

ENHANCING SPEAKING SKILL IN EFL SETTING IN WEST BORNEO: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN ROLE PLAY AND DEBATE

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the difference between using role-play and debate methods on students' speaking skills in English subject. This study is quantitative research with a comparative study method. The sample of this study was the students of XI IIS3 and XI MIA1 at one of the top-favourite private schools in one of the developed regencies in West Borneo. The researchers applied a performance test to collect the data while the T-test was used to analyze the data. The result revealed there was a significant difference between using role-play and debate toward the students' speaking skills. It can be seen from the significant difference in the comparison of their average values. In the role-play method, the average value is 62.11 while in the debate is 51.82. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of the role-play method is better than the debate method in an EFL setting. However, this study realizes that it happens because the role-play method offers a flexible chance for the students to ask for help during the preparation of the speech production.

Keywords: Role-Play; Debate; Speaking Skill

INTRODUCTION

As an international language, acquiring English is undeniably to be significant in this modern era. English fulfills the need for interaction in global communication where speaking repositions the communication skill which needs to be acquired by EFL learners (Akhter et al., 2020). In learning English, there are four- important language skills that must be mastered by students, they are listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and writing skill (Ghonivita, Pahamzah, & Ayu Wijayanti, 2021; Handayani, Syafei, & Perwikasih Utari, 2021). One of the most important language skills is speaking skill. It is the very basic communication skill we need in everyday life. English is considered a means of intercultural communication in the world Chang (2011). Here, within this context, the need of using English in daily communication is crucial as the bridge of understanding among cultures.

Speaking skill is the skill of producing an articulation sound system to convey our will, needs, feelings, and desires to others (Lestari, 2019; Derviş, 2018). In this case, the completeness of a person's utterance is a natural requirement that enables us to produce a wide variety of articulations such as sound, pressure, and tone. In the context of communication, the speaker acts as a sender while the receiver is the recipient of the message. It means in the implementation of speaking skills requires a minimum of two people, one as the sender of the message and the other one as the recipient of the message. Parupalli (2019) strengthens that speaking skill is a language skill to express ideas and opinions to be performed orally. There

are seven purposes of speaking skills for students according to AM & Mulyawan (2021) namely 1) convey information; 2) participate in a conversation; 3) explain self-identity; 4) retell the reading results; 5) participate in an interview; 6) play a role; and 7) deliver ideas of discussion, speech, and debate.

In developing speaking skills, students not only learn about grammar and vocabulary but also try to apply their knowledge to communication activities. Moreover, in school life, especially in learning English, the emphasis tends to focus on mastering grammar. Thus, speaking skills as an important role in language are often neglected. In fact, the students' ability to speak in English is the major problem that formal and non-formal schools face nowadays. It happens because students lack opportunities to speak in English. Providing a friendly-English speaking habit is the major challenge to provide in school life and the social environment here in Landak. English is considered an alien language; the students who try to speak in English in often receive plentiful verbal bullying from the other students (Agung, 2019). Somehow, several English educators in this town motivate their students to keep practicing their English whenever they can. In the level of academic practice, various teaching methods are applied by teachers to shove up the students' speaking abilities in the classroom.

Teachers are expected to be able to use appropriate methods and find the best one. The teacher is expected to understand the various individual characteristics and the appropriateness of different teaching methods (Vokić & Aleksić, 2020). They are free to try various methods. Considering the results of the pre-observation, the researchers find that the students' difficulties to speak English belong to 1) the limited vocabulary mastery to produce sentences; 2) the miss pronunciation which leads to a wrong meaning; 3) the lack of grammar understanding leads to ungrammatical sentences. As a response to those findings, the English teacher took an initiative to try other methods namely role-play and debate methods.

According to Sanjaya (as cited in Fahreza & Rabiatal, 2018) role-play is a method of learning as part of simulations to create historical events, and create actual events or events in the future. Through role-play, students will understand someone's behavior like the person they play, students will gain knowledge about the person and his/her motivation which mark their behavior (Azhar et al., 2022). In its implementation, the students work in groups to improve their interaction ability (Negara, 2021). The students also learn to face imaginable fictitious situation (Simonneaux, 2001). Furthermore, debate can also actively involve students in their English speaking skills. Debate is one of the most crucial learning models for improving students' academic abilities. Besides improving critical thinking debate aims to persuade people of your side (Silberman, Carpenter, Takemoto, & Coyne, 2021; Healey & Leatham, 2022; Alghamdi Hamdan & Aldossari, 2021). Teaching material is selected and arranged into a package of pros and cons. Students are divided into groups and each group consists of four people. In the group, students (two taking propositions and two others in counter positions) do debates based on the topic that has been determined by the teacher. In addition, Latif, Mumtaz, Mumtaz, & Hussain (2018) state Both role-play, and debate are considered effective teaching methodologies in Problem-Based Learning.

Based on the description above, the purpose of this study is to find out the difference between using role-play and debate methods toward students' speaking skills in English subject. This study is also supported by previous research conducted by Yuliana, Kristiawan, & Suhartie (2014) this study aims to explore the significant influence of role-play on students' speaking skills.

METHOD

This study was conducted at one of the top-favorite private high schools in one of the developed regions in West Borneo. The researchers implemented quantitative research with a comparative

method by comparing two variables with data analysis techniques using the independent sample test (t-test). The samples in this study were 36 students of class XI IIS3 to apply role-play and 33 students of class XI MIA1 to apply debate. In collecting the data, the researchers implemented a performance test of speaking skill and interview with the English teacher. The role-play was conducted in pairs with the topic of asking and giving opinions in class XI IIS3. Each group was asked to make a conversation related to the topic. At the end of the activity, students practice the conversation in front of the class. Furthermore, the debate was implemented in class XI MIA1. The researchers explained the topic of asking and giving opinions. After presenting the topic, the students were divided into 4 and 5 groups consisting of pro and cons groups. Before the debate began, the researcher conveyed the topic and asked them to discuss it for 15 minutes. During the debate, students are required to involve in the expression of asking and giving opinions in their statements or opinions. Finally, the researcher asked every two groups to debate in front of the class. First, the pro group delivered their opinions then the cons group attacked their opinions.

Meanwhile, the interview was conducted to validate and triangulate the data findings. During the interview, guided questions concerning the importance of the data findings were asked of the teacher. It was focused on validating the average scores of the performance test, the sociocultural and geographical distance of the students' previous learning, and the implication of the role-play and debate in the setting of a developed city. As a note, the geographical distance in this study is elaborated in terms of "rural". Referring to Ikhsanudin (2021) many rural areas in West Borneo refer to geographical distance. That information deliberates the finding of this study beneficially. Additionally, previous studies acknowledged the impact of demographic and personality characteristics on students' evaluations and perceptions of learning (Rachman, 2023; Fatima et al., 2007; Keri, 2002; Jessee et al., 2006; Severiens & Dam, 1998). Their studies will adorn the unique finding in this study.

In assessing speaking skills, there are five components to be scored: grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation (Brown, 2004; Venera, 2017). The grading system in scoring the aspects of the speaking skill in this study used the numbering system starting from 1 to 5. Number 1 indicates the lowest score, and number 5 is the highest score. In calculating the final score, the score of each aspect is combined and then multiplied by 4.

Ensuring the validity of the instrument test, this study used content validity by having 2 experts as validators. One expert is a speaking enthusiast in teaching, and the other one is a content writer for reputable digital learning. The data analysis started with the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, then followed by a homogeneity test using a homogeneity test of variance from the Levene statistic, and finally, the hypothesis test used a two-sample t-test or independent sample test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Using SPSS version 20, the result of the normality test can be seen from the data normality test using significance values, in which if the significance value is greater than 0.05 then the data is normally distributed. Based on the result of the normality test, the result of the significant value of the speaking skills test in class XI IIS3 is 0.612, and class XI MIA1 is 0.083. Thus, the data is normally distributed since the significance value of the test result of class XI IIS3 is 0.612. It indicates that the significance value is > 0.05 and class XI MIA1 is $0.083 > 0.05$. For more details, the normality test output is provided in the following table:

Table 1. The Output of Data Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
		IIS3	MIA1
N		36	33
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	62.11	51.82
	Std. Deviation	6.709	9.505
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.127	.220
	Positive	.111	.220
	Negative	-.127	-.102
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.759	1.262
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.612	.083
a. Test distribution is Normal.			
b. Calculated from data.			

According to the homogeneity test, if the significance value > 0.05 then the variance of two or more data population groups is the same. The result of this test shows the significance value is 0.111. It indicates that the data have the same variance or are homogeneous. The SPSS output from the data homogeneity test can be seen in the following homogeneity test output.

Table 2. The Output of Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Speaking Skill			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2.614	1	67	.111

The last prerequisite test is the hypothesis test by conducted t-test independent sample test using SPSS 20. The hypothesis in this research is “there is a difference between using role-play and debate methods on speaking skills in English subject class XI at one of top private high schools”. The hypothesis is accepted if the significance value or sig. (2 tailed) <0.05 and the hypothesis is rejected if the significance value or sig. (2 tailed) > 0.05. Reviewing the independent sample t-test, it is known that the significance value or sig. (2-tailed) of the Equal variance assumed is 0,000 which means <0.05. Thus, the analysis results show that the proposed hypothesis is accepted. It indicates a consequential difference between using role-play and debate on speaking skill in English. The overview of this test can be seen in the hypothesis test output table:

Table 3. The Output of Homogeneity Test

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
S S	Equal variances assumed	2.614	.111	5.231	67	.000	10.293	1.968	6.365	14.220	
	Equal variances not assumed			5.154	57.031	.000	10.293	1.997	6.294	14.292	

The researchers compare the two methods (Role-play and Debate) in order to find out the best method to teach speaking skill. The result of the comparison can be seen in the of the group statistics.

Table 3. The Output of Homogeneity Test

Group Statistics						
	Methods	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Speaking Skill	Role-play	36	62.11	6.709		1.118
	Debate	33	51.82	9.505		1.655

Based on the table above, it is known the mean score of the role-play in class XI IIS3 is 62.11 while the debate in class XI MIA1 is 51.82. These results indicate the students' speaking skill in class XI IIS3 is better than in class XI MIA1. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between role-play and debate.

Discussion

Reviewing the comparison of the average scores of the group statistics, role-play is considered better than debate. It is because role-play gives them more chances for the students to prepare the speech they are going to produce. Role-play gives a flexible chance for the students to ask for the teacher's assistance in making sentences. Using their critical thinking, they can ask the teacher about unfamiliar vocabulary, dictions, and grammar. For critical thinking, role-playing activities are preferable to debate (Latif et al., 2018). They also have a chance to discuss with their friends about their idea. They barely have those chances in the debate because they can only talk to friends within their group for a limited time.

According to the interview with the teacher, she understands it is hard to teach speaking. This is in line with Nieto García (2020) that considers speaking is one of the most difficult skills when focusing on the scoring of Brown's five aspects of speaking skill assessment: grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation, both of the sample students still have low mastery on grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. Converting the data statistics, the students' speaking skills in role-play and debate classes belong between levels 2 to 3. The teacher thinks that this is the effect of their previous learning where they have insufficient knowledge of English materials within their previous level of study. The socio-cultural background contributes to this. Where the students come from affects their prior knowledge. The students who come from the Junior High Schools which are located in rural areas and villages have lower input of knowledge in English rather than those who study downtown. They also have more anxiety rather than those who are from downtown. Anxiety affects the students' performance in how they struggle to speak in public (Turjoman, 2016). It has a consequential effect on their present learning. Moreover, it gains the selection of the teaching method.

CONCLUSION

Considering the data analysis and discussion, the proposed hypothesis in this study is accepted. It reveals a significant difference between using role-play and debate. Comparing their mean scores, role-play is higher than debate. The mean score using role-play is 62.11 while the debate is 51.82. As the finding, this study summarizes the use of role-play is better than debate in the context of speaking skills. In advance, role-play is realized to be better than debate because it stretches the chance to ask for help (from the teacher & classmates) in preparing the sentences of the speech production. Moreover, both role-play and debate are relevant to be used in teaching speaking when the students already have adequate vocabulary mastery. Given the

nature of adult learners with advanced technology, further research on critical thinking in connection to social media use and discussion vs role-playing would be worthwhile.

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