Improving the Speaking Skills of Junior High School Students

Through the Role Play Method

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Abstract: This study aims to help teachers improve students' speaking skills by using learning methods that are expected to increase students' interest in learning and students' speaking skills. English is the language most widely mastered and used by people around the world in various sectors such as politics, economics, education and so on. English is also a globally recognized language as an international language. The ability to master English is mostly judged by how proficient a person can communicate using English, therefore many people practice to be able to master this skill. However, English speaking skills in education in Indonesia are still under-appreciated, when compared to other aspects of English skills such as reading and writing. To overcome this, it is recommended to use role-play because it can increase the fun in learning and make it easier for students to learn to communicate with someone or a group using English. The method I use in this research is Role Play, with the subject of class VIII junior high school students. Collecting data using observation and tests. This type of research is Classroom Action Research. The results showed that the average score of students before the use of role-play was 57.3 which then increased in the first cycle with an average score of 66.7 with an increase of 14%. Then the second cycle was carried out which showed the average score of students to be 77 with an increase of 12.7% from the first cycle.

Keywords: Role-play, Improve, English speaking skills.

INTRODUCTION

English is the language used by many people in the world as the language of international communication. Many people study English courses to acquire good and fluent speaking skills. The reason is because English is used in many fields, both formal and informal. These fields include politics, economics, education, health and so on. There are four mandatory skills that must be learned to be able to master English. There are four aspects of language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills [1]. Mastery of English will be difficult if you cannot master these four skills. Even so, speaking skills are the most important and most needed skills. Ur says that speaking intuitively seems to be the most important [2]. Speaking can express feelings and emotions more clearly, besides the use of speaking skills is used more often than other English skills. For most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured by the ability to have conversations in that language [3].

It is unfortunate that English subjects in Indonesia still tend to prioritize teaching theory, and reading and writing skills rather than speaking and listening skills. This causes students to be stiff and confused when asked to speak in English even though they have mastered the theories needed to learn English. When the research was conducted, several problems were found, such as: students were not familiar with English which is a foreign language, students were embarrassed when asked to speak in English, motivation to learn speaking skills was still low, and there were still many students whose scores were below the KKM. In an effort to

overcome this, the researcher uses the role play method which is considered capable and suitable to overcome the problems above.

Role-play is a learning method in which students directly act out a problem that focuses on issues of human relations. Students are given the opportunity to describe or reveal the characters played and other students are given the task of observing the course of the drama. Role playing model can be said to be the same as sociodrama, which basically dramatizes behavior in relation to social problems. Role play in principle is learning by presenting roles that exist in the real world into role performance in the classroom which is then used as reflection material so that students can provide an assessment of the learning that has been done and then provide alternative suggestions or opinions for the development of this role.

This study looks at the problems above and will focus on the delivery of increasing student grades after the implementation of the role-play and the process of implementing the role-play.

Previous research on improving speaking skills has been extensively researched in other studies such as "Role Playing Method in Improving Storytelling Skills in the Buying and Selling Experience of Elementary School Students" by Reza from Wijaya Kusuma University Surabaya [4] and "Increasing Talking Skills through Phase Dialogue Using SAVI Techniques in SMA Santun Untan" by Lora from the University of Tanjungpura Pontianak [5]. The research of the two articles discusses how to improve students' speaking skills but with a different focus. Reza's research focuses on improving speaking skills using the role play method through direct interaction by students in traditional markets which are then displayed in class by students. Lora's research focuses on improving students' speaking skills using the SAVI method which is somewhat similar to role-play but has a different process and steps. This study focuses on improving students' speaking skills by using role playing games but with recount text material. This is in accordance with the material taught in schools based on the competence of the K13 English curriculum for class VIII, especially KD 3.11, namely learning that discusses past events or recount text.

Recount text is one type of text in English that contains a story about an action or activity of the author or character in the story. The activity or action in question is the author's experience expressed through recount text, usually the purpose of recount text is to entertain the reader, as well as provide information.

METHOD

The method used in this study will be described briefly and clearly. The things that will be described include research design, population, sample, sampling, research procedures or steps, instruments and ethics of acceptance of research implementation by related parties. Here's the description:

The research design used is classroom action research. Classroom action research (CAR) is action research carried out by teachers in their own classrooms, through self-reflection in order to solve problems until the problem is solved, with the aim of exploring improvements. performance as a teacher, so that student learning outcomes increase.

Classroom action research is a form of reflective study by action actors, which is carried out to increase the rationality and stability of their actions in carrying out tasks, deepen understanding of the actions they take, and improve the conditions in which learning practices are carried out. Action research generally aims to make changes in the form of increasing knowledge about problem solutions between theory and practice faced by teachers in schools. This research was conducted through collaborative research with an English teacher for class VIII students at SMP N 1 Manisrenggo.

Kemmis and Taggart provide a limitation on Classroom Action Research (CAR), which is a form of reflexive research by taking certain actions in order to improve and improve learning practices in a more professional class.

The steps contained in this research include:

1. observations (initial observations) related to basic information in schools and problems that exist in schools while asking for advice on research subjects,
2. Observing the implementation of learning in the classroom and determining the steps to be carried out in the cycle,
3. the first cycle experiment,
4. cycle II experiment,
5. Reflection, if there is an improvement, the results can be formulated, if it fails, it needs to be repeated.
6. description of research results.

The population or subjects in this study were class VIII students of SMP N 1 Manisrenggo Klaten. The class used as the research subject is class VIII A recommended by the English teacher. The sample that will be shown in this article is 15 children, which is half of the number of students in the class. This research is a CAR research so that data collection is carried out by adjusting the data collection contained in quantitative research and qualitative research.

The procedure used in this study was as described in accordance with the general procedure of classroom action research. The steps include:

1) Initial observation

Initial observations were made by researchers for 3 days before the study was conducted. Researchers observed the learning process that usually occurs in some eighth grade students at school. The researcher also paid attention to the schedule, regulations, attitudes of students and teachers during learning, and what policies were displayed by the school such as disciplinary regulations and the implementation of 15 minutes of preparation before starting the lesson which was carried out by all students and teachers, namely singing the national anthem and reading the Koran briefly. before.

Observations were also made with interviews with teachers, regarding what materials are suitable for improving speaking skills and in accordance with the applicable Basic Curriculum. The researcher also asked about the learning situation, and the students' abilities according to the teacher. Which class is suitable for this learning, and the validation of the lesson plans that will be used during the lesson. In addition, the researcher also asked about teaching time and how to adjust research time with classroom teaching so that there would be no clash of schedules.

2) Observation and Planning

Planning is done simultaneously with giving pre-test to students. The pre-test was given to class VIII A students at the first meeting. The pre-test tested in the form of descriptive questions, multiple choice questions, and blank columns for students to write their own dialogue using holiday-themed recount text. The learning steps at the first meeting were carried out in accordance with the RPP which was made based on the RPP reference made by Erni Yuniarti S.Pd in October 2021.[6]

3) Cycle I

The implementation of the first cycle was done by dividing the students into several groups. Students have been asked to make the dialogue as an assignment or homework at the first meeting. This time, students were asked to present the results of their assignments in front of the class by doing role playing with the plots made by them. The whole group had advanced and the teacher and friends who had not advanced paid attention. At this time the researcher also took the value of the students' appearance in front of the class.

4) Cycle II

After the implementation of the role play in cycle I which had been assessed and researched, the researcher again asked the students to present their new story. This time the teacher and researcher gave a free theme, but the types of recount text were different, there were personal recount text, imaginative recount text, and factual recount text. Groups of students write dialogues based on the themes they get after being shared by the teacher. This research was also carried out in the same way as cycle I. When students appeared in front, the teacher and researchers reassessed as before.

5) Reflection

Reflection is done by giving post-test questions to students. This question is used to measure students' knowledge abilities as a complement in this study. As for the students' speaking skills after the assessment, it is known that after the first cycle and second cycle the students' speaking skills have increased so that the researcher does not continue the next cycle because it is considered sufficient.

6) Description of research results

The results of the knowledge assessment research show that students' scores have increased. At the time of the pre-test or before the role play method was applied, students explained about the recount text as usual which was explained by the teacher in front of the class. When given a test which is then assessed students get the results as in Table 1. The passing grade is 65.

Table 1. Processed Data of Students' Passing the Assessment of Knowledge

No	Student ID	Score		Average	PASSED/FAILED PRE-TEST	PASSED/FAILED POST-TEST
		Pre-test	Post-test			
1	AS	46	76	61.00	FAILED	PASSED
2	AII	73	73	73.00	PASSED	PASSED
3	AF	63	66	64.50	FAILED	PASSED
4	APU	63	73	68.00	FAILED	PASSED
5	AAW	40	86	63.00	FAILED	PASSED
6	ADA	66	73	69.50	PASSED	PASSED
7	AHK	86	86	86.00	PASSED	PASSED
8	AN	83	90	86.50	PASSED	PASSED
9	AE	76	76	76.00	PASSED	PASSED
10	ANC	86	93	89.50	PASSED	PASSED
11	BNRN	50	96	73.00	FAILED	PASSED
12	BR	70	86	78.00	PASSED	PASSED
13	CN	66	86	76.00	PASSED	PASSED
14	EFA	76	80	78.00	PASSED	PASSED
15	FRA	70	70	70.00	PASSED	PASSED
Average		67.6	80.7	74.13	PASSED	PASSED

To assess the students' speaking ability, the researcher used the scoring rubric as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Scoring Rubric of Speaking Ability

Criteria	Score	4	3	2	1
Pronunciation		Speech and pronunciation is understandable despite the accent	Pronunciation is sometimes defect which sometimes causes problems in understanding	Pronunciation problems often lead to difficulty to understand the speech	Problems in pronunciation occur along the speech; leading to difficulty in understanding
Grammar		Speech is grammatically accurate	Grammar is sometimes troubled but does not interfere meanings	Many grammatical errors which interfere meanings and therefore speech is often repeated.	Grammar is too problematic, making the speech difficult to understand.
Vocabulary		Using the proper and appropriate expression.	Some vocabulary is not appropriate	Using inappriate vocabulary, which confuses meanings.	Vocabulary is limited, which making him/her hard to follow conversation.
Fluency		Dialog/speech is fluent	Fluency is hindered by some language problems	Frequently hesitate and eventually stop due to language limitations.	A lot of pauses and stops during the dialog, barely speaks.
Comprehension		Conversation/dialog is easy to follow, despite some repetitions.	The majority of the conversation/dialog is understandable, despite some repetitions.	Conversation/dialog is hard to follow except in some parts where the dialog discusses general topic and with repetitions.	Dialog cannot be understood despite its being simple and short.

Measurement of skills using the formula :

$$Final\ score = \frac{The\ number\ of\ scores\ obtained\ by\ students}{Maximum\ or\ Ideal\ score} \times 100$$

In practice, students do role play with enthusiasm and joy. This can be seen from the results of the increased speaking skills assessment. When the pre-test was conducted to test the students' speaking ability, the researcher asked each two children in pairs to read the dialogues they made in front of the class. The assessment carried out during the pre-test got an average student learning outcome of 57.3. After knowing that the speaking skill score was less than the KKM, which was 65, the researcher started the first cycle. After the first cycle was implemented, the researcher found that the average score of the students increased to 66.7 or increased by 14% from the previous score. However, because there are still many students who have scores below the KKM, the researcher continues the research to cycle II where this time students get an average score of 77 with an increase of 12.7% from cycle I.

The instruments used in this study were observation sheets, pre-test sheets, and post-test sheets.

The research has been conducted in accordance with applicable research ethics. The researcher has submitted an initial observation letter from the campus which is signed by the Head of the Study Program. After the letter was received, the researcher then conducted interviews with the teacher and began to make observations on the appointed day. When conducting research, the researcher again submitted a research letter to the school, namely the vice principal of SMP N 1 Manisrenggo. Both letters have been kept and approved by the school.

Before the pre-test was conducted, the researcher asked the teacher to validate the questions and lesson plans. The researcher asked for the signatures of the teacher and principal on the lesson plans and the results of student assessments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study can be said to be successful because there is an increase in each cycle. In the assessment of knowledge in Table 1. Knowledge can be seen that the average value has increased. The previous number of students was 5 students who had not passed the KKM, after the role play was carried out, all students had a score above 65, which means that they have passed the KKM score and are declared to have passed. This gives the result that students are able to learn the recount text material better by using this role-play method.

Speaking skills have the same result where students' skills can be improved more than before by using the role-play method. The following is a table of students' speaking skills results for 2 research cycles:

Table 2. Speaking skills

No	Student Initials	Pre-test score	Score in Cycle 1	Increase	Score in Cycle 2	Increase
1	AS	60	65	7.7%	80	18.8%
2	AII	60	70	14.3%	75	6.7%
3	AF	50	70	28.6%	70	0.0%
4	APU	50	65	23.1%	75	13.3%
5	AAW	45	60	25.0%	85	29.4%
6	ADA	55	70	21.4%	70	0.0%
7	AHK	65	70	7.1%	75	6.7%
8	AN	75	70	-7.1%	90	22.2%
9	AE	65	65	0.0%	70	7.1%
10	ANC	65	65	0.0%	70	7.1%
11	BNRN	60	70	14.3%	75	6.7%
12	BR	45	70	35.7%	80	12.5%
13	CN	65	65	0.0%	70	7.1%
14	EFA	55	65	15.4%	90	27.8%
15	FRA	45	60	25.0%	80	25.0%
Average		57.3	66.7	14.0%	77	12.7%

Based on the table above, it is known that the improvement of speaking skills in English has increased in each cycle. The same explanation has been explained in the description of the research results in more detail. At the beginning of the use of role play, perhaps because the use of the new

method, students still did not adapt well so that some students experienced a decline in grades. In the pre-test there were only 5 students who passed the speaking skill test. After the use of the role play, the average score rose and only 2 students did not pass the speaking skill test. After the second cycle was held, all students passed the speaking skill test.

Based on these data, it can be concluded that the application of role play in improving speaking skills in grade VIII students of SMP N 1 Manisrenggo has been successful and proven effective.

The problems found can be said to be resolved. Students are getting used to writing dialogues, discussing with groups, and speaking in English. Students are also no longer shy as before, as evidenced by the increase in grades and improvement in skills that indicate student comfort or student pleasure during lessons. Students' grades have also passed the KKM, and by assessing students' speaking abilities, students begin to increase their interest in learning to speak better.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether role-play was effective enough for teachers to improve students' speaking skills. Based on the increase in students' grades and attitudes in the field, it shows that role-play has proven to be effective. Even a lot of research on role-play that can improve students' speaking skills can be considered as a consideration for the effectiveness of role-play. This research is quite consistent with other CAR research. Researchers followed the CAR steps in accordance with applicable regulations. The difference found in this study is in the place and subject of the research which is different from other studies. In addition to the year of research, the situation and conditions during the research are also definitely different from other studies.

CONCLUSION

Role-play is a role-playing method that takes events or patterns of human social behavior and then plays them in a short and epic manner without conflict. This method is usually used for narrative text material, with the aim of improving speaking skills, improving critical thinking skills by making dialogues or analyzing dialogues, assessing the performance of friends, or it can also increase students' interest and willingness and abilities. to discuss with the group. This method is widely studied by teachers, lecturers and other researchers. Therefore, the researcher feels that the use of the role play method is appropriate to improve the speaking ability of elementary school students because it is quite easy to apply and easy to understand by students. This research uses the CAR method because it is in accordance with the implementation process in the classroom and is also more flexible in terms of data collection and data analysis.

This study took recount text material according to the K13 basic curriculum, especially KD 3.11 to teach students about past learning. However, in KD the researcher found that the curriculum provisions also wanted to improve students verbally. This is one of the reasons researchers focus on improving speaking skills.

The research objective is seen from the results that have been implemented or achieved well. Student interest increases and grades increase. The scientific reason that can show that students' interest can be increased by using role-play is that students can create their own dialogue, with their own plot according to their imagination. This makes students feel enthusiastic and prefer when learning takes place to make it easier to understand the material, because that is why their scores can increase in each cycle. The difference and decrease in cycle I in some children can be caused because they have just adapted to role-play. This is reinforced by the increase in their abilities and average

scores in cycle II. This can be a consideration for teachers and other researchers who want to use role play in learning and what aspects affect it.

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