

# THE INTERACTIONAL SPONTANEOUS DRAMA THROUGH IMPROVISATION TECHNIQUE AND ITS IMPLICATION WITH TEACHING SPEAKING

YASIR AMRI

**Abstrak:** Pentingnya penguasaan keahlian berbicara sebagai salah satu dari empat keahlian berbahasa Inggris telah mendorong guru untuk menggunakan strategi yang sesuai dan teknik yang baik. Teknik yang dipilih dapat membawasiswa untuk meraih kemampuan berkomunikasi yang meliputi komunikasi yang efektif dan alamisebagaimana yang diharapkan dalam pengajaran bahasa komunikatif. Perbaikan keahlian berbicara melalui drama improvisasi menjadi pertimbangan dalam menyediakan garis besar bagi guru dalam pengajaran berbicara. Teknik ini juga membuat kepercayaan diri siswa menjadi lebih aktif untuk mengekspresikan ide mereka yang menyatukan dalam keahlian berbicara mereka secara spontan dan alami.

**Key word:** interactional, improvisation, speaking skill improvement

## INTRODUCTION

The existence of speaking as the first manifestation of language has been positioned as an importantly considered skill that should be taught with appropriate technique, and good strategy. Communicative efficiency as the goal of teaching speaking is a target that should be achieved. Absolutely, the achievement of the target involves cooperation in both teacher and students in which the teacher not only knows what to do in teaching speaking but also gives motivation and even awareness

for the students about how important the subject is. Strategies and techniques used in teaching speaking absolutely determine the success of the teaching which should always be conditioned with the students' ability, so that the students will seriously feel guided and joyful, really bringing them more interested and confident in expressing their ideas. Of course, inhibition, fear of making mistake, keeping silent or other speaking problems can be avoided.

The skilled teacher in selecting techniques and supported strategies can also help the students do more in order to make them easy to apply their own strategies for the techniques applied, so that what has been targeted is successfully achievable. Zainil<sup>1</sup> suggests "a language teacher must identify their students' learning strategies and recognizes that some strategies are successful and others unsuccessful." It gives an indication that the teacher also has role to help the students recognize what the appropriate strategies suitable for them are. Absolutely, It is due to inability of the students to find their own strategies and how to use them. Chamot et al<sup>2</sup> discuss some important points of developing learning strategies that can help students become effective learners with a variety of tools in all types of learning and understanding. First, Teachers have to point out that the strategies learned can help not only in language but also in other subjects areas and even in any situation that understanding is needed. Second, Teachers should explicitly discuss why and how each strategy can improve students' understanding, production, and learning. Third, Teacher needs to build students' metacognitive knowledge that consists of work not for the

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<sup>1</sup>Zainil. (2008). *Actional and Functional Model: Good Language Learner Strategies and Communicative Language Teaching (2<sup>nd</sup>)*. Padang: Sukabina Offset, p. 3

<sup>2</sup>Chamot, et al. *Language Learning Strategies*. (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1991), p. 38-39

students, teacher can encourage to use other. Furthermore, Ur<sup>3</sup> explains the ways or strategies that should be taken by the teacher in solving the speaking problems that make the students able to improve their speaking skill that involve: use group work, base the activity on easy language, make a careful of topic and task to stimulate interest, give some instruction or training in discussion skills, and keep students speaking the target language.

In other side, the application of techniques is also more importantly viewed as a crucial medium in separated with the success of teaching speaking. The techniques will work hand in hand with strategies in improving the students' ability in speaking. On the other hand, the techniques cannot work alone. Thus, the techniques applied are well- considered to be selected based on what the students need. In this case, teacher will show his role of it because the wrongly selected techniques will be influential for the students. Therefore, teacher is expected to have various techniques in teaching speaking. Dobson<sup>4</sup> views that various techniques for stimulating speaking or conversation are intended to help and lead students into a more advanced dimension that reflects their progress in English such as: directing conversation sessions, dialogues, improvisations, plays, speeches, small- group discussion, debates, motion picture, cultural orientation, proverbs, humor, songs, poetry, correspondence, group project, field trips, and games. In the same case, Malley and Pierce<sup>5</sup> support the ideas and agree that many kinds of techniques are used to improve the students' speaking skill such as, improvisation, role play, simulation, oral report, debate, plays.

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<sup>3</sup>Ur, Penny. *A Course in Language Teaching*. (Chambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 121-122

<sup>4</sup>Dobson, M. J. *Effective Techniques for English Conversation Groups*. (Washington D.C: English Language Program Division Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs United States Information Agency, 1981), p. viii

<sup>5</sup>Malley, M. J and Pierce, V. L. *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners*. (Virginia: Addison- Wesley Publishing Company, 1995) (See also, Hammer, 1983, Weir, 1993, and Ur, 1996)

Absolutely, the purpose of various techniques in teaching speaking refers to communicative efficiency as explained in the previous statements.

Regarding communicative efficiency as the target of the teaching of speaking, Harmer<sup>6</sup> discusses the concepts of communicative efficiency refer to English standard and the ability of conveying thought, purposed efficiently, and viewed from the different levels of students that involve: grammar, situation and context, pronunciation and accent and skills. Of course, the concept of communicative efficiency is strongly necessary to know as a consideration how far the teacher can develop and apply strategies to achieve it for students' speaking skill.

In communicative model of teaching speaking, the teacher not only helps the students develop the body of language by providing practice that provides the students for real life communication but also helps the students develop the ability to produce grammatically correct, logically connected sentences that are appropriate to specific context, and acceptable, comprehensible pronunciation. Furthermore, NCLRC<sup>7</sup> discusses the ways of helping the students develop communicative efficiency in speaking that refers to use of 3 balanced activities approach that combines language input, structured output, and communicative output. First, language input comes in the forms of teacher talk, listening, activities, reading passage, and the language heard and read out side of class. Language input is also oriented that focuses on information and descriptions of learning strategies. And the examples of their use and form- oriented input focus on ways of using the language. Second, Structured input is designed to make the learners comfortable producing specific language items. Third, Communicative output refers to the learners' main purpose in completing a tasks such as

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<sup>6</sup>Harmer, J. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. (New York: Longman Press, 1985), p. 24

<sup>7</sup>NCLRC. (2004). "The Essentials of Language Teaching". (Retrieved on 12 April 2008) <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/speaking/about.html>, p. 11-12.

obtaining information, developing a travel plan, or creating a video.

The successfully selected technique used to achieve communicative efficiency will bring the students into a speaking atmosphere which results an interaction more communicatively. It means, the students are more confident to speak, express ideas more naturally and spontaneously based on the context, of course not neglecting the other important aspects of the speaking itself. Furthermore, the students will feel free for the expression produced into an oral form. One of the techniques is worth trying to make our goal come true, called improvisation technique. This paper tries to communicate a technique called improvisation that is viewed qualified to improve speaking skill and also completed with important information and the ways of implementing this technique.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **The Interactional Spontaneous Drama through Improvisation Technique**

Interaction is collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in reciprocal effects on each other. In an interaction of negation which requires attentiveness and involvement which are important for successful communication. Theories of communicative competence emphasize the importance of interaction as human beings using language in various contexts to negotiate meaning, or simply stated, to get an ideas out of one person's head into the head of another person and vice versa.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Gass, SMandSelinker, L.*Second Language acquisition: An Introductory Course*.(N. J:Lawrence Erlbaum, 1993), p. 72

Based on the description above, providing students with sufficient opportunity to interact with one another is very important. Theoretically, it is believed that the more frequently the interaction occurs, the more input the students get as the result of it. The interaction can basically happen between student-student, students- teacher and vice versa. Gaies<sup>9</sup> mentions the pattern of interaction has pedagogic and socio- effective advantages in which the pedagogic advantage of student- student interaction can increase students' self-reliance, confidence, and participation in communication. Meanwhile, in the term of socio-affective advantage, this interaction can increase motivation, strengthening mutual understanding, and decrease inhibition.

The condition explained above is also occurring in improvisation technique. Improvisation is strongly admitted as one of the stimulus techniques used to make the students able to interact in oral form. The students will communicate their ideas into oral form spontaneously based on what situation is given. When working with improvisations, the students will have a large supply of situations in which they will act the situations out with the others by showing up their speaking ability without preparation. Dobson, M.J<sup>10</sup> defines that improvisations is a dramatic hypothetical situation in which two speakers interact without any special preparation. English students working with improvisation use the language in intensive and entertaining form. In addition, Malley& Pierce<sup>11</sup> explain that Improvisations call for students to generate language given an oral or written cue called a prompt that the students typically get no time to prepare what they are going to say.

The consideration of giving situations, of course, determines the life of conversation into drama played by the

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<sup>9</sup>Gaies, S. (1983). "Learner Feedback: An Exploratory Study in Its Role in the SecondLanguage Classroom". Selinger, H. and Long, M.H. (Eds.), *Classroom Oriented Research*.(Mass: Newbury House, 1983), p. 122

<sup>10</sup>Dobson.*Op. Cit.* p. 40.

<sup>11</sup>Malley, M. J and Pierce, V. L. *Op. Cit.* p. 85

students. Teacher would wisely observe on what they students need and know about the situation that will be dramatized. There is not preparation of script for them in expressing the ideas of the situation accordingly. Speaking naturally and spontaneously will describe the efforts of the students in expressing their ideas. Dobson<sup>12</sup>suggests the situations given to the learners in improvisation technique are simply able to emerge the students' ability in both verbal and nonverbal interaction that refers to oral and physical expressions. The situations given to the students are clearly stated, easy to act out, and has a dramatic story, so that the expected result of their conversation is achieved.

In interactional spontaneous drama of improvisation, the students can learn a lot by controlling negotiation of meaning and the relevancy of language communicated among them. Moreover, they can practice patterns of target language and opportunity to use the grammatical points for production. In other words, by responding to each other's comments in their speaking will automatically train them create meaningful and relevant interaction. The students will also learn how to polish their abilities in improvisations. They absolutely use their own strategies to dramatize the situations applied in dramatic forms. When the students are fairly fluent in English, They should be able to create a plausible conversation around the given situations, completed with appropriate facial expression, gestures and even emotion. This kind of conversation exercise is also fun for them to participate and entertain the rest of the class who serve as audiences intended to improve their speaking skill as well. This reality is also supported by Richard and Roger<sup>13</sup>that claim that improvisation is similar to the more general perspective, usually referred to as learning bydoing.

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<sup>12</sup>Dobson. Op. Cit. p. 12

<sup>13</sup>Richard, J. Cand Roger, T. S. *Approach and Methods in Language Teaching: A description and Analysis*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2001), p. 117

In other side, Morgan & Saxton<sup>14</sup> view improvisation should be seen as a technique as well as a strategy which develop spontaneity. Here, the students will find the relation referring to the reality of his own life, both intellectual, emotional, and its physical expression, the means through which he can convey this reality to other. Zalman<sup>15</sup> elaborates, in conversation, improvisation requires the knowledge of a subject, the knowledge of a language, and physical ability to speak that considers the ideas conversed with each other referring to improvisation without reading from a script anymore.

Because improvisations require a relatively high degree of language proficiency and imagination, the students are absolutely expected to have knowledge of subject, knowledge of a language, physical ability, and sufficient vocabularies that are likely to be useful in developing their ideas based on the situations given. The mastery of vocabulary for students will give good impact on the success of the implementation of improvisation. It is seemed from the way the students speak out or dramatize the situations by using various vocabularies, concerned with what the situation they have. Berlinger<sup>16</sup> performing an improvisation can be a highly successful learning experience for EFL and ESL students. While it motivates them to generate imaginative and detailed ideas, greatly expand their vocabulary actively to practice language skills and attain greater fluently and even strengthen students' confidence in their academic ability, an essential component of successful language acquisition.

The existence of vocabulary as discussed by Berlinger above will strongly determine the success of the improvisation.

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<sup>14</sup>Morgan, JandSaxton, *J. Teaching Drama*.(Cambridge:Cambridge University press, 1987), p. 120

<sup>15</sup>Zalman, R. (2002). "Improvisation".(Retrieved on 20 April 2008) <http://www.whole music learning.com/IMPRintro.htm>, p. 1

<sup>16</sup>Berlinger, R. M. (2000). "Encouraging English Expression through Script-Based on Improvisation", (Retrieved on 13 May 2008) <http://iteslj.org/techniques/BerlingerscriptImprov.html>, p. 4



The students will confidently speak out the scenes or situations that emerge the joyfulness among them because their vocabulary mastery helps a lot to express ideas in their minds. This condition will enable the students to keep consistence in dramatizing the situation. Meanwhile, Klinger<sup>17</sup> explains, improvisations can be considered as the fifth skill following listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In many ways, it is also a real test of whether students can use what they have learned without being told exactly what to do or say.

Pertaining to the theoretical explanation above, it can be concluded that improvisation is not only viewed as a technique but also a strategy in combining intellectual, emotional, and physical expression into dramatic form.

The appropriate strategy of applying improvisation technique is the most attentively crucial aspect to get satisfied result of teaching speaking.

## **The Improvisation Technique in CLT**

Communicative language teaching is considered as highly valued method dealing with developing communicative competence. Developing communicative competence is one of the concepts of classroom techniques in teaching English. Hymes and Gusper<sup>18</sup> state that communicative competence means “what a speaker needs to know to communicate effectively in culturally significant setting. Savignon<sup>19</sup> supports the ideas and discusses the four components of communicative competence: grammatical competence, socio- linguistic competence, discourse competence,

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<sup>17</sup>Klinger, W. (1999).“Unrehearsed Speaking Activities for Language Learning”.(Retrieved on 23 April 2008)<http://scholar.google.com>, p. 1

<sup>18</sup>Hymes, DellandGunpers, J. J.*Directions in Sociolinguistics: Ethno ashy of Communication*.(New York: Halt, Rinertheart and Wiston, 1972), p. vii

<sup>19</sup>Savignon, J. Sandra.*Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice*.(California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1983) p. 43

discourse competence, and strategic competence. First, grammatical competence should be developed through the students' grammar internalized by use that focuses on natural communication, not focusing on usage or form. Second, socio-linguistic competence should be developed through the students' understanding the appropriate meaning in social and cultural context in a certain communication. Third, discourse competence meaning in natural communication. Strategic competence should be developed through the students' good learner strategies to sustain their natural communication.

Communicative competence as the achievement of CLT will really encourage the teachers to select more the techniques that will be used in teaching English, especially for speaking subject. The techniques should refer to the achievement of communicative competence aspects that are dynamic, interpersonal, specific, contextual and even relative. Moreover, the techniques used are able to be a problem solving and trigger to develop the students' creativity in written and spoken forms.

Improvisation is admitted a technique as problem solving which creates process of natural communication. The process of natural communication makes the learners creative and productive. Zainil<sup>20</sup> claims, during process of natural communication, the meaning and understanding is primary, so that the speaking result is comprehensible for other students.

Natural communication occurring in improvisation is proved through the spontaneity communicated by the students based on the situations given. There is no time to prepare script and concept to speak that they just use their high imagination to think of what to do for the situation. They will think fast and work together to create like what the drama or conversation played will be. Littlewood<sup>21</sup> clarifies that improvisation is a way of encouraging general confidence and fluency in foreign language

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<sup>20</sup>Zainil, *Op. Cit.* 43-44.

<sup>21</sup>Littlewood, W. *Communicative Language Teaching*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 62

use by allowing the learners to explore and exploit their communicative repertoire in any ways they wish. It also encourages them to express their own imagination and individuality to increase their sense of emotional security in handling the foreign medium. In the same case, Via<sup>22</sup> notes that drama of improvisation expressing strong emotion, feelings, ideas, and phrases help more with language acquisition than those with gentle, neutral content. The students become engaged in the connection of sound and gestures in rehearsal as they interact with another prior to dramatization and presentation.

It is clear that improvisation is a simple way that refers to control-creativity continuum because it is able to encourage students act out the personal interpretation of the situation and their role spontaneity that really depicts the characteristic of natural communication of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

To create natural communication in improvisational drama, situations given are very influential, so that improvisation suggested in CLT can be placed in various levels. The teacher's role and strategy are very expected to smartly and selectively give situations that are really suitable for the students.

In CLT as described in one of the communicative competence aspects, there is strategic competence that will reflect the work and proficiency of a teacher in creating a success of teaching-learning communicatively. In this case, the teacher is suggested to understand about how his students' ability is and what the students need. Haycraft<sup>23</sup> suggests that situation in improvisational drama should seem simple that aims at producing conversation spontaneously and naturally. The same idea is also

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<sup>22</sup>Via, R. A. 1980. "Language Learning via Drama", In J.C. Fisher et al, San Francisco, CA, (Retrieved on 21 June 2011), p. 14

<sup>23</sup>Haycraft, J. *An Introduction to English Language Teaching*. (Harlow: UK Longman Group Ltd, 1987), p. 90

explained by Vygotsky<sup>24</sup> that improvisation can provide appropriate context for learning to take place that the conceptual thinking develops through activity, spontaneous play, manipulation of object, and social collaboration.

Obviously, appropriate context of improvisational situation really helps achieve the target of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) reflecting to development of communicative competence.

## **The Implication of Improvisation Technique with Teaching Speaking**

Mastering good speaking is an important expectation of English students in learning English. The successful speaking is measured with ability carried out in a conversation in language. Of course, the students are not only supposed to master various kinds of techniques of speaking but also strategies used to enable them to speak English fluently.

In successful speaking, the students are able to perform a collaboration of meaning negotiation resulted in a conversation they do. Their speaking is absolutely influenced with where the speaking or conversation takes place. Environment often changes the performances of speaking, clearly belonging various intonation, stress, speed and slow based on expression and feedback experienced by both speaker and listener during the conversation process. Brown<sup>25</sup> defines that “speaking or conversation is collaborative forms as participants in this term are engaged in a process of negotiation of meaning.” Meanwhile, Richards and Long<sup>26</sup> explain that speaking is a conversational

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<sup>24</sup>Vygotsky, *Play and Its role in the Mental Development of the Children*. (Soviet Psychology, 1993), p. 62

<sup>25</sup>Brown, G and Yule, G. *Discourse Analysis*. (Cambridge; University Press, 1983), p. 255

<sup>26</sup>Long, H. M and Richard J.C. *Methodology TESOL*. (Boston: Heinle&Heinle Publisher, 1987), p. 189

competence as a complex set of abilities that involve many components, including: pronunciation, listening, and grammar skill. In the same case, Kramsch in Malley & Pierre<sup>27</sup> states that speaking means negotiating intended meanings and adjusting one's speech to produce the desired effect on the listener. It means that anticipating the listener's response and possible misunderstandings, clarifying one's own and the other's intentions and arriving at the closest possible match between intended, perceived, and anticipated meanings.

Moreover, Bygate in Nunan<sup>28</sup>, explains that oral interaction can be characterized in terms of routines and negotiations. The routines can conventionally be focused on either information or interaction that information routines contain expository (e.g. description, instruction, comparison) and evaluative (e.g. explanation, justification, prediction, decision). Interaction routines contain service and social. Meanwhile, negotiations contain about negotiation of meaning and negotiation of interaction.

Both negotiation of meaning and negotiation of interaction in speaking as explained above are automatically covered by improvisation technique. In implementing improvisation, the students also obtain valuable experiences in using language in pair interaction. They will show their cooperation in building a dialogue or conversation on situations given and keep control each other, so that the conversation performed is enjoyable. Furthermore, Weir<sup>29</sup> describes two major kinds of improvisational skills, namely: negotiation of meaning and management of interaction. Negotiation of meaning refers to

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<sup>27</sup>Malley and Pierre. *Op.Cit.* p. 59.

<sup>28</sup>Nunan, D. *Language Teaching Methodology*. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1991), p. 40

<sup>29</sup>Weir, J. C. (1993). *Understanding and Developing Language Tests*. New York: Prentice Hall, p. 32.

use of discourse processing strategies to evaluate communicative effectiveness and make any necessary adjustment in the course of event that speaker may check understanding, ask opinion, respond to clarification request, check common ground. Meanwhile listener may indicate understanding through gesture or summarizing, indicate uncertainly, use elicitation devices to get topic clarified, express agreement/ disagreement. Management of interaction refers to agenda management and turn- taking, consisting of choice of topic, introduce topic, develop topic that bring it to a close, change topic. Turn- taking: who speaks, when, and for how long.

The existence of improvisation technique in teaching speaking is inseparable with the achievement of speaking communicatively and naturally. It indicates that the students strongly need to develop their communicative competence in which one of the components is strategic competence. Zainil<sup>30</sup> discusses strategic competence should be developed through the students' good learning strategies to sustain their natural communication in English. In addition, the strategic competence is dynamic, interpersonal, context specific and relative one that depends on the negotiation of meaning between communicators.

Acting out the situation into a drama in improvisation accustoms students to perform in front of others, which is what they have to do outside the classroom; because it helps them overcome the nervousness in which this entails. It also get students speak expressively in a situation, and thus makes them more aware of stress and intonation in speech. In other words, it describes that the students will experience the aspect above when acting out the situation of in improvisational drama.

Bennett<sup>31</sup> explains there are three important advantages in improvisation technique in speaking: 1. Improvisation teaches

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<sup>30</sup>Zainil.*Loc.Cit*,

<sup>31</sup>Bennet. (2006). "Teaching English Language Art: Improve ideas". (Retrieved on 12 may 2008) <http://wiki.elearning.ubc.ca/tela/improideas>, p.

basic acting skill. 2. Improvisation develops confidence in performing the material. 3. Improvisation is a rehearsal technique to inform the acting process of scripted work.

Improvisation obviously gives contribution to students to communicate their own ideas and build up their confidence to speak out based on the situations given. It is also as a technique enabling the students to perform a dramatic play without noted preparation and time that will probably motivate more the students' spontaneity in verbalizing the situations. Improvisational drama is also successfully making learners' experience to work in language practice in a context and a situation in which through the simple acting the students adopt a new position that emerge their creativity.

Ainsworth<sup>32</sup> states that improvisation technique also creates a wonderful sense of discovery for the students that after improvisation, students are exhilarated, refreshed, and ready to give their speeches, another tries this time with only a few minutes of rehearsal time.

Encouragement of communicating ideas on situations given in improvisation evolves students' discovery and spirit in conversation. They will be more creative accustomed to speaking fluently as reflection of improvisation that results self-confidence, readiness in expressing ideas in speaking.

Berlinger<sup>33</sup> (2000: 4) performing a script- based improvisation can be a highly successful learning experience for EFL and ESL students. While it motivates them to generate imaginative and detailed ideas, greatly expand their vocabulary actively to practice language skills and attain greater fluently and even strengthen students' confidence in their academic ability, an essential component of successful language acquisition.

The existence of vocabulary as discussed by Berlinger above will strongly determine the success of the improvisation.

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<sup>32</sup>Ainsworth, D. (2008) "Speak up, with confident". (Retrieved on 13 May 2008) <http://www.use.edu/uscnew/stories/1477/html>, p. 3

<sup>33</sup>Berlinger.*Op. Cit.* p. 4

The students will confidently speak out the scenes or situations that emerge the joyfulness among them because their vocabulary mastery helps a lot to express ideas in their minds. This condition will enable the students to keep consistence in dramatizing the situation.

Scrivener, J.<sup>34</sup> states that the skill of running this kind complex improvisation is to find a balance between allowing a free- flowing, growing, aliveimprovisation and the necessity of keeping some control over it to ensure that keep momentum and avoids silliness or trine solution.

Dealing with all information above, it can be concluded that the implementation of Improvisation technique is advantageous for motivating the learners to generate imaginative ideas, expanding vocabulary greatly, obtaining fluency, emerging self-confidence, and even being a basic acting skill.

## **The Teaching Procedure of Improvisation Technique**

The successful improvisation is of course inseparable with the procedure of doing it. The following explanation is the various teaching procedures of improvisation intended to help the teacher apply it to the students.

Dobson<sup>35</sup> explains that the steps of applying improvisations technique based on the following sequence are:

1. The explanation of the general idea of improvisation.
2. Ask each student to write in English three situations that can be used for improvisations. The student should write each situation on a separate slip of a paper. Be sure that the student creates a situation involving two speakers only. Notice, the situations can be from both teacher and students. From teacher, the teacher can provide the

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<sup>34</sup>Scrivener, J. (2005).*Learning Teaching*.Mc. Millan, p. 364

<sup>35</sup>Dobson.*Op. Cit.* p. 45



situation passed out to students. From students, the teacher has students write three situations on a separate slip of paper used for improvisation.

3. Collecting the slip paper from students, reading and correcting over, and choosing the situations that are the most suitable. It means the situations from the students are read and corrected to select which one is necessary. Choose the situations which are the most suitable. Put the slips of paper you wish to use in an envelope.
4. Performing the improvisation immediately without preparation. Once you have collected the situations for improvisations whether from the teacher or from students, you are ready to begin their enactment. First, call one student up to the front of the room. Ask him to draw a slip of paper containing an improvisation situation from the envelope. Have him read the situation loudly and clearly to the rest of the class. He may have to read the situation twice to be sure that all class members understand the situation. He can then choose another student in the class to perform the improvisation with him.

In other case, the improvisation situations will be dictated whether the performers are two men, two women, or a man and a woman. If a male student draws a situation calling for two women performers. He should return the slip into the envelope and draw again until he has a situation where there is at least one male role. Similarly, a female student should disregard any situation calling for two male performers. In selecting a partner for the improvisation, the situation should follow the guidelines in the situation.

The two students who will perform the improvisation can be either have a very brief conference in English on what they will do, or they can begin the improvisation immediately. Although the students may want to have time to prepare for the improvisation, some may even ask to prepare it. You should

explain the benefits of working out the conversation in spontaneous manner in front of the class, with no rehearsal or fixed dialogue line.

Lazar, G<sup>36</sup> points out two steps of applying the improvisation technique that

1. Students are given a summary of the first few scenes of the play and

asked to predict what will follow this. They check their prediction against the reading or viewing of the play.

2. Students are given an extract from the play with phrases or sentences

pertaining to main themes of play underlined. They are then asked to

discuss the issues arising from underlined section.

In the same case, Kurtz<sup>37</sup> supports the ideas and explains that the ways of applying improvisation technique given to students as follows:

1. Two students are given a short dialogue to perform. The dialogue itself should be relatively vague and open-ended, so that it only achieves a particular meaning through the students' performance.

2. Get the students in improvisational activity to recognize the significant of intonation and expression in communicating by doing this activity. Students can see that it is not only what a person says but also how she says. The awareness of the emotional and physical means used in communication.

The steps suggested above will obviously have the students act out the situations into a dramatic form that certainly

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<sup>36</sup>Lazar, G. *Literature and Language Teaching*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 148-165

<sup>37</sup>Kurtz, J. (1998). "Improvisation Game for Learners of English as a Foreign Language". (Retrieved on 02 Mei 2008) <http://Philips.personal.nccu.edu.tw/improving/philips-kurtz-one.htm>, p. 3-4

requires the students' ability to analyze and create enjoyable one for audiences in life show. Analyzing, comprehending, and even acting out the situation spontaneously need language proficiency and imagination in expressing their ideas such a drama that requires high concentration in playing the situation. And the students will even find the relationship between the realities of their own life in which they can convey this reality to others. Here are some situations or setting for improvisation technique:

*You are walking down the hall in an office building. A girl ahead of you drops a paper but does not realize that it is missing. You pick the paper up and give it to her. As she thanks you, you suddenly realize that she was a classmate of yours several years ago”.*

*“You are in a restaurant. You have just had a good dinner. The waiter is waiting for you to pay bill. You look for a wallet and find that you have left at home.”*

*“The car in front of your car suddenly stops, and you cannot avoid hitting it. Both cars are damaged. The driver gets out of his car and comes toward you”.*

*“Your friend asks you to return a book that you borrowed from him several months ago. At first you cannot remember what you did with it. Then you explain why you kept the book for such a long time”.*

*“You buy a sweater and leave it in the store by mistake. When you discover it is missing, you return to the store and ask the clerk if he has seen it”.*

*“You are awakened in the middle of the night by loud noise outside the window. You look out of the window and see a strange man standing there singing but he refuses”.*

*“You are so busy that you cannot get all of your work done. Your boss calls you into his office and asks you why you have not finished a certain project”.*

*“You are a teacher, when you walk into the classroom you see that one student is crying at his desk. You ask him why he is so upset”.*

*“You run into an old friend whom you have not seen for years. He used to weigh 100 kg. Now he weighs 75 kg.”*

*“You are strolling downtown. Suddenly you meet an old friend of yours whom you have not seen since you were in elementary school. You are surprised to learn that he has become a millionaire”.*

*“You are parking your car. You do not see a sign that “No Parking.” A police officer comes up and asks you why you are parking there”.*

*“You are a teacher, you give a student a low grade on his paper, and he becomes angry with you”.*

*“You lose your nephew at the supermarket when you bring him for shopping, and you are very worried. You go to the man in charge and ask him to help you find your nephew.”*

*“You and your housemate are returning home from a movie. You suddenly discover that neither of you has the house key”.*

*“You are describing your sweet heart to an acquaintance of yours. She or he describes your sweet heart, too. You realize that she or he describes the same person”.*

*“You are in a good mood, but your friend is in a bad mood. You try to cheer him up, he remains unhappy”.*

*“You want to go to a football game, but your girlfriend insists that a movie would be much more fun”.<sup>38</sup>*

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<sup>38</sup>Dobson.*Op. Cit.* p. 12

The situations list above is the various examples in applying improvisation to the students. The teachers can probably select each situation to be given the students. The situation given to the students can be suited with their ability in order that the improvisational drama can run well. This way absolutely determines the success of improvisational drama. In other words, the students can use their imagination to respond and even act out their imagination into conversation in drama of improvisation. The teacher can allow the improvisation to go as long as it achieves the objectives.

The students will naturally reach a logical stopping point or possibly exhaust all conversation potential. At this point, the teacher can control and ask the class member if they think the conversation is natural, what they have done. Of course, the teacher should not interrupt or correct the students when they are being involved in improvisation. Whereas he takes note during the performance and go over these. Afterwards he points out the correct forms that should have been used.

Littlewood<sup>39</sup> explains, learners are often presented only with a stimulus situation, in which they can interpret and exploit in any way they wish. They may also be asked to adopt particular identities or personality.

Roles or characters played out in improvisation, of course, require the touch of knowledge, experiences, and training, ever possessed by the learners because the implementation of this technique is really away of the preparation, not only for prepared notice but also for time used in this term. The spontaneity of expressing ideas on the given situations is the primary consideration for this technique application. Students in this term are more supposed to focus on the possible drama made and even identities or characters depicted in the situations.

Once the two students begin the improvisation, they will probably be surprised by how well the conversation turns out.

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<sup>39</sup>Littlewood, W. *Op. Cit.* p. 29

Even though a few pronunciation and grammar errors may occur, the conversation will most likely be coherent and entertaining with appropriate sentiments and gestures.

Furthermore, Morgan and Saxton<sup>40</sup> claim that the students in improvisation technique, moreover, face the challenges to use information given on who, what, where, and how to discover through improvising.

The depth of thinking and analyzing the situation will bear many questions of the information available in it. This condition will allow the students to obtain the information by asking their interlocutors through the questions on who, what, where, when, which, whom, and etc.

The students in speaking of improvisation need serious attention from teacher. The teacher should think a lot the best ways, really required by the students in order to improve their speaking skill. Understanding students' need will always help teacher determine what they have to do, not only in applying the technique but also strategy that will probably be suitable for them.

The appropriate technique and treatment will influence the success of speaking learning. The students feel motivated and helped to express their ideas into oral form resulting natural speaking. The scare of making mistakes can be overcome through high confidence having been planted to the students. Students' high confidence encourages them to do more in practice. They feel involved in speaking atmosphere based on the topic discussed. In this case, the teacher will not find the difficulties to apply new technique and best strategy to guide them.

As mentioned in previous page, it is better to teach students in speaking focusing more on the use of language not usage. The awareness of this statement needs deep understanding and consideration for us in practicing it. It does not mean, we are neglecting the existence of grammar in speaking, but the priority

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<sup>40</sup>Morgan and Saxton. *Op. Cit.* p. 120

is much better focused on the use of language, particularly encouraging the students in self- development expressed into their speaking. Speaking naturally and spontaneously always refers to CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) that is oftentimes sounded in teaching speaking in which basically, this method is suggested to be applied in teaching four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The statement above clearly invites us to rethink the failures of what have been gained in teaching our students. The freedom of expression in speaking is often obstructed with less grammar mastery they have. Finally, they tend to keep silent or to do nothing. These possibilities may often be found in our teaching speaking activities, unexpected at all.

The sameness of teachers' perception and willingness for the better improvement of students' speaking skill becomes strongly fundamental thing to achieve what is expected from the teaching of speaking. It is, of course, supported with systematic curriculum and even syllabus, really related to CLT (communicative Language Teaching). The achievement of communicative efficiency applied into communicative competence is consideration for speaking teachers to bring the students toward what speaking is. Surely, the selectively appropriate technique such improvised drama technique (improvisation) becomes a part, importantly viewed to be used in teaching speaking communicatively. Sharing knowledge and experiences among speaking teachers are also necessary to get information about what they need in solving the students' problems in speaking. In addition to telling their students' speaking problem found during teaching- learning process, they can also practice the friends' experiences as problem solving on different cases experienced by them.

In short, the attention of teacher to the students' need, the application of appropriate technique and good teaching, and sharing ideas are seriously required by the speaking teachers in solving the problem of students in speaking

## **CONCLUSION**

Theoretically, improvisation is strongly admitted as one of the techniques, able to improve speaking skill with its situations applied into spontaneous drama. Students working in improvisation will automatically activate their ability to respond the situations without well- prepared time and script. They not only unify their ideas to be practiced but also create a real condition as described in the situations given to them.

With teacher' good strategy, the implementation of improvisation technique can be successful. The students will enjoy their spontaneous drama in improvisation through solid cooperation with their partners. The situations given to the students are surely considered as ones familiar with them, so that they know what to do. Unfamiliar situation can, whereas, make the students difficult to express their ideas because they do not understand.



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