

Undergraduate Students' Perception on the Use of Role-Play in Speaking Class

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the undergraduate students' perception of role-play in speaking class that focuses on self-concept and speaking ability. The researchers employed a case study of twenty-five undergraduate students who had attended speaking subject with role play as the activity in the learning process. The data were collected by distributing 25-item questionnaires and open-ended interviews to confirm the questionnaire data. The researchers analyzed the questionnaire data quantitatively with mean formulation followed by range score category for the interview data descriptively. The results reported that the student's perception of the use of role-play and their self-concept gained a high score. The students perceived that role play is a suitable and effective technique in speaking class. It helps them to communicate effectively through the use of a script. It also builds self-confidence and motivation to improve their speaking ability. In speaking activities, role play is perceived to create satisfaction and a comfortable and interesting atmosphere. The students are challenged to perform better due to the massive space of practice with their friends with the real life and familiar situation brought to the activity. This study implies that speaking activities with role play to be conducted more frequently and cover more meaningful and contextual topics for the students. This study suggests a comprehensible investigation of the factors underlying the students' confidence in speaking with role play as the activity.

Keywords: Role-play; Speaking Activities; Perception; Self-Concept; Speaking Ability

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an important language skill in learning English, especially for undergraduate students. According to Maria cited in Mulyana (2020), speaking is an essential proficiency for the student for they can communicate in spoken language. By speaking, people will be able to interact with others. However, it is not easy to master speaking English skills. Speaking English skills is still considered a difficult thing for most undergraduate students. As stated by Wulandari, Pratolo, and Junianti (2021), among other English skills, Speaking is the most difficult, and it is difficult to be mastered by the learners. It is because some students feel afraid and shy to practice speaking English in front of the class and watched by a classmate.

Most teachers use appropriate learning techniques to solve students' difficulties in learning to speak English. Teachers need learning techniques to create a good atmosphere when students practice in class. On the other hand, most teachers have many learning techniques. One of the techniques that they used in learning to speak English is Role Play. According to Nga (2011), Role-play is an activity of playing a role so close to real life done by students in a specific situation for a while, improvising dialogue and creating a real world in the scenario.

Byrne (1986) divided role-play into two; scripted and unscripted. Scripted role-play involves interpreting either the textbook dialogue or reading text in the form of speech. The main function of the text, after all, is to convey the meaning of language items memorably. In contrast to scripted role-play, the situations of unscripted role-play do not depend on textbooks. It is known as free role play or improvisation. The students have to decide what language to use and how the conversation should develop.

The students' interpretation about role-play will determine how they respond to this activity. The students' Perceptions will affect a person's view of someone or something they have experienced. In this case, it is the process of learning a language by providing experiential stimuli to students. Perception plays an essential part in the learning process since it influences someone's behavior or attitudes and motivation to learn, as stated by Szilagyi and Wallace (1980). According to Tubbs & Stylvia cited in Ruslan (2020), perception is an active process as one selectively perceives, organizes, and interprets what one experiences. It is supported by Kleinke (1978), who states that perception is essential for teachers and students because it influences the teaching-learning process.

Some previous studies have investigated the role-play in language learning. Mulyana (2020), found that students agree that the role-play method has a positive impact on their speaking skill. Ruslan (2020), reported that role-play could increase students' confidence to communicate with others, increase students' ability to build language competence, and increase students' motivation. Wulandari, Pratolo, and Junianti (2021) found out the problems occurred during the implementation of role-play such as the students did not feel confident, could not master the material, felt nervous, and had difficulties memorizing. Mostly, the research focuses on implementing role-play in teaching speaking but fewer references discuss the students' perception about the role-play in speaking activity. Thus, the researchers focus on students' perception on the use of role-play in speaking activity with students of English education department as the participants.

METHOD

This research focuses on students' perceptions of using role-play in general-speaking classes. Thus, a case study with a qualitative approach was conducted to explore and understand the individual or group scribbled to a social or human problem Cresswell (2009).

Participants

The participants of this study were second-semester students who took a speaking class at the English Education Department, Wiralodra University Indramayu.

Instruments

The instruments were a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was adapted from Adipranata (2009), Wulandari, Pratolo, and Junianti (2019), Zakaria, Rahmat, Aripin, Jasman & Ibrahim (2019). There are 25 questionnaire questions about factors influencing students' perceptions of using role-play in speaking classes. While for the interview, it is used to confirm the results of the Questionnaire.

Procedures

The research was conducted by distributing the questionnaire to the participants about their perception of the use of role-play in a speaking activity. After they filled out the questionnaire, the researchers calculated the result and then three participants were chosen based on the category of high, enough, and deficient level scores of the questionnaires. The interview was conducted to explore their experience with role-play.

Data analysis

The result of the questionnaires was calculated based on the mean formula range score to determine the level of students' perception. Those data are then interpreted into role-play interpretation, self-concept (academic, personal, and social self-concept), and speaking ability. The data from the interview was then transcribed and interpreted based on the relevant theory.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Undergraduate students' perception on the use of role Play

a. Role play

Role Play is one technique in learning English used in speaking class. To see how undergraduate students' perception on the use of Role Play in speaking class, as follow:

Table 1. Role-play

No.	Statements	Mean Score	Mean of Role Play	Category of Mean
1.	I use Role Play in speaking class	4.2	3.9	High
2.	I use English for communication during Role Play	4.2		
3.	I use Scripted Role Play in speaking class	3.4		
4.	I agree that Role Play is an effective technique to learn speaking	4		
5.	The material in the class is suitable to be taught through Role-Play	3.6		

Table 1 shows the result of the student's perception of using role-play in speaking class. The first statement gained 4.2 which indicates that role-play was used in the speaking

class. The second statement gained 4.2 which indicated that English was used during the role-play. The third statement gained 3.4 which indicates the use of scrip in the role-play. The fourth statement gained 4 which indicates that role-play is effective in learning to speak. The fifth statement gained 3.6 which indicates that the material given in the role-play was suitable.

Those data were supported by the interview. The interview covered that role-play was one of the techniques used in speaking class. It was conducted in the form of a scripted method, and guided by the lecturer. According to Donn Byrne (1986), To perform role-plays of the scripted type, the students will have to work in pairs or small groups and play as the model to form the target dialogue or target scenarios. On this occasion, the students can practice the dialogue first before presenting it in front of the class. The students perceived role-play as effective technique in learning to speak. Role-play helped them to develop their speaking skill by the opportunities to take a different role in the performance. By the role-play the students also can communicate effectively using English by practicing the dialogue. This results support the research from Mulyana (2020) and Ruslan (2020) who stated that role-play is an effective technique that can help the students in learning English. It is also suitable to practice speaking for the students.

2. Undergraduate student's self-concept

Self-concept is a person's self-perceptions formed through experience with and interpretations of his or her environment (Shavelson et al., 2012). There are three aspects of self-concept according to Brook: academic self-concept, personal self-concept, and social self-concept.

a. Academic self-concept

Table 2. Academic self-concept

No.	Statements	Mean score	Mean of academic self-concept	Category of mean
1.	Through role-play, I can be more active to speak	3.8	3.7	High
2.	I believe that I can get a better progress in learning by having role-play.	4		
3.	I am more motivated to speak by using role-play	3.6		
4.	Role Play help me think beyond my classroom	3.4		
5.	Role-Play gives me the opportunity to speak up in front of the class.	3.7		

Table 2 shows that statement six gained 3.8, it indicates that the students were more active in role-play activity. The seventh statement gained 4, which indicates that the

students show better progress in learning by having the role-play. The eight statements gained 3.6 which indicates that they were motivated to speak in role-play. The ninth statement gained 3.4, which indicates that role-play helped the students to think beyond their classroom. The tenth statement gained 3.7, which indicates that role-play gave the students the opportunity to speak up in front of the class.

The results of the questionnaires were supported by the result of the interview. The interview result shows that the students perceived role-play could help achieve the academic task. The students perceived role-play could make them more active in speaking class. It supports the report from Gusmuliana, Apriani, and Syafryadin (2021) that role-play motivate students to be more active in expressing their idea. The students also perceived role-play to help them get better progress in learning to speak. Adipranata (2009) reported that role-play makes the students speak. Role-play provides the students to think beyond the classroom. The students do not think that role-play is a task, but it is a way for them to think beyond the classroom. The opportunity given to the students by this technique allows them to speak better in front of the class. This result confirms Wulandari, Pratolo and Junianti (2019) who reported that role-play allows the students to be more active and creative in performing their speaking skill.

b. Personal self-concept

Table 3. Personal Self-Concept

No.	Statements	MeanScore	Mean of Personal Self-Concept	Categoryof Mean
1.	I feel satisfied in using Role Play	3.5	3.6	High
2.	I am more comfortable speakingin English through Role Play	3.4		
3.	I feel challenged to speak in the class conducts the Role Play	4.1		
4.	I am interested in the use of Role Play in Speaking class	3.6		
5.	I learn new expressions used i n my friends' play	3.6		

Based on the table above, the first statement gained 3.5, which indicates that the students feel adequately satisfied in speaking in the class. It is because, students still feel nervous when playing roles in front of the class. The next statement showed that the results of mean score is 3.4. The category of this statements in moderate level. It interprets that students feel adequate comfortable speaking English. The next statement students felt challenges in speaking through role play. The next statement gained 3.6, which indicates that the students are interested to speaking in the classroom by using role play. Students become more active to talk with others, also they become more creative to prepare everything

they will present in front of the class. The last statement gain 3.6, which indicates that the students learn new expressions used when their friends play the Role.

It can be concluded that the interpretations of students' perception on personal self-concept, students feel really satisfied, comfortable, challenged and interested in speaking in the class, and learn new expression used by their friends. The interpretation is also supported by some expert who said students felt comfortable and satisfied to communicate in English during role play, even the students faced some problem, such as feel nervous and find difficulties to memorize that can be a big challenges for students (Liu & Ding, 2009; Wulandari, Pratolo & Juniati, 2019). It means, Role play provides several advantages even though some students still experience problems and difficulties as their challenges in using role play in speaking class. But it is quite interesting technique that can be used in speaking class, because students can be more attractive and creative to prepare well and learn new expression to acting even though it is different with the students' character in normal or real life.

c. Social self-concept

Table 4. Social Self-Concept

No.	Statements	Mean Score	Mean of Social Self-Concept	Category of Mean
16.	Role-play should be conducted based on a familiar situation.	3.4	3.5	Moderate
17.	I guide my friend during RolePlay	2.8		
18.	I prefer to do role-play when learning speaking rather than just read dialogue with my friends	3.4		
19.	Role Play allow me to practice my conversational skills in real life situations	4.1		
20.	I pay attention when my friends perform their play	3.8		

The table above shows that statement sixteen gained 3.4, it indicates that the role-play took a familiar situation so the students can relate to their social role in daily life. The next statement gained 2.8. it indicates that the students did not really guide their friend during role-play. The next statement gained 3.4. It means that the students prefer to do the role-play than just reading the dialogue. Statement nineteen gained 4.1. It means that role-play allow the students to practice the conversational skill in real life situations. The last statement gained 3.8. It means that the students paid attention when their friends perform their play.

The result above can be interpreted that Role Play gives the students an adequate massive space to practice with their friends in real-life and familiar situations. The statement is in line with Zakaria, Rahmat, Aripin, Jasman, & Ibrahim, (2019) they stated

that Role-play allows students practice conversational skills in real life situations. In addition, most of the students pay attention when others perform. On the other hand, students a little bit difficult to guide their friend during role play when they friends forgot the scripts, but they guide their friends when preparing performance by guiding how to pronounce the word or to choose another word that it is hard to pronounce. It can be concluded that role-play is a good way of preparing students to face real-life situations rather than just read dialogue.

3. Undergraduate Students' Speaking Ability on the Use of Role-Play

a. Students Ability

Table 5. Students' Ability

No.	Statements	Mean Score	Mean of Students' Ability	Category of Mean
1	My speaking comprehension has improved through Role Play	3.3	3.4	Moderate
2	My speaking fluency has improved through Role Play	3.3		
3.	I can have pronunciation practice clearly through Role Play	3.4		
4.	Role Play develop my Grammar	3.3		
5.	I can enrich my vocabulary through Role Play	3.8		

Based on table 5, the twentieth statement gained 3.3. It means that the students' speaking comprehension improved through role-play. The second statement gained 3.3. It indicates that the students' speaking fluency has improved through role-play. The third statement gained 3.4. It means that the students can have pronunciation practice through role-play. The fourth statement gained 3.3. It means that role-play developed the students' grammar. And the fifth statement gained 3.8. It indicates that their vocabulary increases through role-play.

The data from questionnaire were supported by the data from interview. The interview covers that the students can speak fluently but still struggling to comprehend what their friends say. Through role-play they learned pronunciation clearly. By the scripted role-play, the students learn the grammar. The lecturer guided them in checking the dialogue, from this activity, the students learn the grammar. They also increase their vocabulary by conducting role-play. some previous research who states that the use of role- playing can increase the vocabularies of students, improve the student's communicative competence, especially in speaking, and also their pronunciation became much better, (Mulyana, 2020; Wulandari, Pratolo, and Junianti, 2021). So, it can be concluded that the students' comprehension are quite complete at a normal rate of

speech. Because, some of students still find some problems on the use role play as learning techniques, even though their speaking ability has increase a little by little.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the students perceived Role Play as a suitable and effective technique in speaking class that helps them to communicate effectively by the use of script in the role play. Role Play helps them to build self-confidence and motivation and improve their Speaking in front of the class and make better progress in learning. The use of role-playing in speaking activity is perceived to create satisfaction comfortable and interesting atmosphere. The students are challenged to perform better speaking ability due to the massive space of practice with their friends by the real life and familiar situations brought to the activity, and the students' comprehension are quite complete at a normal rate of speech. This study implies the use of role-playing in speaking activities to be more frequent and implemented to cover more meaningful and contextual topics for the students. Further investigation is also needed in terms of the effectiveness of role-playing in the speaking activity and the broader scope of the language aspect. It also needed to get more comprehensible results of the research in terms of the factors underlying the students' confidence in speaking through role play.

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