CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents seven topics related to the introduction, namely background of the study, focus of the study, research objective, formulation hypothesis, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Language is what people use to communicate and connect and identify as a community. According to Sirbu (2015) Language is vital for human social life. English, being the prominent language in this area, holds great value. English is a language with a truly global reach. As an international language, it is a necessity for all countries to learn. In Indonesia, for instance, English has become a compulsory subject for students from early childhood education levels to high school. Proficiency in English, however, has become more imperative for Indonesian citizen contrary to it being a foreign language in Indonesia. This undoubtedly renders English a language that must be mastered.

In the process of learning a language, students are required to develop four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are also essential for learning English. According to Lado (1965: 104-105), a teacher should prioritize teaching listening and speaking skills before introducing reading and writing. This approach aligns with the core objective of language instruction, which is to facilitate effective communications. Consequently, students must continue to enhance their speaking abilities to enable effective communication with others.

In speaking, people can express their feelings, opinions about something directly. Lindsay and Knight also posit that there are numerous reasons for speaking, including the desire to socialize, to express a need or desire, to request another's action, to engage in reciprocal interaction, to convey emotions or opinions, to exchange information, to allude to past, present, or future events, and other motives. Speaking abilities can also affect future professional chances and are necessary for real-world communication. As noted by Nunan (1999), Speaking fluent English can increase one's employability and open doors to possibilities around the world. For this reason, including speaking exercises in the eighth-grade curriculum is crucial to the students' linguistic and personal growth. What this idea entails for classroom instruction is that students need to focus more on their oral communication skills in order to make progress. Putting an emphasis on speaking skills is especially crucial for junior high school students from seventh grade students to eighth grade students because they are in a developmental stage where they can effectively acquire language.

According to Linse (2005), once they have mastered speaking, all young English language learners can read and write in the language. Students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar continue to experience challenges in meeting learning markers, largely due to their limited proficiency in spoken language. This issue can be attributed to a lack of interest in learning the language and limited opportunities for speaking practice. Nurhayati (2016) claims that the primary issue is that students experience shyness when required to speak in front of the class, and they also fear making errors while expressing their thoughts during interactions with others. In the majority of cases, educators utilize outdated methodologies such as rote memorization and repetition,

which can prove to be tedious and unproductive. It is of the utmost importance that educators employ dynamic and efficient teaching strategies in light of the difficulties encountered and the significance of speaking abilities.

Brown (2001) enumerates a variety of techniques, including role-playing, group debates, and interactive games, for the enhancement of speaking abilities. These techniques can enhance speaking abilities in an engaging and supportive environment, which will enhance the effectiveness and enjoyment of learning. The objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of role-playing in facilitating students' ability in spoken communication. Given that role-playing incorporates both verbal and nonverbal communication, it is an especially effective method for junior high school students. By providing students with realistic scenarios for language use, role-playing can significantly enhance students' speaking abilities (Harmer, 2008).

According to the theory, there are many chances in the school curriculum to teach speaking ability through dialogues and utterances. Students in junior high are required to study role play because of the frequent role-playing activities they engage in throughout the year. As a result, role play can be used as an instructional strategy to improve junior high school students' speaking skills and build their confidence when speaking in front of an audience. Additionally, students can receive support in enhancing their speaking skills, giving them the tools necessary to communicate well in a variety of professional settings, including job interviews.

Junior high school pupils are expected to read from a textbook and practice afterward in order to demonstrate their spoken English competence. When researcher did pre-survey about 2 months at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar, researcher found that

students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar are still speaking English with little ability. Their inability to express concepts clearly in the language is the reason for this. A number of issues frequently arise when learning spoken English. One is the impact of their mother tongue, which makes it difficult for them to use other languages. The inability to practice the second language on a regular basis for daily conversation is another. They also have a propensity to be reticent and shy when engaging in conversation. The investigated publications together illustrate the beneficial effect of role-play on students' speaking abilities, which aligns with my research emphasis. The study "The Effect of Role-Playing Techniques on the Speaking Skills of Students at University" by Shebli Younus Idham et al. (2022) establishes role-play as an effective method, demonstrating a significant disparity in the speaking proficiency of university students between the experimental and control groups. Likewise, "The Impact of Role-Play Technique on the Students' English-Speaking Skill" by Nichella Ayu Clarita et al. (2020) demonstrates that role-play substantially enhances speaking scores, with post-test scores markedly exceeding pre-test findings.

Another study, "The Use of Role Play to Improve Students' Speaking Skill" by Dela Octavia Ayuningtia et al. (2019), indicates that role play promotes student involvement and confidence, especially among tenth graders in an accounting classroom. The study "The Effectiveness of Role Play in Teaching Speaking Skill of the Eleventh Grade Students at SMAN 19 Makassar" by Muldi Lumiling et al. (2023) corroborates these findings, indicating that the experimental group outperformed the traditional techniques in post-tests. Moreover, "Role Play Activities: An Innovative Approach to Teaching Speaking Skills in an ESL

Classroom" by Nurhamimi Togimin et al. (2020) illustrates enhancements in fluency and understanding, as well as in students' attitudes towards speaking abilities. Sely Olvita Sari and Yuni Amelia (2021) in "The Effectiveness of Role Play in Improving English Speaking Skill to the Tenth Grade Students of MA Nida'ul Khairaat Pombewe" demonstrate comparable outcomes, indicating a significant enhancement from pre-test to post-test scores. Simultaneously, "The Effectiveness of Role-Play Towards Vocational School Students' Speaking Skill" by Bimantara Wicaksana et al. (2020) demonstrates that role-play results in substantial enhancements in post-test scores, with experimental groups exceeding the performance of control groups. Corroborating these findings, "The Use of Role Play to Improve Students' Speaking Skill" by Elisabeth Renita Sari and Intan Hamzah (2023) suggests that role-play serves as an effective technique for the advancement of both academicand social skills.

Furthermore, "The Use of Role Play Method to Improve Speaking Skills" by Adib Ahmada and Lailatul Munawaroh (2022) indicates a significant 80% enhancement in speaking scores following the use of role play, underscoring its effectiveness in educational environments. Finally, "An Analysis of Student Speaking Skill Using Role Play Method" by Fifa Lestari and Fitri Andini Sridatun (2020) underscores the worldwide importance of English-speaking skills, concluding that role-play substantially enhances students' competencies. These findings closely correlate with the research objective of this study, which aims to assess the effectiveness of the role-play method in improving speaking ability within a particular junior high school context.

Most of previous study focuses on seniors in high school and college, who are considered to be more mature learners, have been the primary subjects of most prior research on the Role Play Method's effect in teaching public speaking. Typical characteristics of these research were a higher average age, higher levels of language competence, and classroom settings designed for adults. So, they might not be a perfect match for the dynamics of the classroom, the learning styles of the students, or their stage of development, especially in junior high. The participants in this study were eighth graders from SMPN 1 Sanankulon in Blitar, who are typical of pupils at this point of their language learning journey. Not to mention, this study's methodology is totally different from what has come before. This study employed a pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test model without a control group, replacing older studies that frequently used quasi-experimental or classroom action research methods. Results were gathered by administering speech assessments to children both before and after they participated in a structured role play therapy that was tailored to their curriculum and developmental stage, drawing on real-life situations and everyday circumstances.

Thus, this study addresses the lack of knowledge by investigating the effectiveness of the Role Play Method with junior high school students, specifically through the use of context-based activities that mirror their real-life language uses. The findings also shed light on how to tailor classroom interventions and evaluations of oral communication skills to this age group, which has been understudied in the past.

B. Focus of the Study

The formulated of the research problem is "Is there any significant difference in speaking ability scores of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar before and after taught by using role play method?"

C. Research Objective

Based on the research question above, the formulated of the research objective is "To determine whether there is a significant difference in speaking ability scores of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar before and after taught by using the role play method."

D. Formulation of Hypothesis

Before deciding the result of hypothesis, the writer proposed interpretation toward (the observation) with procedure as follows:

1. Formulating Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in speaking ability scores of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar before and after taught by using the role play method.

2. Formulating Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is a significant difference in speaking ability scores of the eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar before and after taught by using the role play method.

E. Significance of the Study

This study should be important for both theory and practice in the field of teaching English as a second language, especially when it comes to helping students improve their speaking abilities using the Role Play Method. In theory, this study gives real-world proof and statistical data showing role-playing activities can help people learn to speak better. It adds to the body of research on communicative language instruction

by showing how role play may help improve important speaking skills including grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding. The results may also be useful for future research that wants to look at how communicative approaches affect learning a language, especially in junior high school settings.

In practice, the results of this study may be used in a number of ways:

1. English Teacher

   This study suggests that English teachers employ role-playing as a fun and different way to teach speaking. Role play may make the classroom more dynamic and interactive by getting more students involved, improving fluency, and simulating real-life communication.

2. Students

   According to the research, role play can help students feel more confident when they speak and provide them a chance to practice using English in real-life settings that matter.

3. Future Researcher

   This study gives future researchers the chance to do more research with bigger sample numbers, control groups, and longer treatment periods to learn more about how role play affects speaking abilities over time. Future studies may also look at role play in comparison to other tactics like debate, storytelling, or conversation to see which one works best. Also, this research has helped the researcher improve their own teaching skills and experience with designing lessons. This work should also help other academics who want to do similar

studies that look at how to improve English speaking skills using practical classroom approaches.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

The researcher created a scope and confined this research to determine whether or not employing role play can impact the speaking ability scores to the eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar in order to minimize potential misconceptions and to clarify the research. Furthermore, the role-play materials based on scenarios that are typical or frequently arise among students at SMPN 1 Sanankulon Blitar. The disadvantage of this study is that there is no comparison group to control for confounding variables that could taint the research findings because the researcher employ a pre-experimental research design.

G. Definition of The Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in terms and contents of the topic in this study, it is necessary for the researcher to define the key terms used in this study:

1. Speaking Ability

Speaking ability is how well a student can properly and respectfully convey their thoughts, ideas, and facts through spoken language in a variety of situations. It means being able to speak clearly, accurately, and with confidence, employing the right pronunciation, syntax, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Being able to speak well isn't only about making words, also about how well the message is comprehended and conveyed by others in both official and casual settings.

2. **Role Play**

Role play is an activity that puts students in charge and has them act out certain roles or circumstances depending on specified scenarios to practice using language in real-life settings. It means acting out events, concepts, or real-life situations that are connected to the goals of the lesson. The role-play approach lets students practice numerous ways of talking to one other and interacting with others. The pupils are in charge of the performance, but the instructor helps by giving directions, assistance, and comments. As part of the exercise, students not only act out their parts but also watch and talk about them. This helps them improve their language and critical thinking abilities. Role play is a fun way to get students to participate, build confidence, and improve their speaking skills in the classroom.