

## **CREATING A GOOD ATMOSPHERE FOR SPEAKING ACTIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM**

*Frederykus Ege, Yokie Prasetya Dharma*  
*STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang*  
[Fredyege@gmail.com](mailto:Fredyege@gmail.com), [l2yokieprasetya@gmail.com](mailto:l2yokieprasetya@gmail.com)

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to share to other teachers about an activity that my students have enjoyed. The objective of this article is to allow the students to practice their oral skills and express their idea in an interesting topic. Even the activity is not something new but with appropriate approach, this activity can run well and give new atmosphere in your classroom activity. This activity has applied for the tenth year of IPA of senior High School students in a private school in Sintang regency. Besides from the activity, they enjoyed the activities with group work discussion as they could learn from their friends and supported by the teacher. No student sits in their seat without involving in the activity. It can be concluded that role-play learning provides opportunities for students to use and apply their subject knowledge and skill to deepen understanding. It can be seen that the study of Role-play also can improve the students' score in speaking skill test.

**Keywords:** Good Atmosphere, Speaking

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching speaking seems become problems for many teachers. It is difficult for them to guide each student to use the target language. This phenomenon becomes a problem for both teachers and students in reaching the target of learning. These problems can also appear because the teachers can not apply the appropriate activity for teaching English skill in the classroom.

Based on the length of time in learning English, from Elementary school to Junior and Senior High School, it is expected that the students should have been able to use English well. However, the fact shows that the students cannot perform it. According to Gabriela Bunga Pramudhita (2008), it is very difficult for the teacher to make an effective class. The teachers usually give lectures. Every day, the teachers always give theory. The students are not often given a chance to put theory into practice. It always happens in every school in Indonesia. It can be said that the way of teaching is monotonous.

The results are that students are not confident to orally communicate in English. These problems and results are really contrasted with the method of CLT. There should be a motivation either from the students or the teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL teachers). There is no problem with CLT, but the problem is in the way of teaching and learning activities by the Indonesian students and teachers. It should be changed to the other way such as teaching by using CLT approach. It is the teacher's responsibility to organize the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities (Richard and Roger: 2001) Teachers should be able to use appropriate teaching technique in order to get the effectiveness of the language learning and teaching process.

In CLT, there are a lot of activities to do in gaining active classroom; in this case is EFL classroom in Indonesia. Indonesian students tend to be passive therefore teacher should have a skill of creating fun atmosphere in the classroom, so that it can prevent the students from fatigue and boredom. It would be better if teachers are not only lecturing but also interacting with their students. It is difficult for students to be active in the classroom. To build the atmosphere, teacher can create an activity in teaching speaking skill. Role Play is one activity that can create new atmosphere in teaching activity. In this activity, students can explore their abilities through speaking and making or developing a short situational play. The purpose of this article is to share to other teachers about an activity that my students have enjoyed. The objective of this article is to allow the students to practice their oral skills and express their idea in an interesting topic. Even the activity is not something new but with appropriate approach, this activity can run well and give new atmosphere in your classroom activity. This activity has applied for the tenth year of IPA of senior High School students in a private school in Sintang regency. In this article the writer offers the teaching of speaking through role play in order to improve the students speaking ability in expressing asking and giving opinions.

Language as a system for the expression of meaning, Nunan (1989, p94) points out the approach which consists of aspects common to some definitions of CLT: CTL review language as a system for the expression of meaning. Activities involve oral communication, carrying out meaning tasks and using language, which is meaningful to the learners. Objectives reflect the needs of the learners. They consist of functional skills as well as linguistic objectives. The learners' role is as a negotiator and integrator. The teacher' role is as a facilitator of the communication process. Materials promote communicative language use; they are task – based authentic. This definition shows a clear view of understanding and explaining language acquisition. It is socially constructed and may be effect when exploiting to teach language speaking. In communication, speaking plays an important role. The nature of speaking, both the element of pronunciation and connected speech, and the pragmatic aspects, has been discussed to examine by some well- known scholars and linguists. Brown (1994, p256 ) shows many of the characteristics such as the reduced forms, the stress, rhythm and intonation, the clustering, the colloquialism, the affective factors and the interaction, that could make oral performance not easy. From these writers' support, it is easy to realize that the good results of communication consist of many features. They are the ability to articulate phonological ones of the language, the suitable degree of fluency, the mastery of stress intonation patterns, rhythm and etc 1. The development of CLT has had implications, which are necessary for students to develop their speaking ability through cooperative learning. Moreover, it gives students many chances to speak the language with appropriate learning conditions.

Speaking theoretically explain as an oral communication. As Britton cited in (Cremin, Bearne et al. 2009) observed ‘reading and writing float on a sea of talk’; oracy is the basis of much literate behaviour. Talk enables learners to think aloud. Formulate their thoughts and opinions, and refine and develop their ideas and understandings through engaging in meaningful dialogue with others. Talk also enables learners to relate new experiences to previous knowledge and understanding and to value their won and other’s idea.

Good speaking activities should be extremely engaging for the student. If they are participating fully – and if the teacher has set up the activity properly and can give sympathetic and useful feedback – they will get tremendous satisfaction from it (Harmer 2007). The powerful art form support the oral artistry of the spoken word and involve teachers in working alongside children spontaneously using language to generate idea and express themselves (Cremin, Bearne et al. 2009)

As Brown (2003) pointed out, in teaching fluency teacher should be willing to let learners have some say, authority, and responsibility over oral work being carried out. There must be exercises set up, and situation in which fluency can develop and flourish, encouraging learners to orally communicate is positive and enrich environment outside and inside the classroom. The term “role” comes from the “rolled-up” script actors to use over two thousand years ago in ancient Greece. In time, the script becomes the part, and actors were said to play the “role” of, say, Hamlet or Othello or Ophelia or Desdemona. Dr J. L. Moreno designs the first known role playing techniques in 1910. Role-playing become more widely known and used after he moved from Vienna, Austria to the United States in the 1930; Cited in Srimuhadir (2006)

Blatner (2009) sees role playing as a methodology derived from socio drama that may be used to help students understand the more subtle aspects of literature, social studies, and even some aspect of science or mathematics. Furthermore, it can help them become more interested and involved, not only learning about the material, but learning also to integrate the knowledge in action, by addressing problems, exploring alternatives, and seeking novel creative solutions. Role playing is the best way to develop the skills of initiative, communication, problem-solving, self-awareness, and working cooperatively in teams. Liu and Ding (2009) used role-play technique to see how the students performed in groups when they were given a familiar situation to role play in. Role-playing can be used as a method for teaching insight and empathy competence (Blatner, 2005). According to Killen (1998) role play can give students practice in thinking real –life roles and dealing with real world problem.

**METHOD**

The activities are applied in the second year of senior high school students, in SMA Nusantara Indah Sintang. In using Role Play method for speaking activities, we have to prepare our own roles as follows:

<p><b>Define Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What topics do you want the exercise to cover?</li> <li>• How much time do you and your class have to work on it?</li> <li>• What do you expect of your students? (research, reports, presentations)</li> <li>• Do you want the students role-playing separately or together?(group/individual)</li> <li>• Do you want to include a challenge or conflict element?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Choose Context &amp; Roles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide on a problem related to the chosen topic(s) of study and a setting for the characters. It is a good idea to make the setting realistic, but not necessarily real. Consider choosing and adapting material that other instructors have prepared.</li> <li>• If the characters(s) used in the exercise are people, define his or her goals and what happens if the character does not achieve them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Introducing the Exercise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide them with the information you have already prepared about their character(s): the goals and background information. It needs to be clear to the student how committed a character is to his/her goals and why.</li> <li>• Determine how many of your students have done role-playing before and explain how it will work for this exercise.</li> <li>• Outline your expectations of them as you would for any assignment and stress what you expect them to learn in this lesson.</li> </ul>

**Preparation**

Providing the students with concrete information and clear role descriptions so that they could play their roles with confidence. For example, in the situation at a railway station, the person giving the information should have relevant information: the times and destination of the trains, prices of tickets, etc. In a more advanced class and in a more elaborate situation include on a cue card a fictitious name, status, age, personality, and fictitious interests and desires. Describe each role in a manner that will let the students identify with the characters. Use the second person 'you' rather than the third person 'he' or 'she.' If your role presents a problem, just state the problem without giving any solutions.

At the beginning level cue cards might contain detailed instructions (Byrne, 1983). These following are the examples of the Cue Card which contain detailed instructions that guide the students to the conversation to do.

Cue Card A:

YOU ARE A TAXI-DRIVER

1. Greet the passenger and ask him where he wants to go.
2. Say the price. Make some comments on the weather. Ask the passenger if he likes this weather.
3. Answer the passenger's question. Boast that your son has won the school swimming competition. Ask if the passenger likes swimming.

Cue Card B:

YOU ARE A PASSENGER IN A TAXI

1. Greet the taxi driver and say where you want to go. Ask what the price will be.
2. Answer the taxi-driver's question and ask what kind of weather he likes.
3. Say that you like swimming a lot and that you learned to swim 10 years ago when you went to Spain with your family.

To make the activities more interesting you can create more than two cue cards, in order you can apply it in the group work. You can change the situations or topics. To have a good atmosphere in the classroom, you need to modify the cue cards base on your students needed. You can ask your students to create their own cue cards. In my classroom the students were really happy being involved in the activities. Most of them took their part well even still some students used *Bahasa* in expressing their ideas.

### Evaluation

Now the question is *how to score the students' works?* the aspects to score are very important with an analytic rubric, the teacher scores separate, individual parts of the product or performance first, then sums the individual scores to obtain a total score (Moskal, 2000; Nitko, 2001). The aspects to score we can convert in to a Marking criteria. We can decide some criteria that can cover all students' performance in speaking test. To evaluate the students' work, I used the terms: *Matter* for the contents of the speaking or material of the speaking. In these criteria, the speaker provides a variety of types of content for the test such as generalizations, details, examples and evidence. *Manner* for students' body language, intonation and pronunciation. The speaker delivers the message in lively, enthusiastic fashion. The volume varies to add emphasis and interest, pronunciation must be clear. This method uses for students' grammar and how the students organize their time well and also their fluency. It concerned with sequence and the relationships among the ideas in the message. In marking criteria we can decide which aspects that you want to maintain more. In this assessment, I maintained the matter and manner aspects because I wanted my students can speak more and have good body language. In this case I reduced the accuracy of grammar and fluency. We can divide the aspect such as matter (40%), manner (40%) and method (20%). To give the score we can converts the aspects above in to number such as 27-40 for matter, 27-40 for manner and method 16-20. The aspects and the criteria can be figured out in marking criteria as follows:

**Marking Criteria**

No	Name	Matter (40%) (27-40)	Manner (40%) (27-40)	Method (20%) (16-20)	Total
1					
2					
3					

After we decided the aspects to score, we have to make the marking score for each criterion. It is very important for us to make a standard of score to each aspect. We have to consider the meaning of score that we give to the students. So every single score that we give to the students in each aspect depend on how far the students improve their abilities in every aspect to score. The standards of scoring for each aspect can be figured out in marking score as follows:

**Marking Score**

Matter/ Manner	Method	Meaning
27-28	16	Very poor
29-30	17	Below average-poor
31-34	18	Average
35-36	19	Above average-very good
37-40	20	Excellent

From the table we can see that every level of score has their own meaning. A. **Matter**

- *Excellent level* means that the speaker provides a variety of types of content for the test such as generalizations, details, examples and evidence.
- *Above average – very good* means that the speaker provides a variety of types of content for the test such as generalizations, details and examples.
- *Average* means the students can generalization the material but not in detail and give example.

- *Bellow average-poor* means the speaker can generalization the material but he/she cannot give the example.
- *Very-poor* means the student cannot generalize the material.

## **B. Manner**

- *Excellent level* means the speaker can perform their body language, intonation and also pronunciation. The speaker delivers the message in lively, enthusiastic fashion. The volume varies to add emphasis and interest, pronunciation must be clear
- *Above average – very good* means the speaker can perform their body language, intonation and also pronunciation. The speaker cannot deliver well the message in lively, enthusiastic fashion. The volume varies to add emphasis and interest, pronunciation must be clear
- *Average* means the speaker can perform their body language, intonation and also pronunciation. The speaker cannot delivers well the message in lively, not too enthusiastic fashion and The volume varies to add emphasis and interest, pronunciation clear
- *Bellow average-poor* means the speaker can perform their body language, intonation and also pronunciation. The speaker cannot deliver the message in lively, enthusiastic fashion.
- *Very-poor* means the speaker cannot perform their body language, intonation and also pronunciation.

## **C. Method**

- *Excellent level* the speaker can apply very well their grammar and organize their time well and also their fluency. The speaker can narrate the sequence and the relationships among the ideas in the message
- *Above average – very good level* the speaker can apply well their grammar and organize their time well and also their fluency. The speaker can narrate the sequence and the relationships among the ideas in the message
- *Average level* the speaker can apply well their grammar and organize their time well and also their fluency. The speaker can narrate the sequence and the relationships among the ideas in the message
- *Bellow average-poor the* speaker can not apply well their grammar and organize their time well. The speaker cannot narrate the sequence and the relationships among the ideas in the message
- *Very-poor poor the* speaker cannot apply their grammar and organize their time.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion by having good preparations and instructions Role-play approach can boost students to be more creative in the speaking activity in the classroom. This role gives opportunities to the students to express their ideas in real situations. From the activity that applied in my classroom, I could see that my students started to build their self-confidence in speaking. Even some of the students still used *Bahasa* in expressing their ideas, but I could see that they tried hard to speak. Besides from the activity, they enjoyed the activities with group work discussion as they could learn from their friends and supported by the teacher. No student sits in their seat without involving in the activity. It can be concluded that role-play learning provides opportunities for students to use and apply their subject knowledge and skill to deepen understanding. It can be seen that the study of Role-play also can improve the students' score in speaking skill test. So, it can be concluded that role-play can create good atmosphere in speaking activity in the classroom.

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