

ROLE PLAYING AS TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING SPEAKING TO HELP DEVELOPING THE STUDENTS' CHARACTER

Kurnia Fitri Arifah
University of Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

Riyadi Santosa
University of Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

Ngadiso
University of Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Teaching speaking gives opportunity to provide fluency practice for language learners. The students can practice to speak by role playing as one of techniques in teaching speaking. However, students with the high speaking ability are worthless without good morals. For this reason, today the teacher has responsibility towards the student's character. Unfortunately, the character building for students cannot be taught in isolation because it is not included in language skills. Therefore, the character building should be infused to the teaching learning process. This paper addresses the issue of role play as a technique in teaching speaking and developing students' character.

Keywords: *role play, speaking, students' character*

Sari

Mengajar berbicara memberi kesempatan untuk pembelajar Bahasa melatih kelancarannya. Para siswa dapat berlatih berbicara dengan bermain peran sebagai salah satu teknik dalam mengajar berbicara. Namun, siswa dengan kemampuan berbicara yang tinggi tidak berharga tanpa moral yang baik. Oleh karena itu, sekarang ini guru memiliki tanggung jawab terhadap pembentukan karakter siswa. Sayangnya, pembentukan karakter siswa tidak dapat diajarkan secara terpisah karena tidak termasuk dalam keterampilan berbahasa. Oleh karena itu, pembentukan karakter harus dimasukkan ke dalam proses belajar mengajar. Makalah ini membahas tentang bermain peran sebagai teknik dalam mengajar berbicara dan mengembangkan karakter siswa.

Kata kunci: *berbicara, bermain peran, karakter siswa*

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Introduction

One of the focal point in English classrooms is teaching oral communication skill. Speaking is important in language teaching because it is the vehicle of social solidarity, social ranking, business and the media to learn language (Aliakbari & Jamalvandi, 2010). “For the most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication” (Purwati, Ariyanti, Darma, 2010, p. 2). The objectives of teaching speaking have been stated clearly in English Curriculum. The goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficiency, in which learners should be able to make themselves understood, using their current proficiency. Besides, the goal of speaking today should improve students' communicative skills to express and learn to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate (Kayi, 2006). Therefore the learners should improve their speaking skill in order to be able to fulfill the effective communication in English.

However, there are still a lot of students who are not confidence to speak up. Students are afraid of making mistake while speaking English. Some students are lack of knowledge, so that they do not know what they want to say. There are also students who do not get a chance to speak in classroom because the dominating of certain students. Therefore it is important that the teacher should help students to achieve the goal of speaking.

The three major issues in the education of young people today are the development of a vision for one's life, the development of one's character and the development of competence (Huitt, 2004). Beside the responsibility of students' improvement in the English skills, the teachers are also responsible for student's moral. They have a responsibility to help students develop their character to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in classroom especially in learning English as a foreign language. They should understand that the language brings its culture which can effect on learners' character. Therefore they are responsible for using material which promote understanding and inspire the development of good character in every part of students' learning experiences.

Character building is comprehensive school reform in learning process to promote the development of good character which is taught through modeling and curriculum. Character Building means a behavioral values cultivation system to school citizen which cover knowledge, willingness or awareness, and action to execute values, do the values for God, own self, humanity, environmental, and also nationality, so that become perfect person. “Character Education is a national movement creating schools that foster ethical, responsible, and caring young people by modeling and teaching good character through an emphasis on universal values that we all share” (Abourjilie, 2002, p. 2).

Students’ character is not formed automatically because it takes a long period. It cannot be understood and developed with the limited time. It is developed in process of teaching, learning and practice. In fact, students’ character is presented by teachers just for about 10-15 minutes each day. Besides, it is just introduced by discussing the world’s issues and its implications with students through illustration.

Considering that it is hard to overcome the problems to improve the speaking skill and to incorporate the character building in speaking class, some strategies and methods are very important to be implemented. One way to get students to speak and build the good character is role-playing. Role play technique has been applied by some of teachers in the foreign country. Role play engages students in various social contexts. Role play also has a variety of social roles which can affect in students’ character. “Character education may address such critical concerns as student absenteeism, discipline problems, drug abuse, gang violence, teen pregnancy and poor academic performance” (Abourjilie, 2006, p. 2). In role-play activities, the teacher can ask the learners to perform a roll with such critical topic. The teacher guides students as who they are and what they think or feel. Thus, based on the reason above, this paper will discuss about how role play improves the speaking skill and develops the character building in English classroom.

Role Playing to Help Improve the Speaking Ability

Role play is enjoyable and attractive activity. It is a non-threatening technique which tends to be applied for young learners in order to attract them while learning English. According to Banu (2001), role play is effective, meaningful, and enjoyable teaching

strategy which has been proven. Besides, some researchers found that the use of role play improves the students' score in speaking effectively because role play is enjoyable, attractive, and stimulates them to be active.

Furthermore, role play increases the students' willingness to communicate. According to Tan (2005), the guided role-play technique used in communicative teaching is given in order to demonstrate the heavy focus on communication in the classroom. For example students learn about transactional and interpersonal dialog through role play. In doing that, students act out the material with scenario. It helps students decrease the anxiety feeling in practice the transactional and interpersonal dialog because they know what is going to be said. Then, it encourages students to learn more and practice English.

Developing Students' Character through Role Playing

The effective strategy in teaching character education is allowed children to play the part of certain role in order to get the value messages to develop their moral. The students can catch the moral values easily through role play because they experienced it. As previous stated, in role-play activities, the teacher can ask the learners to perform a roll with various social contexts. Therefore role play is the appropriate vehicle to build the good character for students. Role play gives chance to students to play activities with the real context in a classroom such as greetings, making suggestions, asking for directions, ordering food in a restaurant, or functioning at a bank, post-office, airport, etc (Yahya, 1994).

“Role playing is designed to help students see the choices they have in situations and to show them that they do not have to continue in past patterns” (Abourjilie, 2002, p. 32). Role play trains students how to reflect and apply the good character well in real life every day. After doing the role playing, the students are satisfied with themselves. They feel that they have used their knowledge of the language for something concrete and useful. Then, they will see the real world as the reflection based on their role play before. They also build critical thinking towards situations around them.

The teacher creates the character building through the attitude toward students. It is important to adults demonstrating positive character at school because children learn

what they see and they experienced (Abourjilie, 2002). The teacher should be a good model for the students. The teacher cannot ask the students have a good moral when the teacher models bad attitude.

Incorporating Character Building into Role Playing for Speaking Class

Now, English curriculum is consisted of character and values which students think about to create the critical students. The characters are built through the learning strategy and the topic of the lesson. The character indicators in teaching English are religious, honesty, tolerance, discipline, work hard, creative, independence, democratic, curiosity, citizenship, patriotic, respect, communicative, love peace, like reading, sociable, environmentalist, and responsibility.

Therefore, the teacher should include the character indicators in the topic of role playing. The teacher also provides the situation for an effective role play based on the students' need. An effective role play means that this technique not only improves the speaking skill ability, it also builds the good character for students. The guidelines for role play which can be a rewarding experience for both the students and teacher are should be integrated with other language learning activities, given the preparation, care which is required in any language learning method, and adapted to student needs and level (Tompkins, 1998).

According to Abourjilie (2002), there are two preliminary activities for role playing, the first is "Facing Lines" and the second is "Group Decisions". These activities are unscripted role play. The purpose is to prepare the students for fuller role play or traditional role play.

In the Facing Lines, the teacher asks students to make two rows of partners facing each other. Then, she designates one line as "X" and the other as "Y". After she read the scenario, students think about their roles and get in character in thirty seconds. When she says "Begin," students start talking with their partners. When she says "Two minutes", students should ready to end the conversation and be quiet in place. Here are some scenes which can be used in speaking class.

- Scene One : Line X is Nellin and Line Y is Joko. Nellin has just teased Joko because Joko speaks English with a heavy Javanese accent.
- Scene Two : Line X is Diana. Line Y is Amir. Amir is fasting during the month of April because of Ramadhan. Diana is making fun of Amir.

In the Group Decisions, The students are divided into groups consisted of three or four students. After the teacher reads the scenario, the students have thirty seconds of thinking time. Then, they should discuss the solutions of the situation given with time pressure in two minutes. They should reach a decision about what they would do. After that, each group has to share the decision in front of the class. Here are some situations which can be used in speaking class.

- Situation One : You are on a school trip. You get separated from the group because you wandered off for a while. You know you will be in trouble for not staying with the group and you are trying to decide what to tell the teacher.
- Situation Two : Your class has been planning a trip to a local fair. All of you would be able to bring some money each. It is the day before the fair and you realize that several kids in your class won't have any money to bring along.

Another kind of role play is traditional role play. The teacher gives the character names to the students. She asked them to play a part. She should ensure that the character they are played get into them. Here are some situations when the teacher teaches them about how students deal with the differences among others.

- Situation 1 : At a class party, Chyntia who is Hindu get a pizza. She told the parent who serves the food that she cannot eat the pizza because it haves meat on it. The parent said in a loud voice that it would be okay for her just this once. Chyntia is adamant that she cannot eat it. Dean starts teasing Chyntia. He tells her that she is weird and says "just eat it." Angga, who is standing nearby is disturbed and surprised when Dean did that.
- Situation 2 : Nicko is always making jokes about other people. Cila is often the target of Nicko's jokes because of her size. He always makes fun of her. Cila tells Andi that she cannot bear it any longer and will stop coming to class if the teasing continues.
- Situation 3 : Arga and Haris are best friends, although they are of different races. Farid takes Haris aside on the playground. Farid tells him that he should not hang around Arga so much because they are not of the same race.

After role play ends, the teacher asks the students feeling as the character names. Then, ask how they feel as themselves. The teacher also asks students if the problem is resolved, the character feel satisfied or not. Then, the teacher discusses the solutions to the problems in each scene with the class.

As a feedback, the teacher asks two students to come in front of the class. The two students are a boy and a girl who have different races. The teacher asks the rest of the class to call out differences and similarities between the two. The two students step away from each other as the differences are called then walk toward each other as the similarities is called. At the end, they will move so close to each other because there are more similarities than differences. Then the teacher can stop it and give the conclusion for the role play.

In those situations, the moral value is students should appreciate the different things about others, because they can learn a great deal from them. Besides, they need to realize how much they are all alike. Usually they have more things in common than they realize.

From the problems given above, students can learn some traits for inclusion in character building in speaking class; there are religious, respect, tolerance, and love piece. They learn to show high regard for authority, for other people, for self, and understanding that all people have value as human beings. They learn being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding of others; showing care, compassion, friendship, and generosity; and treating others as they would like to be treated. They also learn to choose worthy goals, thinking through the consequences of their actions, and making decisions based on wisdom and good sense.

At the evaluation, the impact of this activity can be seen through the changes of students' attitudes and behavior. Students can determine which character traits they want to have and why. The students' character impacts to the improvement of academic performance. However, it is difficult to assess the students' character, so it needs behavioral observations and self-assessment questionnaires. Here are some items to assess the students' character:

1. Students treat classmates with respect.

2. Students deny other students because they are different.
3. Students try to comfort peers who are sadness.
4. Students resolve conflicts without fighting, insults, or threats.
5. When students see another student being picked on, they try to stop it.

Conclusion

A teacher should support a balanced focus between students' academic and students' character in the speaking class. The teacher develops the students' speaking skill through practice the language orally in role playing. Along with the teacher develops students' character by infusing the character indicators on situation of role playing. Because role playing provides opportunities for putting those principles into practice, it can be a technique in speaking class to build the student's character. The teacher should make a timeline for character education program as he makes a lesson plan for speaking class. With the aim that he has a discipline data that can be used for analyze the students' character development. It makes the language has opportunity to be learnt in a largely supportive context through role play. Besides the teacher must models what they want their students to do based on that data. If students have to be at school on time, so should all teachers. It makes the feedback from the teacher during interaction in a classroom has significant effect on learning. The result of the activity is expected to solve the moral crisis problem on the learners, in this way they can alter their moral. Therefore, before applying role playing the teacher should look at the learners' needs in which determine the selecting of character traits. Besides, the choice of situation also depends on the proficiency level of the learners. The situation given should enable learners to avoid negative pressures and make good decisions in daily life.

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Biography

Kurnia Fitri Arifah is a master degree student at the Universitas Sebelas Maret. She received a bachelor's degree in English Education from Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Now, she teaches English for Junior High Students in SMP Progresif Bumi Shalawat. She is interested in language teaching practices, teaching methodology, and teacher professional development. She is reachable at arifah.kurnia@gmail.com

Riyadi Santosa and Ngadiso are senior lecturer in the Sebelas Maret University (UNS), Surakarta- Indonesia. Their research interests include Language Instruction and applied linguistics.