. In this case, the researcher and collaborator prepared the appropriate teaching strategy, lesson plan, material and media, and the criteria of success. The criterion of success was set up were: the students

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[10]Suyanto KKE dan Sukarnyana IW, *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas : Classroom Action Research* (Malang : Universitas Negeri Malang, 2001), 21.

[11]Koshy V, *Action Research for Improving Practice : A Practical Guide* (London : Paul Chapman Publishing, 2005), 8.

were able to report what they had done on the role playorally. In this case the students who have got fair level and good level in the preliminary studycould reach very good level (80-100).

In implementing, the researcher divided the implementation of the strategy in three meeting, the first meeting was the introduction of the strategy, the second meeting was performance of role play and the third meeting was presenting oral report. The researcher as practitioner taught speaking and was helped by a collaborator who observed the practitioner and the implementation of role play.The researcher also observed the students' involvement during the teaching and learning process.

Observing was done during the implementation of the strategy. Observing is the process of recording and gaining data about any aspects or events which is happening during implementation. The data was gained from the students' speaking scoreand the students' involvement in speaking activities as additional information. The above data were taken from some sources such as (1) the students' final score (2) the result of observation checklists and field notes about the students' participation during the implementation of the strategy and (3) the result of questionnaire to find the students' response toward the implementation of the strategy.

In the reflection stage, the researcher and the collaborator discussed together the implementation and observation during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. All relevant data from implementation were analyzed and reviewed to examine whether the action was successful or not by matching the result of the observing stage with the criteria of success.

B. Result

The implementation of role play through the following procedures (1) brainstorming by turning the video related to topic and questioning the students about what they have watched (2) telling students what is going to be done (3) dividing students into groups (4) giving the hand outs (5) drilling the handout to the students (6) distributing the cards containing the situation to each student (7) guiding the students to make conversation and improvised it (8) modeling the students by performing role play with one of them (9) asking them to make their own conversation, and practiced on their own seat (10) asking them to perform the role play in pair (11) asking them to report what they have done in the role playorally has proven to be successful in improving the students speaking ability of the third semester of students of STIT UrwatulWutsqo Jombang.

The students' improvement can be seen thatin the preliminary study there were 13 (29,4%) students got score with fair level, 2 students (4,5%) were in good level and the average score was 47.5, in Cycle 1 there were 13 (29,4%) students got score with good level, a student got fair level, and one was in very good level, and the average score was 56.4, and in Cycle 2 the fifteen students could reach score in very good level and the average score was 65.1. The highest score in Cycle 1 was 80, and in Cycle 2 was 90. Besides, the data also showed that the students who were actively involved during the teaching and learning process gradually improved from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 and 37 (84%) of students gave positive responses to the implementation of the strategy.

C. Discussion

Derived from the findings of this research, it is found that role play is very effective to teach speaking and gives contribution in improving the students' speaking ability.

The result of the preliminary study showed that most of the students were not motivated in the teaching and learning speaking, the students' score could only reach 47.5 and categorized poor, the score can be seen at the table 1 :

Table 1
The Students' Speaking Score on Preliminary Study

No	Students	Aspects				Total	Score
		Fluency	Grammatical Accuracy	Pronunciation	Vocabulary		
1	ANF	2	3	1	2	8	40
2	ALM	2	3	2	2	9	45
3	AAA	3	4	2	3	12	60
4	AN	2	2	2	2	8	40
5	AK	2	2	1	2	7	35
6	AM	3	3	2	4	12	60
7	AMR	2	3	2	2	9	45
8	AML	1	2	1	2	6	30
9	BSI	3	4	2	3	12	60
10	BSH	2	2	2	2	8	40
11	DM	2	2	2	2	8	40
12	DDJ	3	4	2	3	12	60
13	DMF	3	3	2	4	12	60
14	DMS	3	2	2	2	9	45
15	DS	3	3	4	3	13	65
16	DN	3	2	2	2	9	45
17	EAN	2	3	2	2	9	45
18	FZ	2	2	2	2	8	40
19	HD	2	3	2	2	9	45
20	HK	2	2	2	2	8	40
21	IF	3	3	3	3	12	60
22	IR	2	2	2	2	8	40
23	IK	2	2	2	2	8	40
24	JMY	2	2	2	2	8	40
25	JMT	2	2	2	1	7	35

26	MU	3	3	3	4	13	65
27	MK	3	4	2	3	12	60
28	MBS	2	2	2	2	8	40
29	MAQ	1	2	1	2	6	30
30	ME	3	3	3	3	12	60
31	NTI	2	2	2	2	8	40
32	NA	2	3	2	2	9	45
33	NJ	2	2	2	2	8	40
34	PZ	2	3	2	2	9	45
35	PR	2	2	1	3	8	40
36	SR	2	4	2	4	12	60
37	SFN	3	4	3	4	14	70
38	SM	4	3	4	3	14	70
39	SINL	3	3	3	3	12	60
40	TP	2	2	2	2	8	40
41	UL	2	2	2	2	8	40
42	US	3	2	2	2	9	45
43	WBS	3	3	3	3	12	60
44	ZNR	1	2	1	1	5	25
	Total	**103**	**116**	**92**	**107**	**418**	**2090**
	Average						**47.5**

The steps used in Cycle 1 wereturning the video of role play related to the topic. The video was used as an example of role play. In selecting video, the researcher considered some terms, for example it is easy to be understood by the students; related to the topic, and related to the curriculum.

The second step was telling students what is going to be done, the third step wasdividing students into groups, after that the researcher distributing the hand outsand drilling the handout to the students many times. The next step was distributing the cards containing the situation to each studentand then guiding the students to make conversation and improvised it. After the students made conversation the researcher modeled the student by performing role play with one of them and asking them to make their own conversation to be practiced on their own seat. The following was the researcher asked them to prepare their role play to be performed in the next meeting and the last step was asking them to report what they have done in the role play. And the students' speaking scorecan be seen in table 2 :

Table 2
The Students' Speaking Score in Cycle 1

No	Students	Aspects				Total	Score
		Fluency	Grammatical Accuracy	Pronunciation	Vocabulary		
1	ANF	3	3	2	2	10	50
2	ALM	4	4	2	2	12	60
3	AAA	4	4	3	3	14	70
4	AN	3	3	3	3	12	60
5	AK	3	3	1	3	10	50
6	AM	4	3	3	4	14	70
7	AMR	3	3	2	2	10	50

No	Students	Fluency	Grammatical Accuracy	Pronunciation	Vocabulary		Total	Score
8	AML	3	2	1	3	9	45	
9	BSI	4	4	3	3	14	70	
10	BSH	3	3	2	3	11	55	
11	DM	3	3	2	3	11	55	
12	DDJ	3	4	3	3	13	65	
13	DMF	4	3	3	4	14	70	
14	DMS	3	3	2	2	10	50	
15	DS	4	4	4	3	15	75	
16	DN	3	3	2	3	11	55	
17	EAN	3	3	2	2	10	50	
18	FZ	3	3	2	2	10	50	
19	HD	2	3	2	3	10	50	
20	HK	3	3	2	2	10	50	
21	IF	4	3	3	4	14	70	
22	IR	2	3	2	3	10	50	
23	IK	3	2	2	2	9	45	
24	JMY	2	3	2	2	9	45	
25	JMT	2	3	2	3	10	50	
26	MU	4	3	3	4	14	70	
27	MK	4	4	3	3	14	70	
28	MBS	3	2	2	2	9	45	
29	MAQ	1	2	1	3	7	35	
30	ME	4	4	3	3	14	70	
31	NTI	3	3	2	2	10	50	
32	NA	3	3	2	2	10	50	
33	NJ	2	3	2	2	9	45	
34	PZ	3	3	3	3	12	60	
35	PR	2	3	1	3	9	45	
36	SR	3	4	3	4	14	70	
37	SFN	4	4	4	4	16	80	
38	SM	4	4	4	3	15	75	
39	SINL	4	4	3	3	14	70	
40	TP	2	3	2	2	9	45	
41	UL	3	2	2	3	10	50	
42	US	3	2	2	2	9	45	
43	WBS	4	4	3	3	14	70	
44	ZNR	1	2	1	1	5	25	
	Total	**135**	**137**	**103**	**121**	**496**	**2480**	
	Average						**56.4**	

After the researcher changed the material which was appropriate with students' need and ability to be role played in Cycle 2, the students speaking score could increase and reached the criteria of success as was showed in table 3 :

Table 3
The Score of Oral Report in Cycle 2

No	Students	Aspects				Total	Score
		Fluency	Grammatical Accuracy	Pronunciation	Vocabulary		
1	ANF	3	3	3	3	12	60
2	ALM	4	4	3	4	15	75
3	AAA	5	4	3	4	16	80
4	AN	3	3	3	3	12	60
5	AK	3	3	2	3	11	55
6	AM	4	4	4	5	17	85
7	AMR	3	3	2	3	11	55

8	AML	3	3	3	3	12	60
9	BSI	5	4	3	4	16	80
10	BSH	3	3	3	3	12	60
11	DM	3	3	3	3	12	60
12	DDJ	4	4	3	5	16	80
13	DMF	4	4	3	5	16	80
14	DMS	3	3	3	3	12	60
15	DS	4	4	4	4	16	80
16	DN	4	3	3	3	13	65
17	EAN	3	3	2	4	12	60
18	FZ	3	3	3	3	12	60
19	HD	3	3	3	3	12	60
20	HK	3	4	2	3	12	60
21	IF	4	4	4	4	16	80
22	IR	3	3	3	3	12	60
23	IK	3	3	2	3	11	55
24	JMY	2	3	2	3	10	50
25	JMT	3	3	3	3	12	60
26	MU	5	4	4	4	17	85
27	MK	4	5	3	4	16	80
28	MBS	3	2	2	2	9	45
29	MAQ	2	2	2	3	9	45
30	ME	4	4	4	4	16	80
31	NTI	3	3	2	4	12	60
32	NA	3	3	3	3	12	60
33	NJ	2	3	2	3	10	50
34	PZ	3	3	3	3	12	60
35	PR	2	3	2	3	10	50
36	SR	5	4	3	4	16	80
37	SFN	5	4	4	5	18	90
38	SM	5	4	4	5	18	90
39	SINL	4	5	4	4	17	85
40	TP	3	3	2	2	10	50
41	UL	3	2	2	3	10	50
42	US	3	3	2	3	11	55
43	WBS	5	4	3	4	16	80
44	ZNR	1	2	1	2	6	30
	Total	**150**	**147**	**124**	**152**	**573**	**2865**
	Average						**65.1**

The result of the research using role play indicated that there was an improvement of the students' speaking ability. It could be seen from the students' score which were evaluated using analytical scoring rubric adapted from O'Malley and Pierce. At the preliminary study, there were 15 (34%) students got score in good and fair level, and they were gradually improved from good level at the Cycle 1 to very good level at the Cycle 2. It means that the students' scores could reach the criteria of success determined that was the students who got score in good (70-79) and fair level (60-69) could reach score in very good level (80-100). That is why the study can be stated as successful research.[12]

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[12]O'Malley JM dan Pierce LV, *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learner: Practical Approach for Teacher* (Massachusetts : Addison-Wesley, 1996), 67.

The Students' Involvement during Speaking Class

Based on the observation checklist the students who actively involved in the teaching and learning process in Cycle 1 were 25 (56%) students were actively involved in questioning and answering the lecturer and students, they also asked for clarification when they did not understand the lecturers' or their friends' explanation. However, less than 31% students were reluctant in discussing with their group. In the second meeting most of the students performed role play well and only two groups performed not seriously. In the third and fourth meeting was oral report about what they had done in the former role play. In this case the time that was used to report was not same in which some students reported with short time and some of them spent much time. It was occurred because the material was very difficultespecially for lower students. Some students who had reported their role play were actively involved in writing and correcting their friends' mistakes in pronunciation and grammar. However some of them still laughed at their friends' mistakes.

In Cycle 2, the students' involvement in the teaching and learning process was increased that was 30 (68%) students actively involved in the questions and answers during the teaching and learning process, 39 (88%) students were discussing their role play with their group. In the second meeting most of the students performed role play seriously. Some of the groups made improvisation of their role play, and in the third and fourth meeting the studentsreported what they had done in role play freely without afraid of making mistake. And more than 18 (40%) students wrote their friends' mistakes in grammar and pronunciation.

The data was also sustained by the field note and questionnaire. The field note exposed that the students gradually were active from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2, they could perform role play freely and enthusiastically. They also performed oral report without being afraid of making mistakes. In addition, the students who liked to leave the class or were absent for speaking subject gradually reduced and some of them were actively involved during the teaching and speaking activities.

The field notes also stated that the students were enthusiastic and cooperative in doing their task along the implementation of the strategy. When they got difficulties of words and did not find on their dictionary, they asked the researcher. Most of them paid attention to the teacher's instruction and listened to their friends when they clarified information to their members. Besides, the students were enthusiastically imitated the teachers' pronounce in drilling section.

In regard with the students' responses toward the strategy, it was found that84% of the students gave positive response to the implementation of role play and recommended the strategy for the upcoming speaking activities.

D. **Conclusions and Suggestions**

With the research findings, it can be concluded that role play has proved very effective to improve the EFL speaking ability of the third semester students of STIT Urwatul Wutsqo Jombang.

The steps of the implementation of role play include (1) brainstorming by turning the video related to topic and questioning the students about what they have watched (2) telling students what is going to be done (3) dividing students into pairs (4) giving the handouts to be drilled (5) drilling the students (6) distributing the cards containing the situation to each student (7) guiding the students to make conversation and improvised it (8) modeling the students by performing role play with one of them (9) asking them to make their own conversation and practiced on their own seat (10) asking them to perform the role play in pair (11) asking them to report what they have done in their former role play orally.

The implementation of the role as strategy to teach speaking not only improved the students' achievement in speaking but also the teaching and learning process. At the preliminary study, there were 15 (34%) students got score in good and fair level and they were gradually improved from good level at the Cycle 1 to very good level at the Cycle 2. It means that the students' scores could reach the criteria of success determined that was the students who got score in good level (70-79) and fair level (60-69) in the preliminary study could reach score in very good level (80-100) after the implementation of the strategy.

Besides, role play has successfully encouraged the students to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Moreover, they showed the positive responses toward the implementation of role play and recommended the use of the strategy for the future speaking activities. That is why the study can be stated as successful research.

Based on the above findings, the English teachers are suggested to use role play as strategy to teach speaking, since it can be practical contribution on how to improve the students' speaking ability with more practice of using oral communication in their real and natural communication activities and as a relevant knowledge about the teaching of speaking. For the institution, the findings are expected to be used for decision making that the teaching of speaking in this institution has to use role play as the strategy. And the findings of this

research can become a good reference for the future researchers who wish to conduct similar researches.

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