

Improving English Speaking Skills through the "Role-Play" Technique

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ABSTRACT

The Purpose of this study is to get the empirical knowledge of the Role-play technique to improve speaking ability, to know if the role-play effective in teaching speaking, to find the answer if the role is effective to improve English speaking ability. The technique of the research is qualitative. The data from field was done through observation in the classroom. Here the writer directly taught the students and observed students' activities in speaking class. The writer explains the finding and gives some samples of role-play technique, activities in teaching and how to teach speaking through role-play technique.

Keywords: Speaking Skill, Role Play, Techniques of Teaching

1. Introduction

Nowadays, many English courses are available in various regions. People who wish to improve their English-speaking abilities are provided with numerous facilities. The high number of public courses is one indication that teenagers and even children have a strong desire to become proficient in English. However, despite the abundance of available English courses, it does not necessarily mean that people will have the confidence to participate or speak. The materials used in classrooms do not meet students' needs, which often lead them to seek other places to enhance their English skills. Most students in the classroom are passively involved in learning.

Several factors contribute to students' speaking difficulties, such as their level of interest, the materials used, the media available, and the teaching techniques employed. Many techniques can be applied, with one effective method being *role play*. Research has shown that this technique is effective for teaching spoken English. Role play encourages greater usage of the English language and allows all students to engage in conversation. This is in contrast to discussion methods, where only some students actively participate while others remain silent. In a role play, every student has the opportunity to speak in a more dynamic atmosphere. However, even with role play, only a few students tend to take the initiative to speak.

2. Objective

The objective of this study is to understand how to teach spoken English through the role-play technique and assess the effectiveness of role play in improving spoken English skills.

3. Theoretical Framework

Theodore Huebner, in his book, states that "Speaking is a skill used by individuals to communicate in daily life, whether at school or outside. This skill is acquired through repetition; it is primarily a neuromuscular and not an intellectual process. It consists of the ability to send and receive messages."

According to Chomsky (in Brown, 2008: 33), speaking skills refer to the ability to articulate and deliver messages, opinions, and desires to others. People who are proficient in a language are referred to as its speakers. Speaking involves various activities, and foreign language learners are often primarily interested in speaking the language.

3.1 Teaching Speaking

Jeremy Harmer, in his book, identifies several classroom speaking activities commonly used in communicative classrooms:

- A. **Acting from Scripts:** The teacher can ask students to perform scenes based on routine scenarios. Students often act out plays using dialogues they have written themselves under the teacher's guidance.
- B. **Communication Games:** Games designed to provoke communication among students are very useful. For example, students may practice speaking by mimicking dialogues from videos, solving puzzles, describing and drawing pictures, or finding similarities and differences between pictures.
- C. **Discussions:** Many discussions fail because students are hesitant to express their opinions, particularly if they are unsure of what to say. Students may lose confidence when speaking in front of the entire class, leading to reduced participation.
- D. **Prepared Talks:** In this activity, students are asked to deliver talks on a topic of their choice. These talks encourage spontaneous conversation. If possible, students should speak from notes rather than a fully scripted speech.
- E. **Questionnaires:** Questionnaires are helpful because they ensure both the questioner and the respondent have something to say to each other. Well-designed questionnaires can promote the natural use of language patterns and foster communication between students.
- F. **Problem Solving:** This technique involves students working in pairs or groups to share their problems, opinions, and feelings. The teacher acts as a facilitator, guiding the communication. This activity encourages students to practice spoken language through questioning and answering.
- G. **Role-Play:** Role-play is a popular activity where students simulate real-life situations. In role play, students adopt different characters and engage in conversations. For example, they

might pretend to be guests at a party or inspectors at an airport. Some students feel more comfortable using language in these simulated environments, as it allows them to experiment freely and act as someone else.

4. Methodology

This study aims to understand students' activities in speaking using the role-play technique. A qualitative research method was used to describe the process of teaching speaking through role-play.

5. Results and Discussion

The results of the data show that students' speaking skills improved when taught using the role-play technique. This suggests that role play is quite effective in teaching spoken English. According to student responses, many found role play enjoyable. This enjoyment led to greater attention in learning and motivated students to actively participate in role-play activities. Role plays also helped learners improve their English-speaking ability, as evidenced by the improvement in their speaking skills after engaging in the activities.

6. Conclusion

Based on the research findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The use of role plays in teaching spoken English is effective, as it leads to improved speaking skills.
- Role play makes speaking and learning more enjoyable and interesting. It helps shy students by providing a "mask," allowing them to express themselves more freely.
- Role play expands the classroom experience to include real-world situations, offering a wider range of language opportunities. Students can take on various roles and practice English in different contexts.
- Role play makes the class more dynamic and active. Students are more willing to participate without being forced by the teacher.

The use of role plays increases students' motivation to learn and makes it easier for them to grasp the lesson.

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