

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the research

Speaking ability in English is one of the important skills that students need to master, especially in vocational high schools. However, the speaking ability of students at SMK Muhammadiyah Jember is still low. This is caused by the lack of interest and motivation to learn and improve their English speaking abilities. As a result, they often have difficulties when asked to speak in English. Some of the causes include limited vocabulary, incorrect pronunciation, and a lack of understanding of English material. These problems make students passive and less involved in classroom activities. Its background is relevant with the previous research from Gan (2012) cited by (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020), who stated that the common problems faced by students in speaking English include limited vocabulary, difficult sentence structures, incorrect intonation and pronunciation, few opportunities to speak English, and an underdeveloped language curriculum. These problems were also seen through the researchers' direct observations in speaking classes, where students were often silent and not actively speaking. In addition, they tended not to respond when the lecturer asked questions or requested opinions during the teaching and learning process (Fachrunnisa & Nuraeni, 2022)

Based on this background, this study aims to investigate the effect of using the role play method on the English speaking ability of vocational high school students at SMK Muhammadiyah Jember. This study is needed to be conducted because many vocational high school students still find it hard to speak English, even though speaking skills are needed for their future jobs. The conventional teaching method in class often doesn't give students enough chances to practice speaking. Therefore, a learning method is needed that can create a more active classroom atmosphere and help the student's speaking ability get an improvement. Based on the background that has been explained, this study has a hypothesis that the role play method gives a significant effect on students' speaking ability. In other words, the role play method can help improve students' English speaking skills compared to the conventional teaching method usually used in class. This study involves two variables. The dependent variable is students' English speaking ability and the independent variable is the role play method.

To test the hypothesis, the researcher used a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, specifically a pre-test and post-test control group design. The subjects of this study were tenth-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah Jember. They were divided into two groups: the experimental group, which was taught using the role play method, and the control group, which was taught using the conventional method. The instrument used to collect data was a speaking test in the form of an oral test. The data were analyzed using a normality test, homogeneity test, and

independent sample t-test with the help of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 27 version.

Speaking is one of the four basic skills that learners must acquire when studying English and it can be improved through the habit of speaking English. It is supported by the previous research that speaking skill is very important to be mastered because it can help us to communicate with others well. Therefore, the speaking skill is totally required (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996) cited by (Rokhman et al., 2020). We all know that speaking is a form of communication (Jones, 1989) in (Rokhman et al., 2020) because through speaking, everything we want to convey can be expressed clearly.

In general, students who learn English but are in environments where languages like Indonesian and local languages are spoken tend to struggle when faced with English lessons, especially in speaking. This is in line with the findings shown by (Agus, 2023) in his article, which states that students face difficulties in mastering spoken English, and the main barriers are psychological factors such as a lack of motivation and self-confidence. It can be understood that the lack of motivation and self-confidence comes from the environment, both family and community, where English is rarely or never spoken, making students less eager to speak in English.

In English learning, students need to practice a lot to improve their speaking skills, with several effective methods that can help achieve this. Some methods that can be used to improve speaking skills include role play, using picture strip stories in speaking lessons, and others. This study will also

discuss role play as an effective method for improving students' speaking skills.

Several previous studies support the effectiveness of the role play method in improving students' speaking skills. Larsen Freeman (2000) cited by (Lestari, 2020) stated that role play is important in the communicative approach because it gives the learners an opportunity to practice how to communicate in different social contexts and different social roles. A role play is a highly flexible learning activity, which has a wide scope for variation and imagination

This study found that role play had a significant effect on students' speaking ability, as shown by the improvement in the speaking scores of the experimental group during the post-test compared to the control group, which received treatment using a conventional method. In addition, during the research, the researcher also found that students participated more actively in the classroom learning process because the role play method required teamwork among students to apply it well, and it also encouraged them to speak spontaneously.

The effectiveness of the role play method in improving students' speaking ability, as shown in this study, can contribute to the field of English language teaching in general. This finding also supports previous research that offers role play as an alternative for teachers to create a more interactive and less monotonous learning atmosphere. From its explanation, the main conclusion gotten in this study is role play method has a significant effect on

students' English speaking ability.

Based on the explanations above, the researcher interested in conducting a research The Effect of Role Play Method on English Speaking Ability of Vocational High School Students.

1.2. Research Question

Building upon the background described above, this study frames its research question as follows: Is there any significant effect of role play method on speaking ability of vocational high school student?

1.3. Research Objective

To know whether there is significant effect of role play method on speaking ability of vocational high school student

1.4. Operational Definition

1. Role Play Method

Role play is one of the classroom teaching techniques that encourage students to participate actively in the process of learning English. Therefore, foreign language students practice the target language in context similar to real-life situations where stress and shyness are removed.

2. Speaking Skill

Speaking is a language activity. The second thing that humans do in language life, is, after listening activity. Based on the sounds heard, humans learn to pronounce and eventually become skilled in speaking

1.5. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretically

This research is expected to prove that role-playing can be an effective variation of teaching methods to improve students' speaking fluency.

2. Practically

The benefits of this research are expected to be applicable in every English lesson and to improve speaking fluency through the role-playing method, creating an interactive classroom atmosphere.

3. Scope of the Research

The scope of this research focuses on high schools, specifically grade X- TKJ and X-Keperawatan located at SMK Muhammadiyah Jember. The variables to be studied are the role-play method and speaking fluency. The data will be collected by pre-test and post-test using an experimental research method