The Effectiveness of Role-Play Integrated with Word Cards on Students' Speaking Skill for Communication

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of role play integrated with word cards on students' speaking skill for communication. A one group pretest-posttest design with the 23 students were given treatments for six meetings. To achieve the aim of the study, a pretest before the treatment, and posttest, after the treatment, are constructed. Then, the mean scores of both tests are compared. It is found that the mean score in the posttest is significantly higher than in the pretest. It means role-play integrated with word cards is effective in improving students' speaking skill for communication.

Key Words: role-play, word cards, speaking skill, communication, effective

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujun untuk meneliti keefektifan bermain peran yang digabungkan dengan kartu kata terhadap keterampilan berbicara siswa untuk berkomunikasi. Rancangan penelitian menggunakan tes awal - tes akhir satu kelompok dengan 23 siswa diberi perlakuan selama enam pertemuan. Untuk mencapai tujuan dari penelitian ini, tes awal, sebelum perlakuan, dan tes akhir, setelah perlakuan, diberikan. Kemudian, nilai rata-rata kedua tes dibandingkan. Ditemukan bahwa nilai rata-rata dari tes akhir lebih tinggi secara signifikan daripada tes awal. Artinya bahwa bermain peran yang digabungkan dengan kartu kata, efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara untuk berkomunikasi.

Kata kunci: bermain-peran, kartu kata, kemampuan berbicara, komunikasi, efektif

INTRODUCTION

Learning English means leaning the four skills of English whether in written or spoken form. Of all the four skills, Ur (1996) stated that, speaking becomes the most important of them. Burns, et al. (1994), O'Malley, et al. (1996) define speaking as an active process of negotiating intended meaning, of using social knowledge of the situation and topic with other speakers and adjusting one's speech to produce the desired effort on the listener. To communicate orally in English well, students must be able to master speaking skill. Communication occurs where there is speech. By mastering speaking skill, people can carry out conversations with others, convey the ideas and exchange the information with others.

Practicing speaking can be done with any people. Therefore, students should practice speaking with other students to be able to master speaking well. According to Bilbrough (2007), a practice is required as something to do for the students in order to use language to communicate. In addition, Scrivener (2005) also states that giving students an opportunity and encouragement to speak is important because it will be a useful thing to do in class, and students can learn to speak by practicing speaking. Hence, in a speaking class the students should work as much as possible on their own and talk to one another directly. So, as a result, conversation practice with other students can be a good way to master speaking.

Richard and Renandya (2002) stated that a key factor in second or foreign language development is the opportunity for students to speak, so the teacher must arouse in students a willingness and need or reason to speak. Furthermore, Richard and Renandya (2002) also stated that communication derives from interaction, so teachers should ask students to communicate with others and provide students with opportunities for meaningful communicative behaviour about relevant topics by using student-student interaction as the key to teaching language for communication.

Role-Play

Student-student interaction means students need a topic to talk to each other. The topics used should be adapted with students' level and should be interesting for them. Moreover, roleplay includes a topic and interlocutor. Role-play is an activity of playing a role so closely to real life done by students in accordance with the role card, which involves fantasy or imagination to be someone else or to be ourselves in a specific situation for a while, improvising dialogue and creating a real world in scenario (Nga, 2011; Livingstone, 1983). This strategy encourages thinking and creativity, lets students develop and practice new language and behaviour skills in a relatively non-threatening setting, create the motivation and involvement necessary for learning to occur, and simulates real life situations and allows students to act out what they would do in a real situation (Tompkins ,1998). Therefore, role play is a strategy which requires students to play a role which is appropriate to the given situation and enables students to 'become' anyone or imagine in a specific situation, which leaners may improvise dialogue or creating their own utterances and scenario like in a real world.

In relation to role-play, Dulay, et al. (1982) mention the student's role in communication. They distinguish students' participation into three types; one-way, restricted two-way, and full two-way. One-way communication is when the student listens to or reads the target language without responding to it. Restricted two-way communication is when the student responds to the target language but not using the target language. Instead, he uses the mother language or some other language. Full two-way communication is when the student responds to the target language using the target language. He is able to produce the target language as response. As one of the three types, full two way communication requires students to have conversation. It is commonly implemented in role-play where students really practice to speak English with their role-mates in which both use English. By using this role play, students can get an opportunity to practice improving a range of real-life spoken language in the classroom.

There are some fundamentals of role-play that have to be known so that the process is not done carelessly. The main fundamentals of role-play, according to Shaftel, et al. (1967) are belief and behaviour. Firstly, belief means a teacher should not impose his decision on the group, but should permit students to make their own decisions by letting them discover better ways to handle their difficulties and learn from their own mistakes from discussion and enactment. Secondly, behaviour means a teacher should accept more open expressions of feelings as far as students are helped to respect the ideas and feelings and also it is safe to be expressed for and by students.

Huang (2008), Livingstone (1983), Shaftel et al. (1967) mentioned main steps of role-play into four steps. These steps include: teacher preparation and student preparation. Teacher preparation covers warming up, teaching materials, and selecting the role-players. Firstly, the teacher "warms up" by opening up a problem area and make the students become sensitive, respond, and realize that they have had to face such problem. Then, the teacher selects the topics based on the level of the students. After that, the teacher decides the topics and situations with the roles. He also teaches the language function, grammar, and also provides the vocabulary, phrases, and sentences necessary for the role-play situations. After delivering the materials, the teacher may assign the student into groups randomly or manipulatively.

During the preparation, students may make notes or create dialogs in peers. They are also required to practice before they perform. The third step is the role-play. This step covers setting the stage and performing the role-play. Before the role-players perform, they set the stage and needed accessories quickly. The other students and teacher as observers may help the role-players set them all. Then, the role-players perfom their roles based on the situation. They may improvise the dialogue. The other students and teacher only observe the performance played by the role players. The last step is debriefing (discussing, evaluating, and following-up). In this step, the teacher invites the student to discuss and evaluate the role-plays which were done together. "The students learn what was happening in the other groups, debate the positions of different groups, and correlate the exercise with reality and various theoretical concepts" (Jones, 1995; Merryfield et al, 1995, cited in Shaw, 2010). The teacher triggers the students to share their experiences related to the situations and roles by asking them questions.

Word Cards

In teaching speaking, media like word cards also play an important role in helping students learn to speak and enhance their speaking skill. Word card is a part of flashcards with the size of a playing card that can be shown to students which is useful for handing out

as part of various activities and functioned to create a connection between the form and the meaning of a target word (Scrivener, 2005; Lavoie, 2016).

There is limited numbers of research on the use of role play combined with word cards. This study investigated the effectiveness of role-play integrated with word cards on students' speaking skill for communication since previous studies separated role play and word cards. Therefore, the research question proposed in this study is "Is role-play integrated with word cards effective in improving students' speaking skill for communication"?"

METHOD

This study employed a pre-experimental design because this study investigated the effectiveness of role-play integrated with word cards on students' speaking skill for communication. Twenty three students in the second semester of the academic year 2015/2016 enrolled at Kanjuruhan University of Malang were chosen as the subject of this one group pre-test-post-test design. This design was chosen since there were only few classes and the researcher was only allowed to use one class. Moreover, the second semester students were chosen because in that semester, the students must take the "Survival Speaking" subject. This term derives from "Survival English" that means basic English for daily conversation and communication. Consequently, students were required to have a conversational practice in the class with their classmates.

To obtain the needed data, the researchers utilized a video recorder during the process to record the students' conversations in the tests and treatment. The students were given a pre-test before the treatment was conducted. Related to the teaching scenario to obtain the data, the researcher distributed several topics to be selected by the students. The top six topics selected most by the students were used as the treatments. In the first meeting, the researcher gave a pre-test to the students. After the pre-test was employed, they opened an introduction about the study that was conducted in that class for eight meetings consisting of two meetings for the tests and six meetings for the treatments. They gave an example of playing a role integrated with word cards. The last, they distributed several topics and asked the students to choose the most six interesting ones according to them to be made as the treatments.

In the next meeting, starting from 2nd meeting to 7th meeting, the researchers gave the students the treatments in the form of role-play integrated with word cards based on the topics which had been selected. There were 30 words on the cards. The students were asked to take ten cards randomly. Sometimes there were also students who only took eight if the time was not enough or conversely 12 cards if the students wanted a harder challenge. Then, the students were asked to play the roles based on the situations of the topics and mention the words on the word cards which had been chosen. Moreover, in the seventh meeting, the researchers gave the students more time to practice on their chair before they performed in front of class. While they were performing in front of class, they had about five or six minutes to play and they might mention all words, not 10 or 12 anymore. At last, in the last meeting, the researcher employed the post-test to the students and the result of the post-test were compared to the result of the pre-test.

RESULTS

The researchers used the SPSS 21 for Windows processing program. In measuring the quantitative data collected after the study, means and standard deviations of the pre- and post-tests were compared by using t-tests. To test the hypothesis, the researchers transformed it into the null hypothesis and used significance level 0.05 as the criterion for the rejection of the null hypothesis.

For the pre-test score, it can be seen in Table 1, while the post-test can be seen in Table 2. Based on the Table 1, it shows that the highest score of 23 students is 78,33 while the lowest score is 25. After the total score was divided into the numbers of the students, the average score is 53,33.

Table 1. The Summary of the Students' score in Pre-test

N	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Total
23	25	78,33333	53,33333	1226,667

Table 2. The Summary of the Students' score in Post-test

N	Lowest	Highest	Mean	Total
23	50	88,3333	66,0145	1518,33

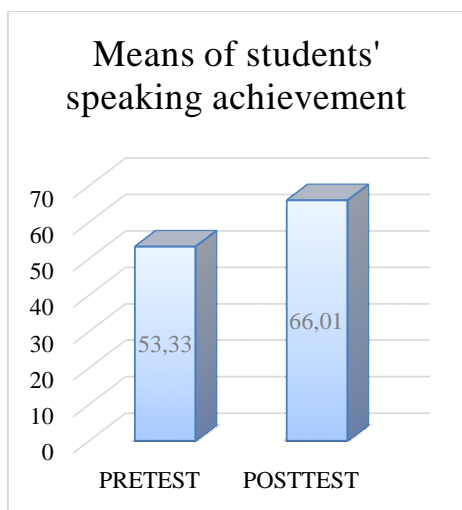## Means of students' speaking achievement

Figure 1. Means of Students' Speaking Achievement between Pre-test and Post-test

Based on Table 2, it shows that the highest score in the post-test is 88,33 while the lowest score is 50. The average score in the post-test is 66,01.

Means of Students' Speaking Achievement between the pre-test and post-test are transferred to Figure 1 to see general difference of the scores.

Figure 1 shows that the average score of the post-test is higher than the average score of the pre-test. The average score in the pre-test is 53,33 while the average score in the post-test is 66,01. The difference of the means between the pre-test and post-test is 12,68.

Paired Sample T-test Results

Paired Sample T-test was used to test the different means between before and after the treatment. $T_{value} > t_{tabel}$ or p-value $< α$ 5% shows that there is significant improvement between before and after the treatment. Going further to a more specific difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test specifically based on each aspect of speaking namely fluency, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and vocabulary skill show to what extent their differences were. Table 4 provides these results. The scores can be seen in the Table 3 for fluency, Table 4 for grammatical accuracy, Table 5 for pronunciation, and Table 6 for vocabulary skill.

Based Table 3, $t_{value} = 5,377$ with sig = 0,000. T_{tabel} of df = 22 with sig. level 0,05 = 2,074. Furthermore, $t_{value} > t_{tabel}$ or sig. $< 0,05$.

Based Table 4, $t_{value} = 4,046$ with sig = 0,000. T_{tabel} of df = 22 with sig. level 0,05 = 2,074. Furthermore, $t_{value} > t_{tabel}$ or sig. $< 0,05$.

Based Table 5, $t_{value} = 3,763$ with sig = 0,001. T_{tabel} of df = 22 with sig. level 0,05 = 2,074. Furthermore, $t_{value} > t_{tabel}$ or sig. $< 0,05$.

Based Table 6, $t_{value} = 4,176$ with sig = 0,000. T_{tabel} of df = 22 with sig. level 0,05 = 2,074. Furthermore, $t_{value} > t_{tabel}$ or sig. $< 0,05$.

While Table 3-6 show the mean score of each aspect, Table 7 show the mean score of speaking skill covering the mean of the all acpects.

Table 3. The Mean Score of Fluency before and after the Treatment

Variable		Mean	t value	df	Sig.	Note
Fluency	Pre-test	14,13	-5,377	22	0,000	Significantly Different
	Post-test	17,39				

Table 4. The Mean Score of Grammatical Accuracy before and after the Treatment

Variable		Mean	t value	df	Sig.	Note
Grammatical Accuracy	Pre-test	13,33	-4,046	22	0,001	Significantly Different
	Post-test	17,03				

Table 5. The Mean Score of Pronunciation before and after the Treatment

Variabel		Mean	t value	df	Sig.	Note
Pronunciation	Pretest	14,64	-3,763	22	0,001	Significantly Different
	Posttest	17,03				

Table 6. The Mean Score of Vocabulary Skill before and after the Treatment

Variable		Mean	t value	df	Sig.	Note
Vocabulary Skill	Pretest	11,23	-4,176	22	0,000	Significantly Different
	Posttest	14,57				

Table 7. The Mean Score of Speaking Skill for Communication before and after the Treatment

Variable		Mean	t value	df	Sig.	Note
Speaking Skill for Communication	Pretest	53,33	-8,145	22	0,000	Significantly Different
	Posttest	66,01				

Based on Table 7, $t_{value} = 8{,}145$ with sig $= 0{,}000$. T_{tabel} of df $= 22$ with sig. level $0{,}05 = 2{,}074$. Furthermore, $t_{value} > t_{tabel}$ or sig. $< 0{,}05$. So, it is concluded that there is significantly different on the score of the aspect vocabulary skill between before and after the treatment, in which the mean score in the posttest is higher than in the pretest. Therefore, role-play integrated with word cards is effective in improving students' speaking skill for communication.

DISCUSSION

The statistical calculation showed that the students' mean score in the post-test was significant higher than in the pre-test. Moreover, the scores of each aspect; fluency, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and vocabulary skill; also significantly increased. It means that role play integrated with word cards was effective in improving fluency, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and vocabulary skill in speaking for communication. Therefore, the scores in the pre-test and post-test were significantly different.

From obtained score, it can be used to test hypothesis. The research hypothesis was "role-play integrated with word cards is effective in improving students' speaking skill for communication", was tested. As a result, the research question, "is role-play integrated with word cards effective in improving students' speaking skill for communication?" could finally be answered. At last, the result of the analysis shows that it met the research hypothesis and it rejected the null hypothesis.

Role-play was implemented to college students based on the belief that they had already enough ability to begin to practice to speaking with a conversation. Based on the research finding, the researchers found students' weakness to perform. First, some students used Indonesian too much while they were performing their roleplay. Second, some students looked difficult to express their ideas. Third, there were many pauses that occured in their speaking performance. Forth, the use of vocabulary and grammar were not satisfactory and could not also be said as good yet. Fifth, some targeted words were not connected to each other because of feeling difficult while using them. Sixth, some students mentioned the word carelessly without any consideration why they should have mentioned the

words so the sentences were not cohesive and coherent. Converserly, there were studenst who could use the targeted words into the conversation well. This was shown when they used the words in their conversation in coherent and relevant sentences from a sentence to others. Moreover, after they got six-meeting treatments, the research finding indicated that role play integrated with word cards could contribute into the improvement of students' speaking skill for communication.

The result showed that this strategy is effective. Furthermore, Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2010) with their study using role play in task-based language teaching (TBLT) showed that role play itself was practically effective in helping students to improve their speaking skill. In addition, this findings also supported Shen and Suwanthep's study (2011) that role-play by practicing with other students gave positive effects on improving students' speaking performance. Yet, in this current study, the researchers combined role-play with wordcards and it was directed in Three-Phase Technique.

Role-play is an effective strategy to improve speaking skill. Besides, word cards are also good media to teach English, and the researchers combined both of them. The integration showed that it brought a positive effect which improves speaking skill significantly. Word cards are good media to teach vocabulary and vocabulary itself is inseparable from speaking. As supported by Kuo and Ho (2012), word cards significantly generate higher score on vocabulary retention. In addition, Lavoie (2016) also stated through his research that the students obtain the positive impact and progress on vacabulary. Furthermore, Koizumi, and In'nami (2013) also add that speaking proficiency can be effectively predicted by vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary has a correlation with speaking. Vocabulary knowledge plays an important role in speaking because students with greater vocabulary knowledge can recall adequate words and use them for speaking through knowledge of antonyms and collocations (Aitchison, 2003). Furthermore, Koizumi, and In'nami (2013) also add that students with poorer vocabulary knowledge may feel difficult to search appropriate words. Moreover, in doing a conversation with other people, without good vocabulary mastery, speaking

cannot run well and fluently since vocabulary words are needed to create sentences.

The function of the word cards in this study is to trigger or encourage studens to speak up longer by connecting a word with other wods in a conversation. This strategy has students acquire enough knowledge in the use of words in speaking and the students are encouraged to develop their speaking till they reach the targeted words to mention (Richek, 2005). Furthermore the students were not limited to use the words' forms shown in the cards only, they might change them into their derivational forms as needed. This is to facilitate the students to develop not only speaking, but also vocabulary words mastery. It constitutes a way of mastering vocabulary (Nagy & Scott, 2000). In using the words during speaking, Willis (1982) uses some words to expand them to make a sentence. However, the researchers not only allowed the students to use some words in a sentence, but also they might use a word for some sentences to expand a longer conversation on condition that the sentences still related mutually since the students did not speak alone, but spoke with others in a conversation.

CONCLUSION

The students taught by using role-play integrated with word cards obtained higher achievement in speaking. It means that the teaching of speaking using role-play integrated with word cards is believed to have contributions on speaking skill for communication. Not only the mean score of post-test which significantly increased from the mean score of pretest, but also the scores of each aspect including fluency, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and vocabulary skill increased. This means that this was an effective and successful strategy in helping the students upgrade their speaking skill for communication.

For future researchers who are interested in using this strategy, it is suggested to conduct a study with more than one group to know whether this strategy is more effective than other strategies. Additional variables can also be added to the study, such as motivation or students' willingness to communicate in English.

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