



ENHANCING STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH ACTING PLAY SCRIPTS (APS) TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

During the process of learning to speak, students often encounter various challenges. Many students exhibit passivity in speaking lessons and lack confidence when speaking in front of the class due to limited vocabulary and a lack of conceptual understanding. The researcher aimed to determine whether the use of "Acting Play Scripts" (APS) in teaching speaking could improve students' speaking skills. The research problem focused on the effectiveness of teaching speaking through the APS technique for students in the English Department of PGRI University Palembang. The objective was to assess the effectiveness of the APS technique in enhancing students' speaking abilities. The study specifically concentrated on students' speaking proficiency in English and utilized a pre-experimental method with a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The researcher selected a single class, namely the 5A class of fifth-semester students from the English Department, comprising 33 students. The findings revealed that the average score in the pre-test was 63.80, while the average score in the post-test was 71.51. The significance level was set at 5%, with a degree of freedom (df) of 32. The critical value of the t-table was 1.6938, and the t-obtained was 55.07. Therefore, the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, indicating that teaching speaking through the APS technique was effective for students in the English Department of PGRI University Palembang. The APS technique resulted in improvements in students' speaking abilities, including their mean scores, their ability to express ideas using appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and their pronunciation development. The implementation of the APS technique in the speaking classroom exhibited strengths, such as increased student participation and enhanced speaking skills.

Keywords: *Acting Play Script (APS) Technique, Speaking, Speaking Skill.*

1. INTRODUCTION

English has evolved to become not only an international language but a global language in today's world. It has become an indispensable component of both general and specialized education worldwide. English is taught and utilized as a first, second, or foreign language in numerous countries across the globe. In Indonesia, English holds a significant

position as the primary foreign language taught in schools. To master English, individuals need to develop four essential language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, language aspects such as vocabulary and grammar play crucial roles in acquiring these skills. Furthermore, Scrivener (2005:146) emphasizes the importance of using a language rather than merely having

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knowledge of it, since it serves no purpose to possess extensive knowledge about a language if one cannot effectively utilize it. Thus, speaking proficiency holds significant value in facilitating communication. Moreover, people require English for various purposes, including conducting business with foreign partners, pursuing educational endeavors, and exploring different cultures while traveling abroad.

English as a foreign language that we learn from school in Indonesia as to college. English consists of four skills namely speaking, reading, listening, and also writing. Therefore, speaking was one of the most important things that could influence students to improve their speaking skills (Jaya et al, 2023). Speaking, as highlighted by Herliani (2013:1), is a crucial language skill that foreign language learners must strive to master. It serves as a fundamental tool for communication, thinking, and learning. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, speaking requires special attention and dedicated instruction. To ensure effective teaching, EFL teachers need to carefully consider the underlying factors, conditions, and components that contribute to speaking proficiency. However, mastering speaking skills is not without challenges.

In learning to communicate in English, speaking takes place as the most important language in the world (Jaya et al, 2019). Several problems commonly arise in the process of learning to speak. Firstly, students often have limited opportunities to engage in speaking activities within the classroom

setting. Secondly, there is a lack of variation in teaching techniques employed by teachers during speaking lessons. Lastly, the application of teaching strategies may become monotonous, leading to student boredom and disinterest in studying English.

As mentioned by Burns and Joyce (1997), speaking is an interactive process that involves the construction, reception, and processing of meaning. The form and meaning of spoken language are influenced by various factors, including the context, participants, and purpose of the communication. Speaking English has become a necessity for many individuals, particularly students who may be enrolled in formal schools or English courses. Moreover, students now seek additional lessons specifically focused on English conversation.

Engaging in spoken English presents its unique set of challenges, demanding proficiency across various essential elements such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The ability to articulate thoughts and ideas effectively hinges on a comprehensive grasp of these components, underscoring the multifaceted nature of language proficiency. Pronunciation accuracy is crucial for effective communication, as it ensures that spoken words are clear and comprehensible to listeners. A solid understanding of grammar rules is essential to construct grammatically correct sentences, contributing to coherence and clarity in speech. Vocabulary mastery enables speakers to express themselves precisely, selecting the most fitting words for

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their intended meaning. Fluency, the seamless flow of speech, is a hallmark of communicative competence, facilitating smooth and natural interactions. Lastly, comprehension skills empower speakers to understand and respond appropriately to others' contributions in a conversation.

Recognizing these complexities, educators are urged to adopt creative approaches in shaping their teaching and learning processes. The emphasis should be on enhancing students' speaking skills through dynamic and interactive methods that address the key elements of effective communication. This entails incorporating diverse activities and resources that cater to pronunciation practice, grammatical understanding, vocabulary expansion, fluency exercises, and comprehension-building tasks. By infusing creativity into English language lessons, teachers can create an environment that not only addresses the challenges of speaking but also makes the learning experience more engaging and enjoyable for students. This proactive approach not only equips learners with the necessary linguistic tools for effective communication but also fosters a positive and motivating language learning atmosphere.

However, it is evident that many students exhibit passivity when it comes to speaking English. They lack confidence and are afraid of making mistakes, so when the teacher asks them to speak, they choose to remain silent. Several indicators highlight the classroom situation:

- (1) minimal student participation in speaking activities;
- (2) a teacher-centered approach in which the teacher dominates most of the speaking time, relying solely on the course book without incorporating communicative activities to encourage student speaking;
- (3) limited interaction beyond formal daily greetings;
- (4) speaking-focused activities that do not effectively promote speaking performance; and
- (5) an atmosphere in the classroom that lacks cheerfulness and enjoyment.

These problems stem from various underlying causes that demand greater attention. Firstly, teachers seldom engage students in authentic speaking activities during class, often assigning written tasks instead. Secondly, students have insufficient time for rehearsal to practice and express themselves in English, with no dedicated period allocated for evaluating their speaking skills at the end of the semester. Lastly, teachers may not fully recognize the significance of employing varied teaching techniques throughout the teaching and learning process, which greatly benefits students.

Yuliati (2010), in her thesis, carried out the Acting Play Scripts (APS) technique, which is employed in this research to provide an engaging method for enhancing students' speaking abilities. The APS technique involves students acting out short written sketches or scenes in small groups of two, three, or four. They are required to create their own scripts

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based on given topics, memorize them, and perform them in front of the class. This technique aligns well with the characteristics of successful speaking activities, including extensive student talk, balanced participation, high motivation, interest in the topic, new ideas to share, and language at an acceptable level of accuracy and comprehensibility. APS also promotes social interaction and effective communication among students.

The APS technique, or Alternative Performance Space technique, cultivates an inclusive and non-threatening environment by encouraging students to collaborate in groups, fostering collective problem-solving dynamics. This approach not only allows for teamwork but also allocates ample time for script writing, providing students with the opportunity to engage in comprehensive discussions regarding word choice, grammar nuances, and intonation for delivering impactful dramatic performances. Furthermore, the technique places a strong emphasis on the development of comprehension skills, prompting students to interpret the content, style, and characterization embedded within the scripts.

The incorporation of the APS technique instills a sense of confidence among students, creating a secure platform for them to enhance their speaking abilities, consequently motivating their active participation in the learning process. The anticipation is that this technique will act as a catalyst in transforming student passivity within the classroom into a vibrant and active learning experience. Additionally, the APS technique offers unique

opportunities for students to assume central roles in the educational process. This shift reduces the reliance on teachers or university instructors to lead every aspect of the class, including explanation, acting, presentation, and analysis. By empowering students through the APS technique, the aim is to promote fluent interaction among peers in the target language and facilitate a more student-centric and participatory learning environment.

Hence, it is recommended that students actively engage with their learning materials to develop confidence in using English. The use of APS as a tool for student involvement in their coursework serves as an illustration of this idea. By reading and acting out scripts, students are encouraged to communicate and discuss the content of the plays. Harmer (2001:271) supports this idea by suggesting various classroom speaking activities, including acting from a script, communication games, discussions, prepared talks, questionnaires, simulations, and role-plays. Among these activities, the writer has chosen to focus on acting from a script. This activity entails students acting out scenes from plays or coursebooks and presenting them to the class. Ultimately, the Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique possesses the key characteristics of successful English-speaking activities, allowing for maximum adaptation to learners' personalities while promoting extensive speaking.

Considering the study's background, the writer seeks to investigate whether the use of the "Acting Play Scripts" technique in teaching

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speaking can enhance students' speaking skills. The following research question arises from this context: "Is it effective to teach speaking through the Acting Play Script (APS) Technique to English Department students at PGRI University Palembang?"

Based on the problem statement, the objective of this study was to find out the effectiveness of teaching speaking through Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique to the students of English Department of PGRI University Palembang. This study would be concentrated on students 'speaking at speaking English subject form English Department of PGRI University and focused on their ability in speaking. From all the above reasons, the writer is interested in conducting a research entitled, "**Enhancing Students Speaking Skill through Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique**"

2. LITERATURE REVIEW**Concept of Teaching**

As stated by Sagala (2008: 9), teaching can be described as the act of assisting or attempting to help someone learn something without the learners themselves contributing to their own education. As mentioned by Jaya et al (2023) Teaching is a profession conducted by using a combination of art, science, and skill. Harmer (2007: 33) further emphasizes that teaching is a complex undertaking that requires careful preparation, including the planning of objectives and activities on various time scales, such as hourly, daily, and weekly.

Long-term planning ensures that the curriculum is adequately covered over marking periods, semesters, and years. According to the Cambridge International Dictionary of English (Harmer, 2001: 56), teaching involves imparting knowledge, providing instruction, or training someone. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines it as showing somebody how to do something or influencing someone's ideas.

In the learner-centered and humanistic approach to teaching, educators act as guides, facilitating the learning process rather than being authoritarian figures (Larsen-Freeman, 1987: 8). While teachers play a pivotal role, students also share responsibility for the depth of learning that occurs. This perspective challenges the conventional notion of teaching, where the instructor is perceived as an all-knowing figure delivering information. Instead, the emphasis is on fostering an interactive and engaging learning environment.

Teaching, according to this approach, transcends the conventional model of one-way information delivery. It involves the art of posing thought-provoking questions that stimulate critical thinking among students. The teacher creates a conducive atmosphere that allows students the necessary time to ponder and articulate responses. This method not only empowers learners but also enriches the overall classroom interaction, making it a collective journey of exploration and discovery for all participants.

Moreover, Wilson and Peterson (2006: 2) highlight the prevalent perception of teaching

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as a seemingly straightforward task, often reduced to teachers merely delivering information. Traditional lessons tend to be characterized by low-level content and concepts, lacking coherent organization. In this view, teachers are portrayed as the sole possessors of knowledge, leaving little room for active student involvement or the development of higher-order thinking skills. This perspective underscores the need for a paradigm shift in teaching methodologies, encouraging educators to move beyond information delivery and embrace a more interactive, engaging, and student-driven approach to enhance the overall quality of education. From the aforementioned explanations, it can be concluded that teaching refers to the activity carried out by educators or professionals in the field of education to impart and develop knowledge during the learning process, ultimately enabling students to achieve their learning goals.

Concept of Speaking

As described by Hosni (2014: 22), speaking refers to the active utilization of language to convey meaning. For young learners, spoken language serves as the medium through which they encounter, understand, practice, and learn a new language. Richard (2009: 1) adds that in the past, speaking often involved activities such as repeating after the teacher, memorizing dialogues, or responding to drills. These approaches reflected a sentence-based perspective on proficiency prevalent in audiolingual and other repetition-based

methodologies of the 1970s. Thus, speaking is the process of using language to communicate, express feelings, and convey meaning, making it a crucial skill for interpersonal interaction. This underscores the importance of teaching speaking effectively.

Furthermore, Hornby (1995: 826) defines speaking as the act of using words in an ordinary voice, possessing vocabulary, and being capable of expressing oneself verbally. Malihah (2010: 88) defines speaking skill as the ability to orally express opinions, thoughts, and emotions directly or indirectly to others. Harmer (1998: 49) highlights several characteristics of spoken English, including the use of incomplete sentences, repetition among speakers, and the frequent application of contractions. In summary, speaking involves actively using language to communicate, express oneself, and convey meaning. It is a fundamental skill for sharing thoughts and interacting with others. Teaching speaking effectively is crucial for learners to develop their ability to express themselves fluently and accurately in oral communication.

From explanation above, the writer concludes that speaking as a way of communication that used by people. As the speech production in the daily activities with almost the speaking activities are in the form face-to face dialogue with involves the interaction. Furthermore, speaking is proses of expressing opinion, thought, and feeling to other people directly and indirectly. The goal of teaching speaking order is to improve students' communicative skill, students can

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express themselves in each communicative circumstance.

Concept of Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique

As explained by Scrivener (1994: 69), the Acting Play Script (APS) technique involves students acting out short written sketches or scenes in front of the class. It is a highly effective method to encourage students to use language actively. By using their imagination, students can assume different characters or transform the classroom into a different setting. This technique serves as a starting point for engaging listening and speaking activities and can be employed to practice specific grammar, vocabulary, functional, or phonological aspects. In teaching speaking through the APS technique, the teacher encourages students to work in pairs, integrating listening and speaking skills. Additionally, the APS technique provides an opportunity to practice a wide range of vocabulary in a meaningful and interesting way.

As stated by Scrivener (2004: 70), the APS technique also allows for the practice of various functional language expressions, such as apologizing, refusing, offering help, asking for opinions, agreeing or disagreeing, denying, praising, congratulating, and more. Consequently, Scrivener provides guidelines on how to effectively implement this technique in the classroom. The steps are as follows:

- 1) Make sure that the students understand the idea of APS. The teachers should explain

to the students that they know what is going to happen, what should they do and whether they are comfortable to do that or not.

- 2) Make sure that the situation is clear.
- 3) Allow the students to write the scripts in the right structure, let them open the dictionary to find the proper words, and also give time to memorize the scripts.
- 4) Give them time to prepare their ideas before the speaking starts
- 5) And at last, when the activity of speaking starts, encourage the students to improve rather than rely on prepared scripts. This condition will make them more relax and could create a natural situation in class.

In line with the procedure in using Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique according to Harmer (2001: 271), there are some procedures in acting from a script. However, the writer simplified those procedures as following:

- 1) Teacher asks the students read dialogue script.
- 2) Teacher gives the students to rehearse their dialogue into appropriate stress, intonation, and speed.
- 3) Teacher asks the students to act out the dialogue in front of the class.

In teaching speaking through Acting Play Script (APS) Technique the writer make the students to pairwork and used integrate the four skill of English between reading, listening, writing and speaking in understanding the context.

The advantages and disadvantages of Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique**Advantages**

As mentioned by Harmer (2005:132), one strategy to encourage quiet students is to involve them in "acting out" dialogues. However, it's important to note that "acting out" doesn't simply mean reading aloud. The teacher must take on the role of a drama coach, guiding the students on when to raise or lower their voices, where to place emphasis, and how to convey the intended emotions. This approach offers several benefits. The advantages by acting from a script are as follows:

- a. increasing students' motivation and participation
- b. increasing students imagination
- c. increasing confidence and fluency in spoken english
- d. increase the range of communication through body language
- e. extending the emotional range
- f. the monotony of a conventional class can be broken

Disadvantages

There are also some disadvantages teaching speaking English subject through Acting Play Script (APS) Technique. There is not single best way to teach. This mean that every teaching method which happen in teaching and learning process. The disadvantages are follows:

- a. Taking long time to train the students to be good in performance.

- b. In controlling the students, teacher needs extra time. If not, the class will be noisy.
- c. Not all the students are interested in acting, it need high motivation to make them enjoyable to do such play.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study were derived from the results obtained through written and oral tests. The oral test in this study was conducted in the form of an essay. Initially, the students took a pre-test before the treatment was administered. Following the treatment, a post-test was given as the final assessment. The analysis of the data revealed that the students' average score in the pre-test was 63.80. In contrast, their average score in the post-test increased to 71.51, indicating progress in their scores. Notably, there was a difference of 7.71 points between the post-test and pre-test scores. The results were further analyzed using a matched t-test calculation.

Upon analyzing the data, it was found that teaching speaking through the Acting Play Script (APS) Technique was effective for the students of the English Department at PGRI University Palembang. This effectiveness was attributed to the fact that the APS Technique enabled students to enhance their confidence and provided them with more opportunities to engage in speaking during the teaching and learning activities. Specifically, the students' average score in the pre-test was 60.56, while their average score in the post-test increased to 71.94. Moreover, the calculated result of the matched t-test was 55.07, which exceeded the

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critical value (1.6938) at a significance level of 0.05%.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the average score in the pre-test was 63.80, and in the post-test, it increased to 71.51. The significance level used was 5%, and the degree of freedom (df) was 32. The critical value obtained from the t-table was 1.6938, while the t-value obtained from the analysis was 55.07. This indicates that the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted. Therefore, it can be inferred that teaching speaking through the Acting Play Scripts (APS) Technique to the students of the English Department at PGRI University Palembang was effective. The implementation of the APS Technique led to an improvement in students' speaking ability, as evidenced by their speaking achievement, their ability to express ideas using appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and their ability to develop pronunciation skills. The use of the APS Technique in the speaking classroom not only increased students' participation but also enhanced their overall speaking skills.

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