

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking is one of the ways to communicate with others and help others understand the importance of our communication in everyday life. In this context, speaking skills have a significant role as one of the main aspects of effective communication skills. However, in many learning environments, speaking skills are often neglected or do not receive adequate attention.

Grugeon et al. (2014) in "Teaching Speaking and Listening in the Primary School" highlight the need for comprehensive education in developing speaking skills from an early age. This often happens because conventional learning methods are inadequate in developing students' speaking skills, especially in foreign language contexts.

In many language classes, teachers usually face challenges motivating students to speak actively. Factors such as shyness, lack of self-confidence, and lack of opportunities to practice speaking in real situations can hinder the development of students' speaking skills (Ahsan et al. 2020). In this case, an innovative and effective learning approach is needed to improve students' speaking skills.

Cameron (2000), in her book entitled "Good to Talk? Living and Working in a Communication Culture" highlights the social and cultural aspects of speaking skills. Cameron states that speaking skills are not only related to technical abilities in using language, but are also influenced by social norms, relational forces, and complex communication contexts.

One promising approach is the role play technique. Role play is a learning technique that involves students in simulating real situations where they act as certain characters.

Miller (2009) researched the effectiveness of various methods in improving students' speaking skills. In his research, he found that role play was consistently considered one of the most successful methods in improving students' self-confidence and speaking skills. In the context of language learning, role play allows students to practice speaking in relevant and meaningful contexts, such as interacting with foreigners, participating in group discussions, or playing a role in professional situations. The main advantage of the role-play method is its ability to create a dynamic and interactive learning environment where students can practice speaking actively.

According to Burns (1998), the importance of speaking practice that is contextual and relevant to students' daily lives. Burns states that, role play is an effective way to allow students to use language in situations that are similar to real life. By participating in assigned roles, students can have direct experience in using language in real contexts, which can increase their confidence in speaking. Apart from that, role play also facilitates the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, because students must respond to the situations they face quickly and appropriately.

Although role play has great potential in improving students' speaking skills, there is still a lack of in-depth research to scientifically evaluate its effectiveness. Many existing studies tend to be descriptive or qualitative in nature, and more comprehensive and controlled research is still needed to measure their impact empirically. Taking these challenges into account, this study aims to fill the research gap and investigate in depth the effectiveness of the role play method in improving students' speaking skills.

Thus, it is hoped that this research can provide a valuable contribution to the development of more effective learning practices in the context of students' speaking ability.

1.2 Research Questions

In light of the aforementioned background, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. Can role play technique improve vocational students' speaking skills?
2. What are the impacts of using the role play method on vocational students' motivation and confidence in speaking?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Reference to the research questions, this study is done to:

1. To find out if role play can improve students' speaking skills.

This aims to investigate how role-playing activities influence students' ability to express them verbally. By engaging in simulated real-life scenarios, students may have more opportunities to practice speaking in a structured yet creative environment, thereby improving their fluency, vocabulary and pronunciation.

2. To find out the impact of using the role-play method on students' motivation and confidence in speaking.

The aim is to explore how role-playing affects students' willingness to participate in speaking activities. Role-playing can help to reduce anxiety and create a

supportive atmosphere, which can have a positive impact on students' confidence and motivation to communicate more freely in front of their peers.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research is very useful for improving students' speaking skills, which has important meaning for both students and researchers.

For students, this research offers a path to strengthening their communication skills through hands-on, immersive experiences. Role-playing activities provide a platform for students to actively engage with language in a meaningful context, fostering fluency, confidence, and adaptability in oral expression. By entering a variety of roles and scenarios, students can develop a deeper understanding of language nuances and cultural perspectives, preparing them for real-world interactions outside the classroom.

For researchers, the role play method is a pedagogical tool offering invaluable insight into innovative teaching strategies. Understanding how role-playing impacts students' speaking abilities allows educators to adapt their teaching approaches to better meet the diverse needs and preferences of their students. Armed with evidence-based practices, teachers can design dynamic lesson plans that prioritize active participation and experiential learning, ultimately creating a more engaging and effective classroom environment. Additionally, this research informs the development of targeted assessment methods that accurately measure student progress in oral communication skills in the context of role-play activities.

Ultimately, the significance of this research is not just limited to the classroom, as it also contributes to the ongoing dialogue around language education and teaching best practices. By uncovering the benefits of role-playing in improving students' speaking

skills, both students and teachers will gain a valuable tool for personal and professional growth. This research underscores the transformative potential of innovative teaching methodologies, paving the way for more dynamic and inclusive learning experiences that empower students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.