IMPROVING STUDENTS’ SPEAKING SKILLS TO EXPRESS ASKING AND GIVING OPINIONS THROUGH ROLE PLAY

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Abstract: This research is about improving students’ speaking skills to express asking and giving opinion through role play. The methodology of this research is a classroom action research which consisted of 3 cycles. The subject of this research was the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Mandor consisting of 34 students. By applying role play technique in asking and giving opinion, the students played their character using prepared scripts. In addition, the students reflected that role play activity could improve their speaking skill. Meanwhile, in collecting the data, the writer used the observation, speaking performance test, grammar test, vocabulary test and field note through role play technique, the students gradually increased their speaking skill as well as vocabulary and they also paid attention to an appropriate grammar and a proper pronunciation. The result from each cycle (53.17 on cycle 1, 62.74 on cycle 2 and 77.92 on cycle3). Even students fulfilled KKM (standard achievement) on cycle 2.

Key Word: role play, speaking skill.

Speaking mostly relates to how to communicate by using that language. The frequency of using the language will determine the success in speaking skill. Other word, without practicing, it will be difficult to speak English fluently. This research is about improving students’ speaking skills to express asking and giving opinions through role play. When teaching English, the writer found out that mostly his students faced problems in speaking English as the foreign language especially in vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation aspects. When speaking activity was conducted, they mostly kept quiet and waited their teacher asked their turn to speaking even in a very simple or short conversation. In speaking, they also had lack of vocabularies in expressing the words into the language. Referring to
the lack of vocabularies, it made them unable to express their asking and giving opinions. Based on the writer’s experience in teaching English, the students were shy and not confident in expressing their feeling into English. In addition, when having speaking activity, the students did not seem to consider some other speaking aspects such as accuracy and fluency. Therefore, by applying role play with guided questions through current issue topic, it was proved that the students were able to express their asking and giving opinions. For asking and giving opinions expressions were taught, the students found difficulties in using the expression as well as their difficulties in pronunciation. Through the scripts of asking an giving opinions that the teacher prepared in manner of role play technique, the students could learn the words so it automatically increased their vocabularies so it made them not longer to be reluctant to speak more. As a matter of fact, one of the ways in communication is through speaking. It is very important to master speaking skill well. To master speaking skill, students must be trained to use English in oral communication because the frequency in using the language will determine the success in speaking ability. Without implementing the experience of learning the language in the real life, it is difficult for the students to be able to speak well. The last but not least, the writer found out that by applying role play technique, the students started to overcome to their difficulties of using vocabulary. In addition through the words on the scripted role play the students learnt become more familiar with them. The more often they used the words, the great possibility they used in expressing the language in speaking. In addition, by speaking through the role-play technique had allowed them easier to communicate and express the language. Even, they got more enjoyable to speak through role play as well.

TEACHING SPEAKING THROUGH ROLE PLAY
Role play is a familiar technique that is usually applied in the classroom to improve the students’ speaking skill. In role plays, students are assigned roles and put into situations that they may eventually encounter outside the classroom. Because role plays imitate life, it helps the students to develop real life speaking skills by imagining and assuming the roles where they create a pretend situation, and they pretend to be some different persons. In order to conduct role play in the classroom, the teacher should prepare as follows:

- Prepare carefully.
- Set a goal or outcome.
- Use role cards.
- Brainstorm.
- Keep groups small.
- Give students time to prepare.
- Be present as a resource, not a monitor.
- Allow students to work at their own levels.
- Do topical follow-up.

In addition, role-play can be practiced in pairs with each person assigned a role to accomplish an objective. By doing that, the students are expected to play the roles actively so the speaking skill can be improved. The teacher should keep motivating the students to speak. Moreover, students learn to use the target
language in a more realistic and more practical way and they can become more aware of the usefulness and practicality of English for speaking skill. Role play also can improve learners’ speaking skills in any situation, and helps learners to interact. Related to this, Tompkins (1998) says that role playing/simulation is an extremely valuable method for L2 learning. Finally, according to Milroy (1982) role plays provide the opportunity to push students to see if they have thought through implementation details and are prepared with the contingency plans to deal with unexpected outcomes.

METHOD

The research applied a Classroom Action Research (CAR) because it purposed to improve the quality of English teachers’ performance in the classroom especially in speaking class. The Classroom Action Research included repeated cycles, each consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The result of one cycle is used to determine the need for the following cycle, until the problems get solved. Moreover, the subject of this research was the eighth grade students of SMPN 2 Mandor consisting of 34 students while collecting the data, the writer used the observation, speaking performance test, grammar test, vocabulary test and field note as the instruments. Here are the steps of conducting the classroom action research.

To Make sure role play is suitable for improving students’ speaking skills.

Successfully (cycle 3)
FINDINGS
The writer identified some findings that relating with the students’ performance and improvement while demonstrating speaking skills in asking and giving opinions conducted in the way of role play. Before the research was conducted, the writer previously explained the procedures how to carry out the role play technique by using asking and giving opinions expression and handing the scripts to the students. As a result, the students were very happy and excited but the class situation became noisy. In cycle 1, some students still were reluctant to speak. Almost 80 percentages of the students were passive. As result, the students could not pronounce some words appropriately and they occasionally did not consider the proper grammar when utterance. It was caused that they were shy and played with each other or other group. Also, they forgot the sentences. It was probably that they were nervous. Therefore, the teacher and his collaborator evaluated the students’ progress and decided to continue the research to cycle II. The students showed their seriousness to play the roles in cycle II. Even some students still played with other friends but it did not distract other students’ attention, even the narrators could play their roles well by organizing the situation and managing the students, of course, helped by the writer and they seemed to be excited about playing the roles because they really imagined that they were the tourist and coincidently the name of the tourist reminded them the names of the football players which were their favorite football players. Gradually, the students started to pay attention to the aspects of speaking skill such as fluency and accuracy. In cycle III, the students showed the very good speaking improvement. During the role play activity, almost all the students totally took part on the performance. The students actively spoke. They seemed enjoying to act the characters. It was probably they did not have burden about the lesson because the school lesson was over and they only waited for the result so they focused on role play activity. The students talked louder than before. While having the performance, when group A acted group B paid attention and judged it. The narrators also paid attention during the both group acted. In the meantime, the students had the opportunity replace their teacher’s role; monitor and facilitator.

DISCUSSIONS
The writer had done the classroom action research for three cycles. Among the cycle I, cycle II and cycle III the students got involved the action and showed the different improvement comparing to other students. The student showed their attention and seriousness when the writer introduced the role play activity or technique in order to improve students’ speaking skill. The most significant progress that could be seen that the students found role play interested in playing because they were asked to imagine to pretend to play other characters. In this case, they pretended to be the tourist from other countries and the names of the roles reminded them about the football players’ names. That was the thing made them more excited to speak the language. It could be seen in cycle I, the students had problem much such as on pronunciation when utterance, making inappropriate grammar and forgetting the words of dialogue. Their score showed very poor. The students were still shy to speak. When the teacher asked the students to come to the class to act the conversation, they looked each other,
played and not took it very seriously. In addition, the student made many mistakes. On cycle II, moreover, the students started to adjust with the role play technique. Bit by bit, the students were less shy to speak on the speaking activity. In addition, they started to adjust the new words to be their vocabularies increasing. Since the teacher allowed the students to bring the scripts at home so they had plenty of time to learn the scripts at home. Also, it gave them an opportunity to memorize the scripts at home. As a result, it allowed them to increase their vocabularies.

Furthermore, the best improvement that the students made was on the cycle III. They understood their roles and lines on the role play scripts. From the result, it could be seen that cycle I did not provide the good result. The students’ mean score was 53.17 which meant it was average. Their speaking skill on vocabulary improvement, grammar and pronunciation were still poor. On cycle II, the students bit by bit improved their speaking. It was shown that their result was 62.74. It also showed that through role play technique the students could manage their problems when using asking and giving opinions expression while demonstrating conversation or dialogue in the classroom. Moreover, at the end of cycle, the writer found that the students improved. It became 77.92. It meant that the students could improve their speaking skill. Here are two scripts role play the students demonstrated during the classroom action research.

**Tabel 1: Sample of Students’ Speaking Transcripts**

| Mike (Stu 1,2,3) | I heard West Kalimantan has some beautiful places to visit |
| Yokohama (Stu 4,5,6) | Yes, I agree with you |
| Gonzales (Stu 7,8,9) | My uncle visited Kapuas Hulu, it has a national park called Betung Kerihun and it is very beautiful. |
| Irfan (Stu 10,11,12) | I am going to Ngabang, people say its water fall is wonderful |
| Peter (Stu 13,14,15) | I agree with you, I saw it in booklet. |
| Gonzales (Stu 7,8,9) | Singkawang has a nice beach, I am going to visit there |
| Irfan (Students 10,11,12) | But, I don’t think so. I think Sinka Beach is better. There is a zoo. |
| Yokohama (Stu 4,5,6) | Yes, I think so. I agree with you Irfan |
| Peter (Students 13,14,15) | Talking about beaches, according to the map, there are some beaches on the way heading to Singkawang. |

| Mike (Stu 1,2,3) | Yes...yes...you are right...There are Jungkat Beach and Wisata Nusantara. So, what do you think is nicer? |
| Gonzales (Stu 7,8,9) | I think Wisata Nusantara, it has many games to play beside the beach like bounce ball, frying fox and outbound |
| Yokohama (Stu 4,5,6) | Really? I think Wisata Nusantara is best place to visit first |
| Irfan (Stu 10,11,12) | By the way, that is our flight. |

**Tabel 2:**

| Mike (Stu 16,17,18) | You are right Yokohama, Wisata Nusantara is a very beautiful place |
| Yokohama (Stu 19,20,21) | Yes, I agree with you. I played out bond. It was very exciting. What do you think about Betung Kerihun, Gonzales? |
| Gonzales (Stu 22,23,24) | I think it is wonderful. There are many species of animals to see. And you Irfan, what is your opinion water fall you visited, what was its name? |
| Irfan (Stu 25,26,27) | Malanggar waterfall, in my opinion it is wonderful. It is good for rafting. |
| Peter (Stu 28,29,30) | Yes, I agree with Irfan I also visited there too, the water is clean and fresh. What about Singkawang Gonzales? |
| Gonzales (Stu 22,23,24) | I think Sinka beach is better than Pasir Panjang Beach in Singkawang. |
| Irfan (Stu 25,26,27) | Really? |
Yokohama (Stu 19,20,21) : Yes, I think Gonzales is right.
Peter (Stu 28,29,30) : How is that so?
Mike (Stu 16,17,18) : I agree with Irfan and Yokohama, Sinka Beach is cleaner than Pasir Panjang beach. Its zoo is also interesting.
Gonzales (Stu 22,23,24) : What about Jungkat Beach, do you think it is good?
Yokohama (Stu 19,20,21) : Well, I think is better
Irfan (Stu 25,26,27) : No, I don’t think so.
Peter (Stu 28,29,30) : By the way, it’s our flight. Good bye to you all

CONCLUSION
Based on the writer’s experience in teaching English, most of his students’ problem is speaking skill. The writer takes role play technique to improve his students’ speaking skill since role play is one of the techniques in speaking activity that promotes the students to be more active to use the languages as the communication. When the students demonstrate the role play they imagine other characters and pretend to be the characters themselves to conduct conversation in the way of the dialogue with the expression of asking and giving opinion as well as rejecting someone’s opinions. Since the students’ vocabulary is limited, the writer applies role play technique with the prepared scripts, it gives the students an opportunity to experience the language and improve their speaking skill. So far, when utterance the target language during the speaking activity, they students encountered problems such as the lack of vocabularies while asking and giving opinions. Therefore, the writer provided the script dialogues to make the students easier to find the words or vocabularies in order to have the conversation in manner of role play. Moreover, it also gave the students more time to study the scripts at home. Finally, based on the observation that conducted by the writer which also helped by other teacher as the collaborator during the classroom action result can be concluded that the use of role play technique, the eighth students’ speaking skill of SMPN 2 Mandor is increasing. It is shown in students mean score in cycle I 53,17, cycle II of 62,74 and the last cycle, it shows 77,92. So, it fulfills the KKM of school 6,1. It also showed that through role play technique the students could manage their problems when using asking and giving opinions expression while demonstrating conversation or dialogue in the classroom that can be seen on this following table.

SUGGESTIONS
Based on the result of the classroom action research and the conclusion as well mentioned above, the writer thinks that role play activity can promote the students to speak actively in using English as the foreign language. Other teachers can choose one of the activities that relate to the condition of their students which can solve the problem happening in the classroom. For English teachers, using role play technique can be used as one of activities that can promote the students to speak. Based on this classroom action research, the writer noticed some advantages from applying this technique such as the students can pretend and imagine other persons or characters to attract their attention in using the language to communicate. When demonstrating asking and giving opinions, the students can interact with their friends which make them motivate to speak while paying
attention the speaking aspects. Considering such advantages, the writer suggests the use of role play for teachers who want to improve their students’ speaking skill as following:

1. The teacher should make the students easy to speak by preparing ready script materials that mostly deal with the students’ daily life activity so that they easily adjust with the situation given.
2. For larger class, it is better for the teacher the students to divide the students into group. Each group consists of six-seven students based on the characters that should speak three-four times so it will create the interaction among them.
3. Since role play is an activity to play roles, the teacher should motivate the students to play the characters that make them comfortable to play so it automatically provokes them to speak more and actively in the classroom.
4. To improve the students’ speaking, the teacher should pay attention to vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.

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