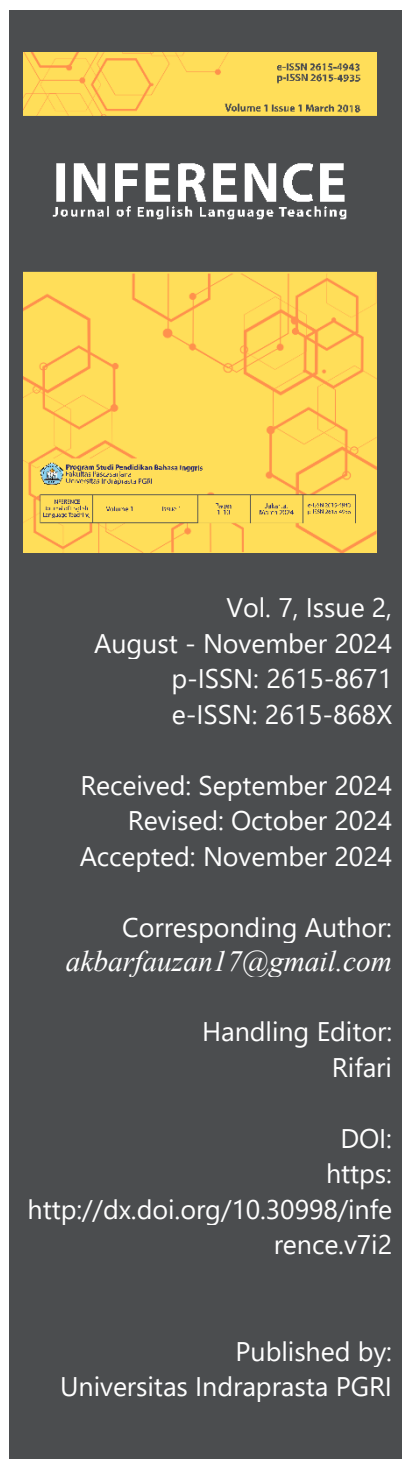




RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPROVING STUDENTS' ENGLISH LEARNING OUTCOMES ON ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS THROUGH ROLE PLAY TECHNIQUE

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Abstract: This study examines the role-playing techniques used on English for Business students at one university in Tasikmalaya West Java. This study aims to know how role play technique can affect the student's learning outcome. The participants in this study are 84 students who take English for Business subject. Classroom Action Research (CAR) was used in this study. This study was carried out in two cycles, with four meetings for each cycle. Data are gathered by questionnaires, interviews, observations, and evaluations. According to the study's findings, it can be deduced that only 30 students, or 35.71%, achieved mastery individually in the first cycle (average of 52.7). In cycle II, the average score is higher at 79.6, with 77 students or 91.67% of them achieving mastery on their own. Therefore, it can be said that using a role-playing technique help university students learn English more effectively.

Keywords: learning outcomes; English Business; role play; university students

MENINGKATKAN HASIL BELAJAR BAHASA INGGRIS PADA SISWA BAHASA INGGRIS BISNIS MELALUI TEKNIK BERMAIN PERAN



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Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji teknik bermain peran yang digunakan pada mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris untuk Bisnis di salah satu universitas di Universitas Tasikmalaya Jawa Barat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana teknik bermain peran dapat mempengaruhi hasil belajar mahasiswa. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah 84 mahasiswa yang mengambil mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris untuk Bisnis. Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua siklus, dengan empat pertemuan untuk setiap siklus. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner, wawancara, observasi, dan evaluasi. Menurut temuan penelitian, dapat disimpulkan bahwa hanya 30 mahasiswa, atau 35,71%, yang mencapai penguasaan secara individu pada siklus pertama (rata-rata 52,7). Pada siklus II, skor rata-rata lebih tinggi yaitu 79,6, dengan 77 mahasiswa atau 91,67% di antaranya mencapai penguasaan sendiri. Oleh karena itu, dapat dikatakan bahwa menggunakan teknik bermain peran membantu mahasiswa belajar bahasa Inggris dengan lebih efektif.

Kata kunci: hasil belajar; bahasa Inggris bisnis; bermain peran; mahasiswa

INTRODUCTION

For students who want to succeed in a variety of professional settings, learning English for corporate is essential in today's fast-paced global corporate environment. The English for Specific Purposes (ESP) framework is essential for customizing language instruction to the unique requirements and objectives of students in specialized fields (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998). Current studies have emphasized the value of ESP in meeting the language and communication requirements of students in a range of professional domains, stressing the significance of employable language proficiency appropriate to particular situations (Johns, 2016). English for Business is a unique subset of ESP that focuses on giving students the language and communication skills necessary for successful business communication (Robinson, 1991). Innovative pedagogical approaches are constantly being sought after by educators as they work to improve students' learning results in English for Business by bridging the gap between theory and practice.

The curriculum for English for Business (EFB) courses includes language-learning exercises designed with the needs of students aspiring to work in a variety of business sectors in mind. English language competency is becoming more and more acknowledged as a necessary talent for success in the corporate world in the modern globalized economy (Chang & Ku, 2020). Therefore, the goal of EFB training is to provide students with the language skills they need to function and communicate successfully in business meetings, negotiations, presentations, and written communication, among other professional situations (Guffey & Seefer, 2012). The aim of EFB training is on building specific language abilities essential to business communication activities, which sets it apart from general English language instruction (Bhatia & Bremner, 2012). This covers learning idioms, terminology, and speech techniques that are frequently employed in professional contexts. Furthermore, in order to give students, the content knowledge they need to participate meaningfully in professional discourse, EFB training frequently includes the study of business-related themes including marketing, finance, international commerce, and management (MacKenzie, 2010).

An individual with proficiency in EFB can follow a variety of professional paths, including those in international trade, multinational organizations, finance, marketing, and other business-related domains. Additionally, being proficient in English makes one more employable and competitive in the job market because many businesses value applicants who speak and write English well (Hewings & Tagg, 2012). A key component of preparing students for successful jobs in the connected and cutthroat corporate world of today is English for corporate education. EFB instruction



prepares students for success in the global business by providing them with the language skills and cultural sensitivity needed to function well in professional settings. Due to the language's lack of usage in everyday speech, teachers of English face certain difficulties (Mandasari, 2018). Furthermore, Rianti (2017) said that though answers are still being developed, Indonesia's strategic concerns with education or learning remain unsolved. The way a teacher teaches and how that method is perceived will have an impact on the lesson that they carry out. There are numerous methods for teaching English, including role-playing, games, conversation, and presentation.

According to Brierly, Devonshire, and Hillman (2002), role-play activities foster functioning knowledge, which is a blend of propositional knowledge (acquiring knowledge about the academic body of knowledge) and procedural knowledge (knowing how – possessing the skills). Furthermore, according to (Clarita et al., 2020) Role-play activities can help students become more self-reliant and confident. Following that, students can engage in educational activities to improve their critical thinking and public speaking skills. Role-playing helps pupils learn by having them take on the roles of characters in fictitious or real-world schemes (Clarita et al., 2020). It is an approach that enhances tertiary level social science learning in addition to the conventional instructors and assignment structure (Manorom & Pollock, 2006). The professors choose a specific scenario or incident for the pupils to learn from during a role-play.

In language education, role-playing is a vital instrument that provides a variety of methods for improving language acquisition and communication abilities. By means of role-playing exercises, students participate in genuine language use within simulated real-life scenarios, giving them hands-on experience utilizing language abilities to accomplish particular objectives or results (Jones, 2012). Learners engage in contextualized language practice by taking on various roles and taking part in dynamic events, which empowers them to utilize language in meaningful and pertinent ways (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In addition, role-playing encourages learners to be actively involved and motivated since they have a personal stake in reaching the scenario's objectives and are keen to interact with their peers in a productive way (Brown, 2001).

Learners' fluency and confidence in using the target language are greatly increased as they participate in natural verbal conversations, negotiate meaning, and respond to communication obstacles (Wright et al., 2006). Furthermore, role-playing helps students manage cross-cultural encounters, negotiate cultural differences, and use tactics to maintain successful communication as they enhance their communication strategies, cultural awareness, and interpersonal skills (Jones, 2012). Role-playing provides learners with a holistic approach to language development by combining all language skills into a seamless learning experience. This allows learners to practice and use speaking, listening, reading, and writing in an integrated and holistic manner (Brown, 2001). This study intends to add to the continuing conversation on cutting-edge pedagogical approaches in ESP, with an emphasis on the development of student's learning outcome, by iteratively utilizing the action research process. The research findings have the potential to guide the creation of curricula, instructional methodologies, and teacher training programs that aim to improve students' English for Business competency in ESP situations. In the end, the project aims to provide students with the language and communication skills necessary for success in the dynamic global business environment through collaborative inquiry and reflective practice.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method utilized in this study is called classroom action research (CAR), and it comes from the foundation of action research. It's termed CAR because it happens within the framework of a classroom. According to Kemmis in (Hammersley, 1993), action research is a type of self-reflective inquiry carried out by participants in social (including educational) situations with the goal of enhancing the fairness and rationality of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their

comprehension of these practices, and (c) the environments in which the practices are implemented. Consequently, it is evident that classroom action research is reflective and evaluative since its goal is to alter and enhance practice.

Kurt Lewin's design is the Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology applied in this study. It is divided into two cycles, with the planning, acting, observing, and reflecting phases found in each cycle. Additionally, the writer of this study will divide the classroom action research into two cycles. According to Arikunto (2009), "At least two cycles of classroom action research should be implemented continuously." This implies that a classroom action study ought to be carried out in a minimum of two cycles. In order to meet the established requirements, researchers can repeat the cycle if the outcomes are less than desirable.

The students at a university in Tasikmalaya during the academic year 2023–2024 were the focus of this study. Second-semester economics students from three different classes made up the study's population. 84 students were selected from the Entrepreneur and Digital Business Program Study by the researchers. The choice was made in light of the writer's observations made during that lesson, which demonstrated that the students lacked the bravery and enthusiasm to participate in the learning process. This study is being conducted for a half-semester, beginning on February 26th and ending on June 6th, 2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Result of Pre-Test

Prior to initiating Classroom Action Research, a pre-test measuring students' learning outcome was administered on March 21, 2024. The learning outcome of the students was not very satisfactory at the pre-test. Based on the data, the writer highlighted the students who passed KKM (65), and to get the result of pre-test, firstly, the writer calculated the mean score by employing the formula that has already been previously pointed out.

$$\pi = (\sum x) / N$$

$$\pi = 3300 / 84$$

$$\pi = 39,3$$

The writer then applied the following formula to get the class percentage that met the minimal mastery level criterion" target score, or Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM):

$$P = F / N \times 100\%$$

$$P = 7 / 84 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 8.33\%$$

The statistics indicated that the pre-test's mean score was 39.3 based on the pre-test result. This indicates that the mean score for the learning outcome of the students was 39.3 prior to the use of role play or the implementation of CAR. Seven students or 8.33% of students who got the score passed the minimal mastery level criterion (KKM), while seventy-seven students remained below the benchmark. It was evident from the pre-test results that the student's learning outcome remained quite low.

It was determined by examining the pre-test results that the majority of students found it challenging to learn English for Business. Therefore, it must determine how to solve this issue. In order to solve the issue and enhance the learning outcomes for the students, the writer in this case employed the role-playing technique in each cycle of classroom action research.

The Result of Post-test I

With the use of the aforementioned table, the writer may determine the average score of the students, the proportion of students who meet the minimal mastery level criterion (KKM), and the increase in

student scores from the pre-test to the first and second post-tests. The First post-test's mean score derived from the following formula:

$$\pi = (\sum x) / N$$

$$\pi = 4429 / 84$$

$$\pi = 52,7$$

Then, to know the class percentage that passed the minimal mastery level criterion Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) on Post-test 1 the writer used the following formula:

$$P = F / N \times 100\%$$

$$P = 30 / 84 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 35,71\%$$

Finally, to know whether students improve their score or not the writer used the following formula:

$$P = (y_1 - y) / y \times 100\%$$

$$P = (52,7 - 39,3) / 39,3 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 34,21\%$$

The writer thus understood that the first cycle' student mean was 52,7 based on the computation. The students' scores improved by 34.21% between the pre- and post-tests, but this improvement is still insufficient because only thirty or 35,71% of the students met the action success target of 75% of the students passing the minimal mastery level criterion (KKM).

The Result of Post-test II

The mean score of the students, the percentage of students passing the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM), and the improvement in the speaking score of the students from the pre-test to the second post-test were all calculated by the writer at the second cycle of the CAR. The second post-test's mean score derived from the following formula:

$$\pi = (\sum x) / N$$

$$\pi = 6685 / 84$$

$$\pi = 79,6$$

The class percentage that passed the minimal mastery level criterion Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) on Post-test 2 the writer used the following formula:

$$P = F / N \times 100\%$$

$$P = 77 / 84 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 91,67\%$$

Third, the students' score improvement from the pre-test to the second post-test:

$$P = (y_2 - y) / y \times 100\%$$

$$P = (79,6 - 39,3) / 39,3 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 102,5\%$$

Based on the computation, the writer discovered that the average score on the students' second post-test was 79,6. Additionally, it revealed that 77 students, or 91.67% of the total, met the minimal mastery level requirement (KKM). Moreover, the average improvement in the students' scores from the pretest to the second post-test would be 102.5 percent. Thus, it indicates that the action has satisfied the prerequisite for action success, as 91,67% of students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM). In this instance, the results demonstrated the effectiveness of the in-class action research conducted with students in the Entrepreneurship and Digital Business classes.

The Result of Observation

Several noteworthy conclusions have been drawn from the observations made in the English for Business classes. These observations give a thorough picture of how role-playing methods affect students' learning results and are consistent with the information obtained from interviews.

1. Intense involvement and participation

During the role-playing exercises, almost every student participated fully. They took on their parts with great anticipation and enthusiastically engaged in the scenarios. During role-playing exercises, there was a lively and engaging classroom environment. Students were constantly communicating with one another, exchanging questions and comments.

2. Enhancement of Verbal Abilities

Notable advancements in the pupils' verbal and nonverbal communication abilities were noted by observers: a) Pupils showed improved fluency and usage of suitable business jargon. They became more adept at creating and speaking sentences with less hesitation and pause, b) Students' nonverbal communication abilities, such as keeping eye contact, using appropriate gestures, and projecting confidence through their body language, showed a noticeable improvement.

3. Development of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Abilities

Role-playing exercises helped pupils develop their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities: a) Analytical Talks: Throughout the role-play, students had in-depth conversations on recognizing issues, evaluating circumstances, and coming up with solutions. It was clear that they were capable of weighing various viewpoints and coming to well-informed conclusions, b) Students demonstrated their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to actual difficulties by skilfully navigating the complicated business settings offered in the role-play games. This approach is known as scenario-based problem solving.

4. Increased Confidence in Using English

It was observed that students' confidence in their ability to use English in business environments was increased by role-play activities: a) Presentations with Confidence: Students spoke with assertiveness and clarity during presentations and negotiations, demonstrating a rise in confidence. They become more at ease speaking in formal corporate situations in English, b) Decreased worry: As their confidence in their language abilities grew, pupils showed signs of a gradual reduction in their worry and uneasiness during role-playing exercises.

5. Enhanced Motivation and Interest in Learning

Students were greatly inspired and became more interested in learning English for Business through role-playing activities: a) Positive Attitude: Students showed excitement and anticipation, and they generally had a positive attitude toward the role-play sessions. Their entire approach to learning the subject was characterized by this zeal, b) Increased Effort: Students were seen to make more efforts to get ready for role-playing exercises, such as role-playing exercises, and vocabulary practice.

The Result of Questionnaire

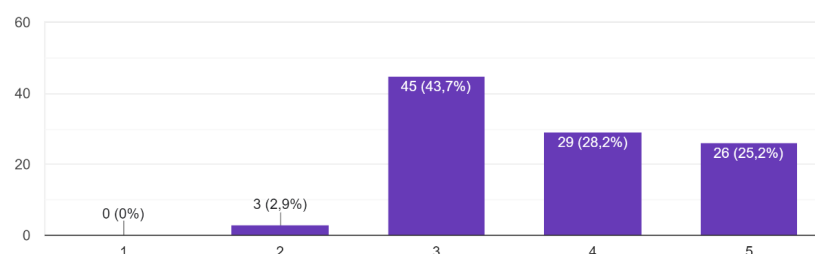


Figure 1. The impact of Role-play technique in improving the student's engagement level and motivation in learning English for Business

According to the above results, 43.7 percent of students indicated that they agree in moderation, 28% that they agree, and 25% that they agree very much. Just 2.9% of students disagree that role-playing techniques increase students' motivation and level of involvement when learning English for business.

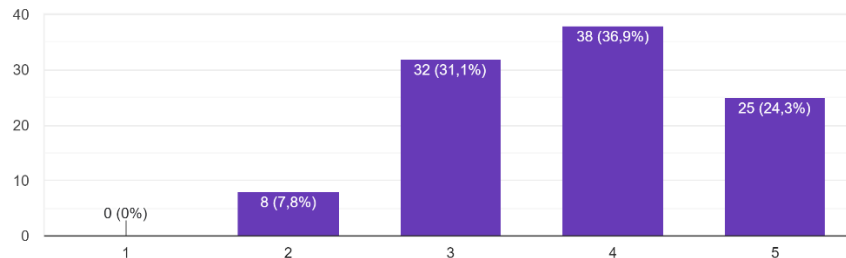


Figure 2. Role-play technique can improve the student's confident in using English Language on Business context

Most students—36,9%—agreed, and 24% agreed very much—that the role-playing strategy can help them become more comfortable using English in business settings. Just 7.8% of them disagree with this.

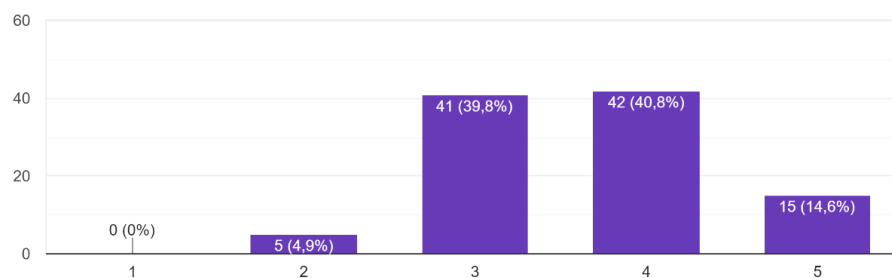


Figure 3. Role-play activity can improve the student's critical thinking and solving problem ability

Based on the aforementioned results, the majority of students concurred that role-playing activities may improve their capacity for critical thought and problem-solving. 14,6% said they agreed very much, while 42,8% said they agreed. On this, just 4,9% disagree. From all of the data above, it can be concluded that using the role play technique can significantly improve students' learning outcomes. In addition, students become more actively involved in the teaching and learning process, and the writer can break the cycle. This is related to the questionnaire results following the implementation of the role play activity, which show that the majority of the students gave a positive response in their teaching-learning process.

The Result of Interview

A semi-structured interview took place on Thursday, June 6, 2024. After the second cycle concluded, this interview was conducted. The general student conditions in the classroom during the implementation of the action were better than before, according to the answers provided by the students in the interview.

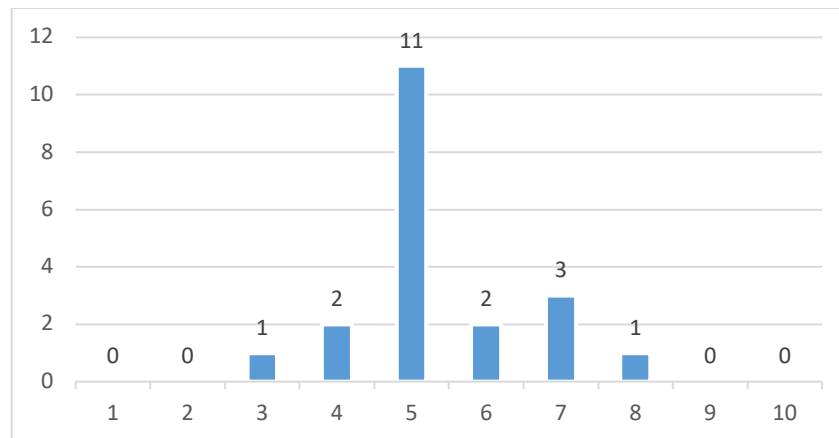


Figure 4. Student's English Proficiency level

Based on the interview result, the student's English proficiency level seems low. That's why the pre-test that had been carried out was low. The students seemed struggled with the instruction, and material before the implementation of CAR. The lack of English proficiency level is getting along with student's interest and motivation toward learning English. As one of the students said:

... *"Semua hal dalam Bahasa Inggris susah kecuali percakapan dasar, seperti selamat pagi".*

"Every single thing in English is difficult, except the basic conversation like good morning." While the other said:

... *"Menurut saya bagian tersulit nya yakni di pengucapan dan arti kosakata".*

... *"I think the most difficulty thing in English is in pronunciation and the meaning of the word".*

... *"Bagian tersulit yakni grammar, Ketika diotak saya bisa, namun Ketika di ucapkan jadi berbeda."*

... *"The most difficult part in English is grammar. I can imagine it in my brain, but when come to realization, it different".*

Based on the interview, the writer can conclude that the students most difficulties in learning English are the Vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. These are the reason why they don't like learning English. The writer then asked some question related to the Role play technique that had been implemented in the classroom. They appeared enthusiastic and found it simpler to communicate through role-playing. Because the students were involved in the classroom activity, there was strong student participation. The students added that role-playing was an effective method of teaching speaking. It might be a useful strategy for supporting the pupils' speech. In addition to helping students improve their speaking skills, it might serve as a substitute method and encourage English teachers to employ it.

... *"saya sangat setuju bahwa roleplay sangat membantu karena dengan roleplay ini kita banyak bermain peran dan praktek juga. Kita banyak bergerak dan ngga ngantuk, ngga melulu membahas teori nya."*

... *"I totally agreed with the Roleplay Technique. It was really helped me. We did a lot of practice through a role play. We did move a lot and didn't sleepy at all, and didn't discuss the theory too much."*

... *"Saya sangat takjub dengan roleplay ini saya dapat banyak berlatih Bahasa Inggris sekaligus dalam memainkan peran ini dapat memperdalam pemahaman dalam materi karena adanya imajinasi yang dilibatkan."*

... *"I feel amazed with the Roleplay technique. With this technique I can practice English together with playing a role, so that I can deepen my understanding. It because we use our imagination in it."*

... *"Sistem roleplay ini cukup membantu, karena Bahasa Inggris termasuk sulit dalam Bahasa, karena dengan roleplay kita dapat mempraktekannya. Juga kita bisa bebas berekspresi karena dibuat dengan seni peran."*

... *"This roleplay system is really helpful, because English language is one of the difficult languages to master, with this Roleplay technique, we can practice it. We are free to express too, it because it made with an act."*

The motivation of the students seems rose in every cycle. Their average score increases as well as their motivation. Not only the motivation, the students believe that with the Role play technique, they can increase their confident through the practice they do with this technique.

... *"Menurut saya, saya sangat termotivasi karena ada seni perannya, sehingga bisa lebih kreatif dan inovatif. Saya suka bermain peran, juga bisa menggali vocabnya lebih jauh lagi."*

... *"In my opinion, I am really motivated by this technique. It because of the act or role play in this technique, so that I can be more creative and innovative. I like playing a role, and also can deepen my vocabulary mastery."*

... *"Menurut saya, saya sangat termotivasi, karena dengan Teknik ini saya dapat membutuhkan Teknik yang dipakai dalam roleplay Teknik ini dalam kegiatan berbisnis kelak."*

... *"I think I am really motivated. It because of the technique I was used can be implemented in the future on my business."*

... *"Saya pribadi sangat memotivasi, selain bisa menjadi lebih pede, kita juga bisa lebih memahami materi tsb."*

... *"Personally, I am really motivated. Beside it can help me increase my confident, this technique can be also useful to deepen my understanding about the material."*

The findings of the study demonstrate how effective role-playing techniques can be in improving student learning results, especially in business English classes. With an average score of 52.7, the first cycle's findings initially showed that only 35.71% of the students had attained individual mastery. This suggested a comparatively low degree of progress. In contrast, the second cycle showed a notable improvement in student performance, with 91.67% of the students obtaining individual mastery and an average score of 79.6. This significant improvement demonstrates how role-playing techniques can help students succeed academically.

First of all, role-playing encourages participation and active learning. Role-playing helps students apply theory in real-world, practical circumstances by immersing them in actual business scenarios. Students' comprehension and retention of the material are improved by this experiential learning technique, as demonstrated by the significant increase in average scores from 52.7 in the first cycle to 79.6 in the second. Engaging actively in these situations improves cognitive processing, which results in more profound understanding and longer-lasting memory of the information.

Second, role-playing exercises promote a cooperative learning atmosphere. Group interactions are necessary for many of these exercises, which foster cooperation and communication skills. In addition to fostering better interpersonal skills, this collaborative element enables students to pick up knowledge from one another and develop new viewpoints and insights. A more captivating and inspiring learning environment is facilitated by the encouraging group dynamics, as seen by the higher percentage of students gaining individual mastery in the second cycle (91.67% as opposed to 35.71% in the first).

Additionally, role-playing strategies aid in the development of crucial business abilities in students, including appropriate vocabulary, fluency, and communication methods. Through practice in a controlled, yet authentic environment, students gain proficiency and confidence in their use of business English. By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and actual application, this practical application increases the relevance and efficacy of the learning process.

Role-playing exercises also take various learning preferences and styles into account. While some kids learn best when using visual and aural aids, others are better when using hands-on or kinesthetics methods. In order to accommodate a wide variety of learners, role-play integrates spoken discourse, visual signals, and physical contact. By taking an inclusive approach, more students will be able to participate in and gain from the learning activities.

Lastly, the role-playing method raises students' enthusiasm and drive for the material. Learning becomes less boring and more enjoyable when students participate in dynamic and interactive exercises. More effort and perseverance are brought about by this increased attention, and these qualities are essential for succeeding academically. The students' increased performance and mastery rates can be attributed to their zeal and active participation in role-playing exercises.

Finally, the role-play method greatly improves student learning outcomes by encouraging participation, teamwork, the development of useful business skills, support for a variety of learning styles, and motivation. The study's conclusions demonstrate how well this strategy works to foster a vibrant and encouraging learning environment, which significantly raises student achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

Positive results have resulted from action study on how to improve students' learning outcomes in English for Business by using role-play tactics, which was carried out at one university in Tasikmalaya West Java. The results of the study showed that adding role-play exercises to the English for Business curriculum greatly improves a number of the learning outcomes and experiences of the students.

First off, role-playing strategies have helped pupils improve student's learning outcomes. According to the study's findings, it can be deduced that only 30 students, or 35.71%, out of the 84 students, achieved mastery individually in the first cycle, indicating poor improvement (average of 52.7). In cycle II, the average score for students' learning outcomes is higher at 79.6, with 77 students completing the course and 91.67% of them achieving mastery on their own. Students felt that this role play technique could make the learning process easier for them. Students developed and acquired the proper business terminology, fluency, and communication styles needed in professional contexts by modelling real-life business scenarios. Furthermore, they found that the biggest obstacle they encountered was in terms of vocabulary. A greater degree of interest and zeal for the course subject is shown by the enhanced motivation and engagement seen in students taking part in role-play exercises. Better recall and comprehension of the material are facilitated by this increased participation. Since many role-play activities featured group interactions, which promote a collaborative learning environment and improve interpersonal skills, improved teamwork and collaboration were also visible.

The previous level of English proficiency has a significant influence on student learning outcomes. Most students who are less proficient in English have lower scores on the pre-test and post-test 1 compared to students who have previous proficiency. This hands-on experience is essential for preparing students for real-world business settings. The effectiveness of role-playing approaches in accomplishing the intended educational results is further demonstrated by the enhanced confidence in the use of English in business contexts and the improved comprehension of business culture and etiquette.

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