

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

English is a compulsory subject at school. It has been taught in junior high school until senior high school as listed in the English curriculum objectives¹. In English subjects, four basic language skills must be learned. The four basic skills are reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills but the researcher did not discuss the four skills. Here the researcher only discussed speaking skills. Speaking skill is one of the language skills that must be mastered by EFL students. According to Nunan in Anchunda “acquiring English speaking is one of the most important aspects of learning in a second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language”². It is indicated that speaking skills are an important part of life to interact and communicate with the people around them.

Nowadays, English speaking is necessary to learn especially for EFL students in school. English speaking skills are very useful for all English language learners who want to continue their education abroad, participate in debate competitions, improve their careers, get better job opportunities, and increase their self-confidence³. Speaking English fluently is also important to introduce the nation's culture to the international world. So it can be said that being proficient in English is a ticket to success and achieving the desired life goals. From now on, EFL students must often practice speaking skills so that they can speak English fluently.

¹ Maryanti, Sofyan Abdul Gani, Saiful Marhaban, “The Strategies Applied By Teachers In Teaching Speaking”, *English Education Journal* 12, no. 3 (2021): 382, <https://doi.org/10.24815/eej.v12i3.19080>.

² Anchunda Henry Yuh and Wareerat Kaewurai, “Investigation of Thai Students’ English-speaking Problems and Needs and the Implementation Collaborative and Communicative Approaches to Enhance Students’ English-speaking skills”, *The Golden Teak : Humanity and Social Science Journal (GTHJ)* 27, no.2 (2021): 92, <https://so05.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/tgt/article/view/252425>.

³ Parupalli Srinivas Rao, “The Importance Of Speaking Skills In English Classrooms”, *Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal(ACIELJ)* 2, issue. 2 (2019): 12, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334283040_THE_IMPORTANCE_OF_SPEAKING_SKILLS_IN_ENGLISH_CLASSROOMS.

In the reality, mastering speaking skills is not easy. There are five aspects of speaking skills that students must pay attention to, namely pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension⁴. These aspects must be possessed by students when they want to be good at speaking English like native speakers. English in Indonesia is a foreign language that is rarely used to communicate in daily life. According to Haghverdi in Riandy, most EFL students think that English is not an important part of their lives⁵. It is not surprising that there are still many students who are at the secondary school level, still having difficulty communicating using English well. It was found that most of the students still find it difficult to speak English in class. According to Ur, the problem is inhibition, students are frequently inhibited about speaking in a foreign language in the classroom because they are concerned about making mistakes, fearful of being criticized, or shy⁶. Reluctant to speak, students are reluctant to speak up because they do not have an idea to speak⁷. Participation is quite low, low student motivation makes some students silent and only some students are actively talking and interacting in class⁸. The use of mother tongue, some students who study foreign languages are more comfortable using their mother tongue because they think that their mother tongue is easier to understand and looks natural⁹.

These problems make them difficult to convey their ideas through speaking. As stated by Bueno, Madrid, and McLaren in Parupalli, "Speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face, and even after years of studying the language, students find it difficult to speak it in real life"¹⁰. For this reason,

⁴ Miranti Anggun Sapitri, Magdad Hatim, Noviati, "The Implementation Of Role Play With Video Blogs (VLOG) In Teaching Speaking To The Eleventh Grade Students Of Senior High School 3 Of Palembang" *Exposure Journal* 9, no. 2 (2020): 404, <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/exposure/article/view/4343>.

⁵ Riandy Arifputra Pradhana, Kusrin, and Praditya Putri Utami, "Exploring Students Experience in Online Speaking Class Using Role-Play Technique", *Journal Of English Language And Education* 6, no. 2 (2021): 93, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v6i2.126>.

⁶ Penny Ur, *A Course in Language Teaching* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 121.

⁷ Penny Ur, *A Course in Language...* 121.

⁸ Penny Ur, *A Course in Language...* 121.

⁹ Penny Ur, *A Course in Language...* 121.

¹⁰ Parupalli, "The Importance Of Speaking... 8.

students must often practice their speaking skills so that they can communicate fluently. As stated by Lilik speaking is an ability that requires a lot of practice¹¹. Students can practice speaking skills by talking to themselves in front of a mirror or practicing with friends¹².

As experienced by most teachers in pandemic time, they made some efforts to create interesting learning process¹³. While, in the new normal era, learning activities returned to normal as usual accompanied by various provisions that must be carried out by students and teachers as educators. As we may know, based on the policy issued by the government, face-to-face learning activities can be continued in schools again while still following the health protocol. Therefore, learning in new normal era must be made interesting and varied so that students are interested and enthusiastic to keep learning. Teachers must change the learning model from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning. So that EFL students can get more opportunities to actively participate in teaching and learning activities that take place in class. This can encourage them to think critically and be able to solve their problems.

English teachers must be smart in choosing the appropriate learning technique to be applied in the classroom. The selection of learning technique must be adjusted to the needs of the students. The appropriate learning technique in teaching speaking can increase students' participation in speaking and also make them interested in joining the class¹⁴. Speaking is one of the language skills that must be frequently trained and practiced. One of the learning techniques that can be applied in the classroom to train students' speaking is using role play. Budden in Della defines role play as a speaking activity by positioning oneself in another person's position

¹¹ Lilik Huriyah, et.al., "Peer Dialogue as an Effective Way for Teaching Speaking: Indonesian EFL Students' Voices", *Proceedings of the International Conference on English Language Teaching*, (2019): 235, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200427.046>.

¹² Lilik, "Peer Dialogue... 235.

¹³ Anisah Setyaningrum, et.al., *Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Daring: Sebuah Keniscayaan dalam Masa Pandemi in Pengalaman Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Daring di Perguruan Tinggi pada Masa Pandemi*. (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2020), 73.

¹⁴ Abdul Gafur Marzuki, "Developing Speaking Skill through Oral Report in an EFL Class in Indonesia", *Al- Ta'lim Journal* 24, no. 3 (2017): 244, <http://dx.doi.org/10.15548/jt.v24i3.330>.

(according to the role played) in a situation that has been previously set¹⁵.

Role play is an essential technique in language teaching especially in teaching speaking because it allows students to practice communicating in a variety of social contexts and social roles¹⁶. It means that role play provides more opportunities for students to practice speaking English in order to improve verbal communication skills. In role play, students can freely express their emotions, feelings, and faces according to the role they play. In addition, role play also encourages students to be more creative.

Based on the preliminary research that have been made by the researcher at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara. The researcher found that there are several problems experienced by students in speaking English. The following are some of the problems experienced by students in speaking English¹⁷.

The first problem is that students have difficulty pronouncing English words. Many students do not know how to pronounce good and correct English vocabulary. This is because they are not familiar with English vocabulary and the pronunciation of English vocabulary is very much different from Indonesian which is their native language.

The second problem is that students have limited vocabulary. To convey ideas, or communicate with other people, vocabulary is needed to be arranged into sentences. If they have a limited vocabulary, they will automatically find it difficult to speak English.

The third problem is that students feel afraid of making mistakes. Students are afraid to make mistakes both in pronunciation and sentence structure. They are not confident in their abilities so they feel afraid when asked to speak English.

These problems make them difficult to speak English. In consequence, the English teacher tried to apply role play technique as a learning innovation in the new normal era to enhance students'

¹⁵ Dela Octavia Ayuningtias, Wulandari, Yana, "The Use Of Role Play To Improve Students' Speaking Skill", *PROJECT: Professional Journal Of English Education* 2, no. 3 (2019): 417, <http://dx.doi.org/10.22460/project.v2i3.p416-420>.

¹⁶ Mavlonova Ugiloy Khamdamovna, et.al., "Role Play As A Method Of Developing Speaking Skill", *Scientific reports of Bukhara State University* 3, issue. 1 (2019): 255, <https://uzjournals.edu.uz/buxdu/vol3/iss1/13>.

¹⁷ Samudi as the English teacher at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Jepara, interviewed by the researcher, March 1, 2022.

speaking skills and also overcome the various problems experienced by students in speaking English.

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher conducted a study entitled “Implementing Role Play to Enhance EFL Students’ Speaking Skills in New Normal Era at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara”.

B. Research Focus and Scope

This research focuses on the English teaching and learning process. The scope of the study is the use of role play to teach speaking skills. The researcher wants to know the implementation of using role play to enhance students’ speaking skills.

C. Research Problems

1. How is the speaking skills of seventh grade class A students at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara?
2. How is the implementation of role play to enhance EFL students’ speaking skills in new normal era at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using role play to enhance EFL students’ speaking skills in new normal era at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara?

D. Research Objectives

1. To know the speaking skills of seventh grade class A students at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara.
2. To know the implementation of role play to enhance EFL students’ speaking skills in new normal era at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara.
3. To know the advantages and disadvantages of using role play to enhance EFL students’ speaking skills in new normal era at MTs Al-Alawiyah Karangrandu Pecangaan Jepara.

E. Research Significances

This research is expected to provide benefits for related parties, both theoretically and practically, including:

1. Theoretical Significance

The results of this study are expected to increase knowledge and insight regarding matters related to learning English, especially understanding the implementation of role play in teaching English speaking in the classroom and the advantages and disadvantages of using role play.

2. Practical Significance

a. For English Teacher

This research is expected to be an inspiration for English teachers in choosing suitable teaching techniques for their students. One of them is the teacher can choose to use role play in teaching speaking in class.

b. For Students

The results of this research are expected to increase the enthusiasm of students in participating in learning because learning is packaged attractively through role play. Besides, the researcher hopes that the use of role play can enhance students' speaking skills.

c. For Future Researcher

This research is expected to be a reference source for future researchers who will research the same topic.

F. Definition of Key Terms

This key term is given to avoid misunderstanding or different perception of meaning. Based on the research title, there are four key terms used, including:

1. New Normal Era is an era where the government issues policy during the Covid-19 pandemic so that people can live back to normal as usual while still implementing health protocols.
2. Speaking Skill is the person's ability to produce speech sound.
3. EFL Student is people who learn English as a foreign language in non-English speaking countries in which English is not the first language or the official language of the country.
4. Role Play is a technique that allows students to act out in different social conditions and roles. In this activity, students can play the role of anyone according to the role they play.

G. Organization of Thesis

This thesis consists of initial, five chapters, and complement:

Initial: it contains cover, approval pages, statement of work's originality, abstract, abstrak, motto, dedication page, acknowledgement, preface, and table of contents.

Chapter I Introduction: it contains research background, research focus and scope, research problems, research objectives, research significances, definition of key terms, and organization of thesis.

Chapter II Review of related literature: it contains theoretical description, theoretical framework, and previous study.

Chapter III Research methodology: it contains research method, research setting, research subject, instrument and data collection technique, research data validity, data analysis technique.

Chapter IV Research Findings and discussion: it contains research results and discussion.

Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations: it contains conclusion and recommendation.

Complement: it contains references, appendices, and curriculum vitae.

