STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON THE USE OF ROLE PLAY BY THE TEACHER IN EFL CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

The use of learning methods that are in accordance with the conditions of students is a must for teachers in order to maximize the results of the learning process. One method that can be used is role play. This study aims to determine student perceptions of learning activities followed by students who use the role play method by the teacher during the learning process in the classroom. Data is collected by using interviews with students who have carried out role play activities. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The results show that use of role play can: (1) increase students' confidence to communicate with others, (2) increase students' ability to build language competence, (3) increase students' motivation, (4) help students eager to learn (5) motivate students to be active in learning process. Thus, students' perceptions of learning using role play show positive student perceptions.

Keywords : role play, students' perception, EFL classroom.

INTRODUCTION

The use of role-playing as a learning method in higher education has been used in problem-based learning contexts. It is also considered to be a useful method of teaching. Neuendorf and O'Connell (2011) described the value of role-plays in teacher education: "Pedagogically sound scenario-based role-plays are activities with a specific learning outcome designed to create a realistic learning experience for participants". In role play students not only learn the language but also, they try to behave as if they are in real work. (Arham, Yassi, & Arafah, (2016). Role play strategy supports the theory of Vygotsky in Brown (2008) as stated that the development of language performance occurs in sociocultural interaction in learning process. On the other hand, role play urges students to speak directly in the target language to develop communicative competence as stated by Hymes and Savignon in Savignon (2008)

The use of role-play also has the potential to facilitate a more comprehensive learning experience for teacher education students compared to the more traditional cognitive focused approach. Role-play discovers problems of humanistic relations by showing problematic situations and discussing them. Students can discover feelings, perceptions, values, and problem-solving strategies together. And group work skills and group members participation can be increased through role-playing. Role-play can take place in a real environment in which students bring this opportunity to acquire intended results in a safe and confident environment.

Many studies investigated the role play in langauge learning (e.g., Chauhan PM, 2015; (Arham, Yassi, & Arafah, 2016; Neupane, 2019; Krisdiana, Irawati, & Kadarisman, 2018; Liu & Ding, 2009; Krebt, 2017). For instance, Arham, Yassi, & Arafah, (2016) pointed that role play is very important technique in language teaching, particularly in teaching speaking because it can give learners opportunities to practice communicating in different social contexts and social roles. Furthermore, it also allows students to be creative and to put themselves in another person's place for a while. That is why role play is considered suitable for vocational classes that urge much direct learning for their profession. Students are not only as passive learners but they become active learners since there are various activities that put them in an active process. A study (Krebt, 2017) discovered that there is a significant improvement in speaking skill of experimental group. The two groups were significantly different to the sake of using role play technique. While Krisdiana, Irawati, & Kadarisman, (2018) pointed out that role-play integrated with word cards is effective in improving students' speaking skill for communication. Another study showed that there is a significant improvement in speaking skill of experimental group. It can be concluded that role play have significant effect on students' speaking skill (Neupane, 2019).

A study showed that role-play improves different skills such as ethical, practical, emotional and social skills. Emotional skill refers to a person's ability to counter, manage, express and control its own exciting conditions such as anxiety, anger, grief, excitement, and happiness. Social skill enables individuals to connect with others so that they encourage their responses and avoid their negative responses. Role play motivates students to speak spontaneously in the target language which is ultimately able to develop communicative competence as stated by Hymes and Savignon in Savignon (2008). The two theories--social learning theory and Communicative Language Teaching are considered relevant to role play since social learning insist the integration of social life into learning (Vygotsky in Brown 2008). In this case social role in various area are selected based on the students' needs. This kind of learning brings students social experience how to do the role in specific context of communication. Here role play opens the stage for students to explore what they see, they know and what they learn to behave in their prospective career.

Moral skill refers to what school, intended and unintentional, applies to help young people to reflect on right and wrong affairs and too strong them young's tendency towards social good- being and help them to behave in an ethical way. So, practical refers to how students able to observe the dimension of learning that learner practically demonstrate.

While the researcher was doing teacher training at one of Vocational High Schools in Tasikmalaya. Many students get bored while learning, moreover if it is already noon. When the weather was getting hot, the students would start to be sleepy, because they cannot focus on the learning process. After that the researcher sees her teacher mentor demonstrate to teach the students using role play.

There are many researchers conducted the study related to the frame of the students' perception of the teacher using role play. The first study is conducted by Incecay (2009), who investigated the perception of communicative and non-communicative activities in Turkey education programmed. The second study is conducted by Huang and Hu (2016), who examined student's perception of classroom activities such as English dubs, role play, brainstorming, etc. in Beijing Forestry University, China. Those studies focused on the student in Turkey and China, whereas this research is focused on doing role play in Vocational High School, yet with the same goal that is active learning.

Dealing with the description above, then, this present study focuses on investigating the student perception towards the use of role play as performed by an English teacher when teaching English in vocational school. The findings is expected able to contribute to development of teaching and learning strategy in which personal factors and pedagogy are the two points very considered in this study. In addition, the result also can be an evaluation, particularly for the teacher teaching English where this study carried out.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Nature of Role Play

In general role-play is a method of acting out particular ways of behaving or pretending to be other people who deal with new situations. Play means that is taken on in a safe environment in which students are as inventive and playful as possible.

Role-play is an activity of playing a role so closely to real life done by students in or involves fantasy or imagination to be someone else or to be ourselves in a specific situation for a while, improvising dialogue and creating a real world in scenario (Nga, 2011). Keneth (2008) argues that role play can be defined as the type of student to behave in a certain context.

This strategy encourages thinking and creativity and lets students develop and practice new language and behavior skills in a relatively non-threatening setting, create the motivation and involvement necessary for learning to occur, and simulates real life situations and allows students to act out what they would do in a real situation (Tompkins ,1998). Therefore, role play is a strategy which requires students to play a role which is appropriate to the given situation and enables students to 'become' anyone or imagine in a specific situation, which leaners may improvise dialogue or creating their own utterances and scenario like in a real world.

There are some fundamentals of role-play that have to be known so that the process is not done carelessly. The main fundamentals of role-play, according to Shaftel, et al. (1967) are belief and behaviour. Firstly, belief means a teacher doesn't impose his decision on the group, but permit students to make their own decisions by giving then opportunities to discover better ways to handle their difficulties and learn from their own mistakes from discussion and enactment. Secondly, behavior means a teacher accepts more open expressions of feelings as far as students helped to respect the ideas and feelings.

According to Crookal (2014), there is a little consensus on the terms used in the role-playing and simulation literature. Role-play, on the other hand, can be a quite simple and brief technique to organize. It is also highly flexible, leaving much more scope for the exercise of individual variation, initiative, and imagination. Role-play also included in simulation as well.

In defining role-play, Donn Byrne (1986) gave comments that role-play is a part of drama activity. In detail, he described that there are three terms to cover the drama activities. They are mime (mimicry-memorization), role-play and simulation. He distinguished the terms as follows:

First, mime, the participants perform actions without using words (although as we shall see, this activity leads naturally on to talk). Second, role-play, the participants interact either as themselves in imaginary situations, and simulation, this involves role-play as defined above. However, for this activity, the participants normally discuss a problem of some kind with some setting that has been defined for them.

Both role-play and simulation are commonly used in foreign language classes to facilitate communicative competence. Whereas mime seems more appropriate as a language game. It is performing actions without using words. For instance, someone mimes and actions, the others try to guess what it is.

Role-play, as an active teaching method is explained by Altuan (2015) that role-play is a strategy in which students are required to act specific roles through saying, doing, and sharing. On the other hands "Role-play is approved to be a communicative language learning since students are actively getting involved in conversations" (Nunan, 2001). Ladousse (2004) states the role-play is one method to help students achieve their objectives of speaking English; it is dynamic and fun to be used in the classroom and it makes the teaching-learning process more enjoyable (as cited in Alabsi, 2016). Cameron (2001) describes vocabulary learning strategies as "the actions that learners take to help themselves understand and remember vocabulary items. Gass and Mackey

(2006) argues role-play's main contribution is to involve learners in a fun environment avoiding rivalry and competition among learners. Meanwhile, Huang (2008) argues that teaching and learning plans that include role-play had created more adequate atmospheres for learning a foreign language; and helping students to practice English in a more realistic way.

From those explanations above, the researcher views that role play is a technique that involves fantasy or imagination to be someone else or to be ourselves in a specific situation for a while, improvising dialogue and creating the students' a real world in the scenario. It aims to encourage thinking and creativity, let them develop and practice new language and behavioral skills in a relatively non-threatening setting, and create the motivation and involvement necessary for learning.

B. The Nature of Perception

The word perception comes from the Latin word percipio, meaning "receiving, collecting, action of taking possession, apprehension with the mind or senses". Forgus and Melamed have defined perception as "the process of information extraction" (1976). Forgus and Melamed based their description of perception on cognitive structures and according to them, "perceptions are the processes that determine how humans interpret their surroundings". According to Steward L. Tubbs & Stylvia Mors (1990), "perception is an active process as one selectively perceives, organizes and interprets what one experiences. Interpretations are based on the perceivers' past experiences, assumptions about human behavior, knowledge of the other circumstances, present moods / wants / desires and expectations."

Perception according to Critcher (2010) is divided into two: judgment and behavior, which explained as follow;

Judgement of perception according to Kant's theory on the judgment of perception said judgment of perception is empirical by nature, as you must first experience something in order to perceive it. Because a judgment of perception only judges an object or thing based on the senses. The judgment of perception does not require pure concepts of understanding but only the logical connection of concept.

Behavior is begun by noting that all behavior is describable as an attempt on the part of an individual to bring about some state of affairs – either to effect a change from one state of affairs to another or to maintain a currently existing one (Ossorio, 2006, p. 49). In other words, it can be said that behavior is the range of actions and mannerisms made by individuals in conjunction with themselves or their environment.

Therefore, it can be concluded that students' perception is how students interpret their surroundings based on their judgment and behavior. So, here the researcher combined role play and perception to know the students' judgment and behavior based on role play they acted in the classroom.

METHOD

In conducting this research, a case study has been chosen as a method. It is done because the research focused on investigation of the students' perceptions on role-play. Two student teachers participated in this study. A case study is used to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within it is real world context (Yin, 2014, a cited in Hollweck 2016).

In this research, the data was collected using semi-structured interview because it is focused on interviewer's perceptions from a neutral, objective while doing a role play (Fontana & Frey 2005). During the interview, the data was recorded using the digital recorder. Then the data were analyzed by using thematic analaysis (Braun and Clarke's, 2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Through the thematic analysis, the researcher found the answer to the question of this research. The research question was "What are the students' perception on the use of role play by the teacher?" The researcher identified one emergent theme, which is the students' perception of role play that develop "Critcher (2010)" Self-Perception theory. The students' perception were divided into two sub-themes: (1) judgement, (2) behavior. Each of the themes is presented with the data together with analysis.

A. Students' Judgement

Relating to the data interview, the researcher found that, there are several students' perception on role play. Such as: (1) increase students' confidence, (2) increase students' ability to find a new vocabularies and (3) increase students' motivation.

   1. Increase Students' Confidence to able to Communicate with Others

Through role play, students are given opportunity to express their thought since they are given a rehearsal in their own group before acting it out in the front of their friends. The important thing of the role play that student are stimulated and encourage to speak. To this respect, it is obviously argued that role play become the good strategy to simulate students to speak in which they are facilitated to improvise in the conversation. In this context, students are provided opportunity to be more creative in using language (Arham, Yassi, & Arafah, 2016).

The study revealed that role-play has a good benefit to the students in enhancing their oral communication skills. Role-play helped learners to build their creativity. Furthermore, role-play really encourage the students to speak, and thus, this could lower their anxiety levels.

Role-play is an effective method to increase students' confidence, because they are required to speak and show drama in front of the class. This finding supported by the study conducted by Altuan (2015) which stated that role-play is a method in which students are required to act specific roles through saying, doing, and sharing. It was found that conduct of role-play activities can provide a stress free learning environment where students enjoy using the language. The findings show that role-play activities enable students to gain self-confidence enhance. Although not 100% increase their confidence but at least minimize the embarrased of the students when performing in front of the class.

   2. Increase Students' Ability to Build Language Competence

Role play is categorized as a good method to stimulate students to speak. In this context, students are provided opportunity to be more creative in using language.

A good learning is not only students memorize the materials but also make them motivated to look for the vocabularies and meanings which is suitable used in conversation. This finding is in line with Cameron (2001) that described vocabulary learning strategies as the actions that learners take to help themselves understand and remember vocabulary items.

The students who are facilitated in their learning using role play show significant their improvement in their speaking skill. In the teaching setting, the teacher functions as a facilitator and controller of the learning activities conveyed by the students. The teacher helps them when they face problem, for instances, hard or difficult to finds words to say or some expression to say something. Thus, the students are given opportunity to be creative to do some improvisation based on their own knowledge or experiences. This kind of learning makes students feel important in their participation (Arham, Yassi, & Arafah, 2016).

The other benefit of role play can be identified from Cornett (1999) who discovered that students improve fluency in language and oral interaction skills, beside the use of language of the body during face-to-face communication, when they are participated in role play techniques. Those techniques are especially fundamental for students learning a foreign language who may not often speak English at home because those students are eager to use the language and then improve their fluency and speaking with the chance to participate in role play (as cited in Neupane, 2019).

3. Increase Students' Motivation

Role-play method engaged students' motivation on learning process. Role-play created more students-centered learning environment. "Role-play is approved to be a communicative language learning since students are actively get involved in conversations" (Nunan, 2001). In this case students are force to be active learners.

The students become the center of learning not the teachers as found in common ways of teaching process. Students are step by step lead into the independent phase of learning. Role-play method makes the students motivate to join learning process. Altun (2015) conducted a case study on the implementation of role-play activities to explore the benefits of such activities in developing language, motivation and promote the speaking skills of foreign language learners.

Role play refers to the technique belongs to communicative language learning since the students are participatively get involved in the process (Nunan, 2001). The students are perceived as active learners and become the centre of learning (not a teacher) and build independent learning step by step. In line with, Tompkins (2001) pointed that role play as it is one of the classroom teaching techniques can encourage students to participate actively in the process of learning English. Therefore, foreign language students practise the target language in context similar to real-life situations where stress and shyness are removed. Tompkins, P.K. (2001). This makes sense since The appropriate technique used by the English teacher also supports their interest in practicing their speaking. One of the techniques that can be applied is role play (Fadilah, 2016).

B. Students' Behavior

The effect of role-play such as become active, could happen to the teacher or students of the teaching learning process. Role-play is a potential activity for helping the teacher while serving the material to the students. When students doing a role-play the researcher found several behaviors that emerged such as: (1) students are eager to learn and (2) students are eager to be active in learning process.

1. Students are Eager to Learn

The students have their own participation on their process of teaching learning. Role-play method in the class would get different respond from them. One of the respond is students' eager to learn while learning process.

Role-play was an exciting activity and make them eager to learn, all of the students answer that role-play make them eager to learn because there is an activity or action that students' do. That statement is support by Gass and Mackey (2006) role-play's main contribution is to involve the learners in a fun environment avoiding rivalry and competition among learners. It is also in line with Huang (2008, a cited in Rojas and Villafuerte 2018), who argued that teaching and learning plans that include a role-play activity had created more adequate atmospheres for learning a foreign language. Moreover it help the students to practice English in a more realistic way.

2. Students are Eager to be Active in Learning Process

The students made a good contribution while teaching learning process. All the students' participant said that a role-play activity make them active. It is in line with Ladousse (2004) the role-play is one method to help students achieve their objectives of speaking English; it is dynamic and fun to be used in the classroom and it makes the teaching-learning process more enjoy.

In summary, role-play is a teaching method to make the students active because the data showed that all the students' participant engage and active while the teaching learning process in the class.

CONCLUSION

Based on data analysis, the researcher found that students' perception on the use of role play, they are as follow; most of the students said that they able to improve their language competence, including speaking and vocabularies. Beside, their confidence become increase. Role-play also makes them become motivated and enthusiastic in following activity. In other word, the students are forced to engage in their teaching learning process.

In addition, other positive effect of role play is on students' feeling. Most of them firstly feel nervous but after a while they are able to adapt with the condition. Even one of them is hard to adapt her feeling toward the condition of teaching learning process using role-play method by the teacher. Therefore, it can be concluded, role-play used by the teacher as one of a method is able to improve students' confidence.

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