IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH ROLE PLAY AT GRADE XI OF SMK N 6 YOGYAKARTA OF TRAVEL TOURISM PROGRAM IN THE YEAR OF 2014/2015

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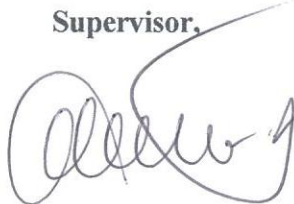
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Improving Students' Speaking Skills through Role Play at Grade XI of SMK N 6 Yogyakarta of Travel Tourism Program in the Year of 2014/2015

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Abstract: The objective of the research was to improve the students' speaking skill through role-play technique at Grade XI of SMK N 6 Yogyakarta of travel tourism program in the academic year of 2014/2015. The research was classroom action research. The subjects of this research were the researcher, the English teacher and the students of SMK N 6 Yogyakarta at Grade XI of travel tourism program which consisted of 30 students. This research was carried out in two cycles. The steps involved planning, doing action, observing, and reflecting. The data of this research were qualitative and supported by quantitative data. The qualitative data were obtained by observing the teaching and learning process, delivering the questionnaire, and interviewing the English teacher and the students of Grade XI at travel tourism program. The qualitative data were in the forms of field notes, interview transcripts, and the questionnaire responses. The instruments used to collect the data were observation sheets, interview guidelines, and questionnaires. Pre-test and post-test were administered to obtain the quantitative data which were in the forms of speaking scores. The research findings show that the use of role-play technique improved students' speaking skills. The improvement could be seen from: (1) the students' pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and accuracy, (2) the students' confidence, enthusiasm, and opportunity to speak up, and (3) the mean score of pretest (49.833), progress test (56.166), and posttest (64.833). In conclusion, role play is believed to be effective to improve students' speaking skills.

Keywords: speaking skills, role play

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Abstrak: Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa melalui tehnik *role play* atau bermain peran pada siswa kelas XI SMK N 6 Yogyakarta program kepariwisataan tahun ajaran 2014/2015. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas. Subjek penelitian ini adalah peneliti, guru Bahasa Inggris dan siswa kelas XI SMK N 6 Yogyakarta program kepariwisataan yang terdiri dari 30 siswa. Penelitian ini terdiri dari dua siklus. Langkah dalam penelitian meliputi perencanaan, pelaksanaan tindakan, pengamatan, dan refleksi. Data dari penelitian ini berupa data kualitatif dan data kuantitatif. Data kualitatif diperoleh melalui pengamatan selama proses pembelajaran, hasil kuesioner, dan hasil wawancara dengan guru Bahasa Inggris dan siswa. Data kuantitatif diperoleh melalui pretes dan postes. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan *role play* atau bermain peran dapat meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa. Peningkatan tersebut dapat dilihat dari (1) pelafalan, kosa kata, kelancaran dan ketepatan siswa dalam berbicara, (2) rasa percaya diri, antusias, dan kesempatan berbicara siswa, dan (3) nilai rata-rata pretes (49.833), *progress test* (56.166) dan postes (64.833). Dapat disimpulkan bahwa tehnik *role play* atau bermain peran efektif untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa.

Kata kunci: keterampilan berbicara, *role play* atau bermain peran

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Introduction

Language is important in building a communication. It can be a device to express ideas verbally. Although language is not always formed verbally, the general communication is always interpreted with languages. In the globalization era, English is the most widely learnt and used language in the world. One of the competences of the language is speaking. It is a tool for communicating with others. In the tourism industry, the human resources have to master English to interact with tourists.

English is significantly important for travel tourism students. It continues to dominate the lingua franca of various contexts, in tourism and travel professions particularly, and has become a common language for travelers from many different countries. The travel tourism students who are going to work with foreigners have to be able to speak English well. It has an important role to meet the global trend and the students' future career needs. Furthermore, in connection with school based-curriculum for vocational schools, they are required to master both spoken and written English.

The most important skill for students for interacting with tourist is mastering speaking skill. They are demanded to speak with foreigners in many different contexts of conversations, such as making a reservation, giving information about tourism, marketing products or services, etc. Therefore, having a high level of speaking English is crucial for the students who are going to work in the tourism industry

In addition, the experience of learning English is important. To support it, students need some classroom activities which enable them to develop their skills to participate in oral communications. Based on *Permendiknas* No. 22 (2006: 384), t h e eleventh grade students in Indonesian Vocational School are in the elementary level. In addition, based on *Permendiknas* No. 23 (2006:72), the goal of learning speaking in the elementary level is expressing meaning orally both interpersonal and transactional expressions, either formal or informal, in delivering request and commands related to the job.

Despite, the eleventh grade students have had English subject before, most of them still have low motivation to speak English. Their language skills are influenced by their mother tongue and they often find some problems, such as lack of vocabulary, grammatical errors, mispronunciation and many more.

These facts were also faced by students of SMK N 6 Yogyakarta at the Travel Tourism Program. Basically, they should be good guides for tourists when they graduate from this program. Based on the observation, they had low motivation to speak in the class because they cannot speak English well. They still have some problems in mastering speaking skills, such as lacks of vocabulary and the real speaking activities to support their fluency to speak English.

The researcher conducted action research to solve the problems of the students in learning English. He carried out classroom action research since he identified the crucial problem of speaking especially for students' vocational school at Travel Tourism Program. He used the role play for effective solution for the problems. Based on Harmer (2001: 69), activities in communicative language teaching involve students in real or realistic communication, where the successful realization of the communicative task they are performing is at least important as the accuracy of their language use. One of communication activities in English language teaching (ELT) is role play because it can be used to encourage general oral fluency or to train the students for specific situations (Harmer, 2001:352). In other ways, by doing this activity, the students can get many opportunities to speak.

Research Method

This research was action research. There were two cycles in this research. There are five phases in the action research, which include problems identification, planning, action and observation, and reflection. The researcher used the procedure of action research proposed by Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988) in Koshy (2005:4). The procedure is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: **Procedure of action research by Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988)**
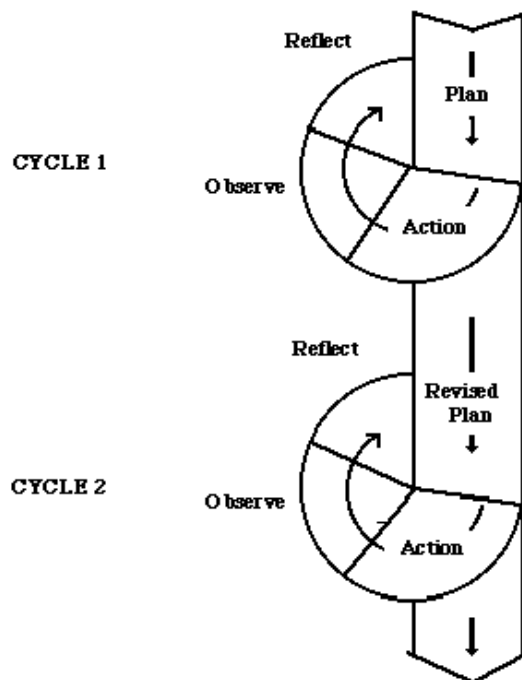
This research was conducted within the first semester of the 2014/2015 academic year from November to December 2014 at SMK N 6 Yogyakarta at Travel Tourism Program. The subjects of the research were the researcher, the English teacher and the students of SMK N 6 Yogyakarta at grade XI at Travel Tourism Program which consists of 25 female and 5 male students.

The data of the research were qualitative and quantitative data. The data were collected by observing the teaching and learning process in the classroom, interviewing the students and the English teacher, testing the students and also giving them questionnaires. In line with the aims of this research, the research used observation sheet, interview guidelines, questionnaire data and students speaking rubrics as the instruments of the data collection.

All of the data obtained from observation checklist, field notes, questionnaire data and interview transcripts and questionnaire data were analyzed qualitatively while the data obtained from the tests (pre-test and post-test) were analyzed quantitatively. The steps of the data analysis included collecting the data, comparing and cross checking the data from the observation checklist, interview transcript, field notes and students' tests.

Findings and Discussion

In Cycle 1, the implementation of role play was successful to improve their speaking skill because role play provided students with lots of opportunities to practice their speaking skill. The opportunities enabled them to make the related expressions to their job in the future. They said that the role play activities encouraged them to learn many things such as fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and accuracy. First of all, they learnt

dialogues related to their job. Then, they practiced pronouncing the dialogues. In addition, role play boosted the students' self-confidence.

However, problems reed to the students' motivation in the teaching learning process still existed. The researcher found that they lacked of motivation. Some of them did not pay attention to and participate in the teaching learning process. They also asked the researcher to dismiss earlier. The result of students' improvement in the four indicators had still questionable too.

To solve these problems, the researcher implemented actions in Cycle 2. In this cycle, the teacher gave them a warning when they asked to go home earlier. After that, the researcher also gave them a game. The game was about pronunciation game. All of the students sat on the floor in the big circle. The table below shows the result of the actions applied in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

Table 1: **The Result of Actions Applied in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2**

No	The students' speaking condition before the action of Cycle 1	The students' speaking conditions after the action of Cycle 1	The students' speaking conditions after the action of Cycle 2
1	The students were shy and passive to speak English and had low fluency.	The students' self-confidence was better; they were more active and more fluent.	Most of the students spoke confidently fluently.
2	The students had difficulties in pronunciation and had low accuracy.	There pronunciation mistakes decreased. They more accurately pronounce the words.	Their pronunciation was better. Their accuracy increased.
3	The students had limited vocabulary mastery	The vocabulary mastery was richer.	The vocabulary mastery was much richer.
4	The students had less opportunity in practicing speaking as they got less chance to practice speaking in the class.	There were many opportunities for them to speak-up.	There were many varieties of opportunities for them to speak-up.
5	The students were bored, had low motivation and not interested with the English material.	They looked enthusiastic on the new topic only and they still asked the teacher to go home earlier.	They enthusiastically got involved in the teaching learning process.
6	The activities were monotonous.	The activities were more varied.	The activities were more varied and interesting.
7	The mean score of the students' speaking skill was 49.833	The mean score of the students' speaking skill was 56.166	The mean score of the students' speaking skill was 64.833

In line with this table, there were improvements on the students' motivation at the end

of Cycle 2. They were motivated to improve their performance on the role play. They made some efforts so that they could perform role play successfully. One of the efforts was rehearsing their dialogues many times before they actually carried out it in front of the class. Their fluency was better than that before the implementation of role play technique. They were more active during the teaching learning process because they were given varied activities in one meeting.

In reference to the table, it could be seen that their speaking skills improved and their vocabulary mastery was better. They learnt many new words and expressions in the dialogues which were useful for their future needs. The students' pronunciations were better than theirs in the first cycle. They knew the right pronunciation so that they spoke more accurately than before. They were more enthusiastically when joining the second cycle. The table also shows that there was a statistical difference among the pretest, progress test, and posttest. The mean score of posttest was 64.833 and the progress test was 56.166, and then the mean score of pretest was 49.833. In this case, there were improvements in the speaking skill in both cycles.

In connection with the qualitative analysis and the quantitative analysis, the students' speaking skill improved. Therefore, it can be concluded that the role play effectively improved the students' speaking skill.

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