

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ROLE PLAY IN TEACHING
SPEAKING AT SMAN 1 MOJO: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
AND CHALLENGES**

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Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain
The Sarjana Degree of Education of English Departement
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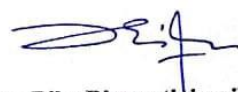
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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

Motto

Progress, not perfection. Keep going, the best is yet to come.

Dedication

I hereby dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, Mr. Heri Suntoro and my late mother, whose unwavering love, prayers, and sacrifices have been the cornerstone of my academic journey. Even though she is no longer with me, her love remains the home I return to and the greatest source of strength that has guided me through every situation.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor for their dedicated guidance, valuable insights, and immense patience in helping me revise and refine this thesis. I am also truly grateful to my teachers at SMAN 1 Mojo for the foundational knowledge and the valuable materials they provided, which have been essential in shaping my academic growth.

To my friends and dear companions, thank you for being my support system, for our constructive discussions, and for making this long journey much more rewarding. Your presence has truly added color to my life.

Finally, I dedicate this work to myself. Thank you for staying resilient, for working hard, and for never giving up despite all the challenges. I am proud of how far I have come, and I look forward to the future with hope and determination.

PREFACE

Praise and gratitude are expressed to Allah SWT, who has bestowed His mercies and blessings so that this thesis entitled "Students' Perceptions and Challenges in the Implementation of Role-Play Technique to Improve English Speaking Skills at SMAN 1 Mojo" can be successfully completed.

Furthermore, the writer would like to thank to all parties who have contributed to the success of writing and preparing the proposal of this research, including:

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The writer recognizes that this thesis remains open to refinement.

Thus, constructive feedback and suggestions are warmly appreciated to enhance future studies.

Ultimately, it is hoped that this research will offer meaningful insights and contribution to the field of education.

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ABSTRACT

Title : THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ROLE PLAY IN TEACHING SPEAKING AT SMAN 1 MOJO: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Keyword : Role Play, Speaking Skills, Students' Perceptions, EFL Learning.

This study investigates the implementation of role play as a pedagogical strategy to enhance speaking skills among tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Mojo. The primary objectives are to describe the classroom implementation process, explore students' perceptions of this technique, and identify the contextual challenges encountered during the activities. Employing a qualitative case study design, this research utilizes classroom observations, student questionnaires, and documentation to collect data. The findings indicate that the implementation of role play, structured through preparation, facilitation, and reflection phases, fostered a student-centered learning environment. Data analysis reveals that the vast majority of students perceived role play as an effective tool that increased their confidence, engagement, and oral fluency. Despite its benefits, the study identified several challenges, including large class sizes, students' limited vocabulary knowledge, and time management constraints, which require careful teacher scaffolding. This research concludes that role play serves as an effective strategy for EFL speaking instruction when teachers effectively manage classroom dynamics and provide adequate linguistic support. The study implies that integrating active learning techniques like role play can effectively support communicative competence in secondary school EFL settings.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL PAGE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
APPROVAL SHEET	Error! Bookmark not defined.
STATEMANT OF WRITING ORIGINALITY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
MOTTO AND DEDICATION	v
PREFACE	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF APPENDICES	xiv
CHAPTER I.....	1
INTRODUCTION	1
A. Research Background	1
B. Research Focus	4
C. Research Question	5
D. Research Objectives.....	5
E. Significance of the Research.....	6
CHAPTER II.....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
A. Review of Previous Studies	8
B. Operational Definition of Concepts	9
1. Speaking.....	9
3. Students' Perceptions.....	11
4. Teaching Speaking Using Role Play	15
5. Interrelation of Key Concepts.....	15
C. Theoretical Framework.....	16
1. Core Theoretical Foundations.....	17
2. Conceptual Framework.....	17
CHAPTER III	19
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	19
A. Research Design and Approach.....	19
B. Methodological Pathway.....	20
C. Research Setting and Timeline.....	21
1. Research Setting	21
2. Research Timeline	22
D. Data and Data Sources	23
1. Student Questionnaire.....	23

2. Observational Data.....	25
E. Data Collection Procedures.....	25
1. Observation	25
2. Questionnaires	26
3. Documentation	26
F. Data Analysis Techniques	26
G. Data Validity Verification.....	28
CHAPTER IV	31
RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION.....	31
A. Data Description.....	31
B. Research Findings.....	32
1. The Implementation of Role Play in Speaking Activities	32
2. Students' Perceptions toward Role Play	32
3. Challenges in Implementing Role Play.....	33
C. Discussion	35
CHAPTER V	37
CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND SUGGESTION	37
A. Conclusion	37
REFERENCES	39
APPENDICES	42
A. Pengertian.....	49
B. Asking for Opinion (Menanyakan Pendapat)	49
C. Giving Opinion (Memberikan Pendapat)	50
D. Formal and Informal Expressions.....	50
E. Agreement and Disagreement.....	50
F. Contoh Dialog	51
A. Multiple Choice	53
B. Short Answer	54
C. Dialogue Task.....	54
Lampiran 4: Instrumen penilaian	54
A. Instrumen Penilaian Tes Tulis.....	54
B. Instrumen Penilaian Presentasi Dialog	55
1. Apersepsi dan Pengenalan Materi	61
2. PPT Slide "Compliment and Gratitude" (Definition)	62
3. PPT Slide "Purpose of Compliment".....	62
4. PPT Slide "Simple Patterns for Giving Compliments"	62
5. PPT Slide "Example Dialog about Compliment"	63
Guru menayangkan dialog pada slide dan mengajukan pertanyaan kepada siswa:...	63

Lampiran 3: Instrumen penilaian	66
A. Penilaian Proses (Formatif).....	66
B. Penilaian Produk (Dialog Performance)	66

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Research Timeline22

LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 1 Research Thinking Flow.....	18
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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Questionnaire	42
Appendix 2	Respondents	43
Appendix 3	Modul Ajar I.....	44
Appendix 4	Modul Ajar II.....	56
Appendix 5	Daftar Nilai Peserta Didik	67
Appendix 6	Daftar Hadir Peserta Didik	68
Appendix 7	Documentations	69

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction to the study, outlining the fundamental background and parameters of the research. It encompasses the research background, research focus, research questions, research objectives, and the significance of the research.

A. Research Background

English has firmly established itself as the universal language, acting as a vital conduit for worldwide communication, scholarly endeavours, and professional advancement. English is a required subject at both the junior and senior high school levels in Indonesian education, with a focus on the value of oral competency. Students who are proficient in spoken English are better equipped to engage in international relationships, take advantage of global opportunities, and function in a world that is becoming more interconnected by the day. However, many students continue to struggle with fluency development, especially those at SMAN 1 Mojo. These difficulties are brought on by a lack of exposure to real world speaking situations, low self-esteem, and instructional strategies that place a strong emphasis on writing exercises and grammatical instruction often at the expense of oral communication. Even though communicative ability is emphasised as a primary goal in the senior high school curriculum, interactive speaking exercises are still occasionally used. The need for creative, student-centered teaching methods like role play, which have the potential to more successfully foster communicative competence, is highlighted by this gap between policy and practice.

In order to overcome these instructional deficiencies, teachers are essential. According to Awla (2014), teachers must modify their methods to accommodate the various learning styles of their students in order to produce engaging and educational classes. Due to their inability to foster

active participation and lack of applicability to real-world situations, traditional lecture-based formats frequently fail to inspire students to speak. On the other hand, role play offers students a fun, simulation-based learning setting in which they may practise their English in authentic situations. Many students exhibit a hesitancy to speak English, primarily because they are afraid of making mistakes and receiving negative feedback from their peers, according to preliminary observations made at SMAN 1 Mojo. Role play helps lower these affective barriers by offering a structured yet imaginative space for language experimentation, fostering a sense of security that supports verbal risk-taking.

Negara (2021) defines role play as an educational technique in which students use speech to convey their ideas, feelings, and thoughts, frequently while assuming fictional or real-life personas. Sociocultural theories of language acquisition, which contend that social connection and participation are crucial elements of language development, are in line with this approach. Students naturally use language to express meaning, increase vocabulary, and improve pronunciation in a variety of communicative scenarios when they take on roles. Enacting scenarios like debates, job interviews, or service encounters, for instance, helps students to employ formal register, negotiate ideas, and respond spontaneously skills that are directly applicable to communication in the real world. Furthermore, by giving students the opportunity to assume viewpoints that may be different from their own lived experiences, role play encourages critical thinking and cultural awareness.

Speaking difficulties at SMAN 1 Mojo are indicative of more general structural problems with Indonesia's language education system. When speaking practice is offered, it is frequently monotonous and uninspired, and students are frequently not exposed to English outside of the classroom on a regular basis. Furthermore, it is challenging for teachers to provide individualised education due to huge class sizes and disparities in language proficiency. By facilitating individualised learning and promoting peer-to-peer engagement, role play can help lessen these

problems. While less confident learners can benefit from regulated, encouraging speaking roles, more experienced students can act as language models. Through trip dialogues, commercial exchanges, or discussions about the digital age, role play's adaptability also enables teachers to modify content to students' tastes and interests in real life. In addition to enhancing the educational process, this relevance increases students' intrinsic motivation, which is crucial for successful language learning.

Previous research confirms role play's transformative impact across Indonesian educational settings. Octaviana (2024) recorded significant vocabulary and fluency gains among eleventh graders at SMAN 6 Kediri. Harda (2023) documented improved confidence and participation at SMPN 22 Barru through cyclical implementation. Fahriyawan (2023) linked role play short dramas to practical oral skills in vocational schools, while Ahmada (2022) showed profession-based scenarios like doctor-patient dialogues increased focus and achieved competency standards. Pinatih (2021) affirmed role play as a contemporary solution for low motivation. Despite these robust findings, critical gaps remain: existing studies prioritize learning outcomes over implementation processes, rarely examining teachers' scaffolding strategies, students' personal perceptions of the method, or context specific barriers in schools like SMAN 1 Mojo.

One encouraging move in reviving English instruction at SMAN 1 Mojo is the inclusion of drama in the speaking curriculum. It is anticipated that the method will improve fluency and accuracy while also changing the dynamics of the classroom. By using a role play-based pedagogy, the instructor becomes a communication facilitator rather than a typical knowledge imparter, enabling students to take more charge of their education. Additionally, this change in education is consistent with the tenets of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, which prioritises experiential, student-centered learning approaches. To address the identified gaps, this study examines not only outcomes but the nuanced implementation of role

play at SMAN 1 Mojo specifically, how role play activities are implemented in the classroom, how students perceive its value, and what contextual challenges emerge. It attempts to provide useful insights that teachers can use to improve classroom interaction by examining how role play affects students' speaking abilities. If the results are positive, they may encourage more widespread use of interactive learning techniques in Indonesian high schools, bringing teaching methods into line with the 21st century's communication needs.

In conclusion, SMAN 1 Mojo's incorporation of role play into English learning tackles persistent issues with speaking instruction. It provides an interesting, research-backed approach that helps students get past psychological and linguistic barriers and enhance their communicative proficiency. The purpose of this study is to examine role play as a transformative technique that gives students the abilities and confidence they need to thrive in a society that is interconnected on a global scale.

B. Research Focus

This study focuses on three interconnected dimensions of role play implementation in the Indonesian EFL context, which are closely aligned with the documented pedagogical challenges and existing research gaps. First, this research centers on the actual implementation of role play in speaking activities within the classroom. Effective role play requires careful scaffolding (McSharry & Jones in Erturk, 2015), yet Indonesian teachers often lack training in communicative methods (Awla, 2014), resulting in inconsistent execution. Therefore, this dimension analyzes how role play activities are conducted and managed under pedagogical and logistical constraints, such as large class sizes, which remain a documented barrier in Indonesian schools (Permatasari, 2016). Second, this study investigates students' perceptions toward the use of role play. While role play's potential to reduce speaking anxiety is well-theorized (Negara, 2021), student perceptions remain understudied in rural Indonesian settings where affective barriers and "face-saving" concerns

often inhibit active participation (Ur in Yusuf, 2016). This dimension explores how simulated scenarios influence students' attitudes, confidence, and engagement in oral communication. Third, this research focuses on the specific challenges that students encounter when participating in role play activities during speaking classes. Although interactive strategies aim to create a supportive environment, EFL learners frequently face context-specific barriers, such as limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of spontaneous speaking confidence, and psychological pressure or anxiety when performing in front of their peers (Yusuf & Zuraini, 2016). By examining these three dimensions, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how role play operates as a pedagogical tool at SMAN 1 Mojo.

C. Research Question

This study aims to investigate the implementation, perceptions, and impact of role play in teaching speaking at SMAN 1 Mojo. The research focus are formulated as follows:

1. How is role play implemented in teaching speaking to the tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Mojo?
2. What are the students' perceptions of the use of role play in speaking activities at SMAN 1 Mojo?
3. What challenges do students encounter when participating in role play activities in speaking classes at SMAN 1 Mojo?

D. Research Objectives

Based on the research focus above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To describe how role play is implemented in teaching speaking to the tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Mojo.
2. To explore the students' perceptions of using role play in speaking activities at SMAN 1 Mojo.

3. To identify the challenges encountered by students when participating in role play activities in speaking classes at SMAN 1 Mojo.

E. Significance of the Research

The findings of this study are expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits for multiple stakeholders in the field of English language education, particularly within the Indonesian context:

1. Students

This research offers direct pedagogical benefits by utilizing role play to enhance speaking fluency and confidence among students at SMAN 1 Mojo. By engaging in simulated real-world scenarios, students can practice English in a low-pressure environment, reducing anxiety and encouraging active participation. The study's focus on affective barriers ensures that role play designs are culturally sensitive, thereby increasing their effectiveness in supporting communicative competence.

2. Teachers

English teachers at SMAN 1 Mojo and similar schools can gain practical insights into the use of role play as an interactive strategy to enhance students' speaking skills in the classroom. This study provides a description of how role play activities can be implemented during speaking lessons, including ways to organize scenarios, guide students during the activity, and encourage active participation. In addition, the findings support the principles of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum which emphasizes experiential and student-centered learning, and may help teachers create more engaging and communicative speaking practices.

3. Future Researchers

Theoretically, this study contributes to the body of knowledge on communicative language teaching (CLT) by addressing critical gaps in role play literature. While existing studies prioritize learning outcomes, this

research examines the nuanced processes of implementation, student perceptions, and contextual challenges factors essential for sustainable

pedagogical innovation. Findings may inform curriculum designers about the need for localized, flexible speaking activities in Indonesia's standardized frameworks. Additionally, the study serves as a foundation for future research, such as longitudinal investigations into role play's long term impact or adaptations for diverse learning environments.

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