

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English becomes the most essential language in the world. Almost all the people from many different countries around the world use it to communicate. It is spoken by millions of people all over the world. The area of English has always become a special interest. It's because of the importance of English in many aspects of our lives.

One of the expressive language elements is speaking skill. Speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with other, and speaking skill is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language. In the international language relationship, English speaking skill is very important to be able to participate in the wider world of work. According to Atherton (2003:38) when someone speaks, he or she interacts and uses the language to express his or her ideas, feeling and thought also shares information to other through communication.

English is the most universally spoken language and many countries around the world often take English as a second language. Learning English is also helpful because it allows them to communicate effectively and enables people to form a

cohesive sentence. Everyone uses language to inform the people around them of what they feel or what they desire. Through language we can connect with other people and make sense of our experiences. Strong language skills are an asset that will promote a lifetime of effective communication.

Many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. These learners define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments in spoken communication.

In this global era we are demanded to be good in speaking English because English is the most important language in the world. That is the reason why we should learn and practice on more speaking. According to the writer's own experiences when she was having teaching practice, the students often found some problems. The problems frequently found were that their native language causes them difficult to use the foreign language. Other reason is because low motivation to practice the second language in daily conversation. They are also too shy and afraid to take part in the conversation. Many factors can cause the problem of the students speaking skills namely the students interest the material and the media among others, including the technique in teaching English. Many techniques can be applied including role play because many research findings say that this technique is effective to use in teaching speaking.

Role play is very important in teaching speaking because it gives students an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles. In addition, it also allows students to be creative and to put

themselves in another persons place for a while. According to Atherton (2003: 50) based on his observation in the conversation class, the role play would seem to be the ideal activity in which students could use their English creatively and it aims to stimulate a conversation situation in which students might find themselves and give them an opportunity to practice and develop their communication skill.

In this study, the writer focused on role play. The reason for using role play is to give more opportunities to students to make turns in speaking. The writer assumed that role plays are combination between language practice and fun. They can express their ideas, feeling because they do activities with their friends. Based on the background above, the writer is conducting a research entitled “ **A Study on Speaking Ability Through Role Play of The Eighth Grade Students of SMPK St. Yoseph In The Academic Year 2014/2015**”

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background described above, the writer would like to state several problems in several questions below:

1. Are the eighth grade students of SMPK St. Yoseph able to speak English through role play?
2. What is the students' level of ability in speaking?
3. What might be the difficulties faced by the students in speaking?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the question in the statement of the problems, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out whether the eighth grade students' of SMPK St. Yoseph able to speak English through role play
2. To find out the students' level of speaking ability through role play
3. To know the possible difficulties faced by the students' in speaking English through role play.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of the study may contribute several advantages and benefits for the writer, students and English teacher. The benefits are:

1. The Writer

This study is useful for the writer to improve her knowledge particularly about speaking especially in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

2. The Students of the Researched School

Through this study the students can be motivated to learn and speak orally with correct pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

3. The English Teacher of the Researched School

This study is beneficial for the English teacher to know about their students' ability in speaking.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

There are four skills of learning and teaching language including learning and teaching English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are also sub skills of learning and teaching language including English: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and spelling.

In this study the writer only limits to the speaking through role play. The writer also limits the evaluation on speaking elements on grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary.

1.6 Definition of the Terms

The following are the definitions of the terms that can help the readers to understand the whole body of the study.

1. Speaking

According to Jill (2000: 96) speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. In this study speaking means an activity used by someone to communicate with other

2. Ability

Based on Hornby (2007), ability is capacity or power (to do something physical or mental) so in this study ability means be able to speak English in normal way.

3. Role Play

Harmer (1983: 210) role play is one of communicative activities where students pretend that they are in various social contents and have a variety of social roles.

4. SMPK St. Yoseph

It is one of the private junior high schools in Kupang city where the writer takes the data for this study. The school is located in Jl. E. R. Herewila No 27 Naikoten II Kupang.