



DEVELOPING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS BY ROLE PLAYING OF GRADE 6 STUDENTS AT KLONGHA SCHOOL, PATHUM THANI

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was two-fold. First of all, the researcher aimed to develop English speaking skills of Grade 6 students in Klongha School by utilizing role plays. Secondly, to compare learning achievement of Grade 6 students in English speaking skills before and after utilizing role plays. This study consisted of one single group experimental research. The subjects of this study were a group of 30 grade 6 students, enrolled in the first semester of academic year 2016 in Klongha School. The research instruments were a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test after the treatment. The additional research instruments were the speaking evaluation form the researcher used for observing the students' behavior in speaking and the self-evaluation form for the students to use for evaluating themselves in their speaking ability before and after the experiment. In the quantitative analysis, after all the data was collected, they were analyzed and compared by using mean average \bar{x} , standard deviation (S.D.) and t-test.

The results from the pre-test and post-test were obtained, analyzed, and compared. The effectiveness of the English speaking skills of the students utilizing role playing activities as a whole was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 15.80$, S.D. = 1.10). And the post-test results were 15.80 significantly higher than those of the pre-test scores 5.23 at a p-value = 0.05. The results of the observations of the students' behavior in the speaking activities showed that the students developed much better in their speaking ability. The results of the self-evaluation of the students' speaking ability after using the role play activities indicated that the students' speaking ability was at a good level.

Keywords: Developing, Speaking English Skill, Role Playing

1. Introduction

In the present era of globalization, English has become the language for international communication, such as in trade, tourism and education. Therefore, English is an important intermediate of communication. Speaking is one of the most important language skills frequently use in daily life but Thai students have very low proficiency in speaking skill. Speaking Skill in English is the largest problem for Thai students because Thai students tend to lack of self-confidence in speaking English. One reason for the lack of self-confidence is that many Thai students lack of the pragmatic awareness needed to use English confidently and appropriately in most social contexts (Sabua, 2006,



p. 1). In Thai education, The Ministry of Education sets the basic education core curriculum for schools. In foreign languages the basic education core curriculum focus on language and relationship with community and the world, use of foreign languages with many situations inside classrooms, outside classrooms, in community and in the global society, forming a basic tool for further education, livelihood and exchange of knowledge with the global society (MOE, 2008, p. 267). Vithikul (2005) also found similar problems why Thai students do not speak English fluently and accurately enough although they have studied English for many years. It is also found out if there are any hidden causes which influence Thai learners trying to master speaking competence. The literature review on methodology used in developing English speaking skills by role playing to help their students improve their English speaking skills. Rayhan (2014) supported that role play can improve learners' speaking skills in any situation, and helps learners to interact. As for the shy learners, role play helps by providing a mask, where learners with difficulty in conversation are liberated. In addition, it is fun and most learners will agree that enjoyment leads to better learning. Ladousse (2004) indicated that role play is one of a whole gamut of communicative techniques which develops fluency in language students, which promotes interaction in the classroom, and which increases motivation. Barkley (2005) supported that role play is an example of "learning by doing." The word role indicates that the students must actively apply knowledge, skill and understanding to successfully speak and act from different, assigned perspectives. The term play indicates that the students use their imaginations and have fun, acting out their parts in a nonthreatening environment. Thus role play engages students in a participatory activity that requires them to apply course concepts as they assume fictional identities or envision themselves in unfamiliar situation. From the above definition, the activities to develop speaking are important to the teaching process. The learners are interested in activities that communicate focus on content more than form. The learners are able to communicate on various ways and learners practice language follow real situations that it makes learners have communication skills.

2. Objectives of the study

To develop English speaking skills of Grade 6 students in Klongha School by using role playing activities.

3. Materials and methods

Research Design

In this study, the research was an experimental study of a single group which was pre-tested and post-tested for quantitative data collection. The scores from pre-tested and post-tested were analyzed in SPSS. The statistics were sorted out by finding the mean average (\bar{x}), standard deviation (S.D.) and t-test. The data was collected from various categories including pre-test, post-test, observations of speaking ability and self-evaluation of speaking ability. The researcher had the tests checked and approved by three professors who checked the appropriateness of the questions and the suitability of them according to the student grade level.



Population and Sample

The population in this study was 60 Grade 6 students studying in the second semester of academic year 2016 at Klongha School, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand that the subjects consisted of 30 students in Grade 6 at Klongha School, Pathum Thani Province, Thailand and were selected by using a simple random sampling method.

Research Instruments

Lesson Plans

The lesson plan is one of the research tools to which outlined the following 5 topics that the lesson plans using role plays were constructed by the researcher. The process of lesson plan construction included the following steps.

1. The contents and the construction of the lesson plans were studied and analyzed according to the English curriculum.
2. The objectives of each lesson plan were set up, and the authentic materials were chosen by the researcher.
3. Five lesson plans were constructed by studying curricular documents that involved teaching spoken English and methods for implementing role plays in English class.
4. The lesson plans were submitted to the experts for checking its contents for reliability and validity.
5. The lesson plans were checked and improved. Then, they were experimented with students who were not a part of the study and improved again.
6. The lesson plans were used for experimenting with the subjects.

The Achievement Test

The achievement test contained 20 items with 4 multiple choices answer for testing the students' learning achievement before and after they finished the study.

Constructing the Achievement Test: Pre- and Post –Tests

The achievement test was constructed by the researcher after studying how to construct it from the theory and documents involved. The items of the achievement test with four multiple choice answers which had only one correct answer were constructed. Then, the achievement test was presented to the experts for checking its content for validity. The achievement test was later improved.

Validity and Reliability

In order to verify validity, the researcher's pre-test and post-test question and answer items were given to three English teachers, by utilizing the index of item-objective congruence (IOC).



Data Collection

Students took a pre-test before using the role play activities. Then, the role play activities were used in teaching the speaking skill step-by-step depending on the constructed lesson plans.

1. Approval

The researcher was granted permission from the school's principal (Mr. Terdsak Ngernyung), to be able to use role play activities with the students.

2. Confidentiality

The researcher ensured that all student information was to remain confidential pertaining to their participation in this study.

Research Procedure

The data collection was conducted in the academic year 2016, Term 1. It was composed of the following procedures:

1. The researcher prepared 20 test items for assessing the students' initial proficiency level of using the language functions in appropriate situations.
2. The researcher went to the concerned school and built rapport with the concerned authority (Mr. Terdsak Ngernyung).
3. The researcher met the school's principal (Mr. Terdsak Ngernyung) and asked for his permission to carry out experiments on sixth grade students.
4. In collaboration with the school's principal, the researcher got a fixed period for carrying out the experimental teaching.
5. After fixing the time, the researcher conducted some activities such as finding out references related to teaching spoken English and studying school-based curriculum consisting of learning English. The researcher made lesson plans based on solving problems. The aim was to enable students to improve their speaking skill. Five weekly lesson plans were used. Each weekly lesson plans consisted of two periods consuming 50 minutes per period each.
6. The researcher consulted with the school to receive information regarding the participants of the study.
7. The researcher greeted the students and informed them of the study requirements.
8. The researcher gave the pre-test to the students. The test consisted of close-ended questions. A pre-test was conducted in the month of June 2016.
9. Then the researcher taught the students through role playing that the researcher tried to create many dialogues that correlated with school-based curriculum. The actions which happened in this phase were:
 - 9.1 Step 1 : A situation for a role play: The researcher gave the instruction to the students about the role play.



9.2 Step 2 : Role play Design : The students read the dialogues, selected actor and actress. After that, the students presented in front of the class.

9.3 Step 3 : Linguistic Preparation: The researcher needed to introduce any new vocabularies and expressions before the role play to make more confident acting out a role play.

9.4 Step 4 : Assigning the Roles: The researcher asked learners to act out a role play in front of the class. The researcher observed the in-class activities. The observation of the development of the students' ability was done in the class. The data was analyzed descriptively. All role play situations were evaluated from the input based on the result of the data analysis. The researcher gave feedback on grammar or pronunciation problems that the researcher observed. Last, the researcher asked every students' opinion about the role play.

10. The researcher taught the students 10 classes through role play and at the end the researcher gave the post-test to the students. The test was similar to the pre-test. The post-test was given to the students in the month of July 2016 and the tests were conducted after using role playing activities. The scores obtained by the students from the tests were compared using a t-test by using standard deviation and mean to see the areas of improvement in the students after they have been learning spoken English in role playing activities.

Data Analysis

Statistics for Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed by using statistics such as an arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and t-test for comparison of the scores in the pre-test and the post-test.

The data was analyzed by mean, standard deviation and t-test. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of authentic texts, researcher used mean, standard deviation and t-test for comparing the scores of the pre-test and the post-test of the subjects who did the achievement test.

T- test was used to compare the scores of the pre-test and the post-test of the subjects who did the achievement test.

4. Results

Analysis

The researcher presented the analysis in three parts. In part 1, the statistical analysis from the pre-test and post-test was administered to find the speaking ability of the students before and after the usage of role playing activities. In part 2, the teachers analyzed the speaking evaluation of students by their role play. And in part 3, the students conducted self-assessments based on their performance in the role play activities.

Steps of analysis

1. The researcher compared the pre-test and post-test scores and concluded that the result showed improvement in the post-test. The researcher tested the speaking ability of the students which the pre-test and post-



test which consisted of 20 items and 20 scores. After that, the researcher took the students' scores to evaluate by using mean average and standard deviation. Lastly, the researcher analyzed the different scores from the pre-test and post-test by the dependent samples t-test.

2. Two independent teachers observed the research subjects speaking ability and evaluated them using mean average.

4.51 – 5.00	Excellent
3.51 – 4.50	Good
2.51 – 3.50	Moderate
1.51 – 2.50	Fair
1.00 – 1.50	Poor

3. Students completed self-assessment of their speaking ability during the role plays. The results were evaluated using the mean average.

4.51 – 5.00	Excellent
3.51 – 4.50	Good
2.51 – 3.50	Moderate
1.51 – 2.50	Fair
1.00 – 1.50	Poor

Analysis of pre-test and post-test results

The comparison of the scores from the pre-test and the post-test were analyzed after finishing from the independent teachers utilizing the dependent samples t-test.

Table 1 The Comparison of the Students' Scores from the Pre-Test and Post-Test.

Results	\bar{X}	S.D	t
Speaking ability			
Pre - test	5.23	1.07	47.33**
Post - test	15.80	1.10	

** significant level of .05

Table 1 shows the comparison of scores from the pre-test and post-test after using the role play activities to develop speaking ability of students in grade 6 at Klongha School.

Table 1 shows the t-test for dependent samples with a significant level of .05 and degree of freedom = n-1 that is n-1 = 29 t- test = 2.04 from the table 4.1 t-test = 47.33 that is higher than the t- test. It shows that the speaking ability of the students before and after the experiment were different from a significant level of .05 the pre-test before the experiment was 5.23 and the post-test after the experiment was 15.80 that is higher than 10.57 the results show that using role play activities help the students to develop speaking ability.



Analysis of Observation the students' behavior in speaking results

The result of observations the students' behavior in the speaking activities during the experiment by using role play activities that are shown below in 5 different levels:

Table 2 Observation of the Students' Behavior in Speaking.

Students' Behavior	Average (Times)									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Students able to speak English is very well and fluency.	1.2	1.3	1.50	1.80	2.21	2.80	3.56	4.15	4.32	4.46
2. Students pay attention and active to join with activities.	2.2	2.3	2.53	3.03	3.36	3.56	4.08	4.22	4.4	4.75
3. Students are happy, enjoy and cooperate with activities.	2.75	2.9	3.03	3.36	3.45	4.25	4.33	4.45	4.56	5
4. Students have a lot of confident when they speak English.	2.5	2.7	2.81	3.03	3.36	4.08	4.25	4.56	4.8	5
5. Students do not shy and able to answer questions.	2.8	2.66	2.80	3.12	3.30	3.36	4.08	4.25	4.8	4.8
The total average	2.29	2.37	2.53	2.87	3.13	3.61	4.06	4.32	4.58	4.8
Conclude	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent

Table 2 These results can be summarized in the following figure1 that the students developed more speaking ability. In sections 1 to 5 the level was fair by the total average of 2.29, 2.37, 2.53, 2.87 and 3.13 consecutively. In sections 6 to 8 the level was good by the total average of 3.61, 4.06 and 4.32 consecutively. In sections 9 to 10 the level was excellent by the total average of 4.58 and 4.80 consecutively.

Observation of the students' behavior in speaking results by using role play activities in 10 periods and comparison of the developing speaking ability are shown in Figure 1.

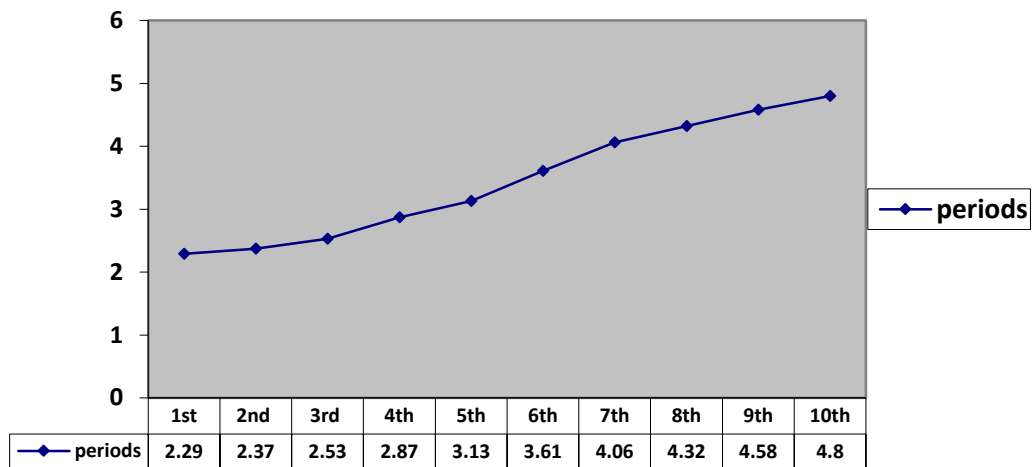


Figure 1 Graph to Compare the Students' Behavior in Speaking Ability in 10 periods.

Figure 1 shows the students' behavior in speaking in the first period was 2.29 and the students' speaking ability was fair. The second period was 2.37 that the students' speaking ability was fair. The third period was 2.53 and the students' speaking ability was fair. The fourth period was 2.87 the students' speaking ability was fair. The fifth period was 3.13 and the students' speaking ability was fair. The sixth period was 3.61 and the students' speaking ability was good. The seventh period was 4.06 and the students' speaking ability was good. The eighth was 4.32 and the students' speaking ability was good. The ninth period was 4.58 and the students' speaking ability was excellent. The tenth period was 4.80 that the students' speaking ability was excellent.

Analysis of Self-evaluation of the Students' Speaking Ability Results

This part is an analysis of the self-evaluation of the students' speaking ability that the students evaluated themselves in speaking ability before and after the experiment. The self-evaluation form had 10 items and the score had a 5-rating scale:

5	Excellent
4	Good
3	Moderate
2	Fair
1	Poor



Table 3 Self-evaluation of the Students' Speaking Ability Results.

Students' Behavior	Rating scale of the students' speaking ability					
	Before the experiment			After the experiment		
	\bar{X}	S.D	Result	\bar{X}	S.D	Result
1.I can speak English and can cover the situation.	2.70	0.60	Moderate	3.77	0.73	Good
2.I have a lot of confidence to speak English.	2.87	0.51	Moderate	3.87	0.57	Good
3.I use body language to communicate with my friends to understand about the situation.	2.70	0.53	Moderate	4.00	0.74	Good
4.I understand all situations.	2.73	0.52	Moderate	3.90	0.80	Good
5.I am active in speaking English.	2.80	0.71	Moderate	3.83	0.57	Good
6.I can speak English in many different situations.	2.77	0.63	Moderate	3.93	0.78	Good
7.I improve speaking English all the time.	2.90	0.66	Moderate	4.00	0.74	Good
8.I use correct grammar in speaking English.	2.37	0.61	Moderate	3.17	0.53	Moderate
9.I correct intonation and stress to speak English.	2.63	0.49	Moderate	3.67	0.66	Good
10.I learn new grammar, vocabulary and/or expressions.	3.23	0.68	Moderate	3.73	0.87	Good
The total average	2.77	0.20	Moderate	3.79	0.44	Good

Table 3 shows self-evaluation of the students' speaking ability before and after using the role play activities. The students' speaking ability before using role play activities was moderate, as the total average was 2.77 and the standard deviation was 0.20. After using the role play activities it was found that the students' speaking ability was good, as the total average was 3.79 and the standard deviation was 0.44 of the first to 9 student behaviors, (1) The students can speak English and cover the situation; (2) have a lot of confidence to speak English; (3) use body language to communicate with their friends to understand about the situations; (4) understand all the situations; (5) active in speaking English; (6) can speak English in many different situations; (7) improve speaking English all the time; (8) use correct grammar in speaking English; (9) correct intonation and stress to speak English after the students result were good only student behavior 10 was moderate.



5. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that students' English speaking achievement after using the role play was statistically higher than before using the role play at the level of .05. The result of the finding confirmed that role play is a beneficial learning tool. The research consisted of various steps. They are actions, observation, self-evaluations and reflections. By conducting this research, it was found that:

1. The use of role playing activities to teach speaking improved the students' confidence and made the students more active to speak. The students could learn to use language expressions in a delightful way.
2. The use of role playing activities to teach speaking improved the students' fluency. The students could learn how to use the language expressions effectively and communicatively. After using the role play activities the students improved their fluency.
3. The use of role playing activities to teach speaking improved the students' correctness. When they were acting, they learned how to use the language expressions and how to speak communicatively using the language expressions with correct grammar. After the students acting, they got feedback which also helped them to improve their correctness.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to develop English speaking skills of Grade 6 students at Klongha School, Pathum Thani province using role plays in English speaking abilities. The population consisted of 60 Grade 6 students at Klongha School, Pathum Thani province enrolled in the second semester of 2016 academic year. The subjects comprised 30 students selected by using a sample random sampling method. They did the activities both in pair and group work according to the teaching steps of the five lesson plans. They practiced speaking skills in different role playing activities. The research was conducted to solve the problems related to speak skills through the role play activities. The research consisted of various steps. They are actions, observation, self-evaluations and reflections. By conducting this research, it was found that: the use of role playing activities to teach speaking improved the students' confidence and made the students more active to speak, after using the role play activities the students improved their fluency, when they were acting, they learned how to use the language expressions and how to speak communicatively using the language expressions with correct grammar and using role play activities to develop English speaking skills in the classroom increased students' speaking ability as shown in the post-test with significant value at a level of .05.

Recommendations

For English Teachers

Teachers should try to use role plays to motivate students. If that happens, English class may not be boring. The students like to act and practice easy lessons before learning the difficult ones. And the role play can be made easily or appropriate to the ability level of the learners.



For Students

In English lessons, it is suggested that students should pay attention to the study of the learning methods in the classroom and give positive attempts, so they get more productive learning. To be a fluent speaker student should pay attention to speak English, get more confidence and do not to be shy and afraid of making mistakes.

Recommendation for Future Research

1. The role play situation which can be adapted to develop grammar accuracy in students' writing skill.
2. Appropriate teaching model or giving situations without conversation which can be useful for students who are poor at English and who need to create it by themselves.

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