Improving Students' Learning Outcomes in Learning English for Special Purposes through The Role-Playing Method

Dwi Handayani Silitonga¹, Haya Haratikka²
1,2 Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Bina Karya
Email: dwihandayanisilitonga@stie-binakarya.ac.id.

ABSTRACT

STIE Bina Karya students where their learning focus is not on English, but they have to take English for a Specific Purpose as one of the general subjects. Therefore, delivering English for specific purposes material requires an appropriate learning method. This research aims to describe the implementation of the Role-Playing Method for STIE Bina Karya students. This Class Action Research applied two cycles. The research subjects are 70 students from the first semester who were chosen randomly. This research used tests, questionnaires, and observations in collecting the data. In analyzing the data, the number of scores obtained by students divided by the total value multiplied by one hundred. Then the data calculation uses the grouping of the average student scores. Research results showed that there is an increase in learning outcomes by applying the role-playing method. In pre-test, student learning outcomes is 35.73. After implementing the role-playing method, students' learning outcomes is 61.14 and increased again to 77.36 in cycle II. Questionnaire data also proved that the Role-Playing method can not only improve student learning outcomes but can also increase interest of non-English study program student in learning English for specific purposes.

Keywords: *Class Action Research, English for specific Purposes, Learning-outcomes, Role-Playing Method*

Introduction

English is required subject from primary school until college which have to be learned by students in Indonesia. They must master English skills such as writing, listening, reading, and speaking when studying this subject (Rao, 2019; Ain et al., 2023) and (Sipayung & Pangaribuan, 2019). English for specific purposes (ESP) has been popular since the 1960s and has grown with massive global developments (Rahman, 2015). ESP can be defined as an approach to teaching language in which all decisions as to material and method are based on the learners' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Besides that, Robinson (1991) cited in Agustina (2014) explained that ESP is an enterprise involving education, training, and practice, drawing upon three major knowledge realism, namely language, pedagogy, and participants of student specialist area of interest. Richards and Rodgers (2001) also said that ESP is a movement to serve the learners'

language needs who need English to carry out specific roles and acquire content and real-world skills through the medium of it rather than master the language. Similarly, the learners of STIE Bina Karya study English for a specific Purpose.

English is one of the general subjects to be taken by Economics Students at STIE Bina Karya. STIE Bina Karya is an institution located in Tebing Tinggi which has three study programs, namely: Management, Accounting, and Digital Business. The learning objective for this English course, with a total of 2 credits, is for students will master the 4 English language skills, namely reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening for academic purposes. According to Sudjana (2010), cited by Mahyuddin (2022) said that learning outcomes are students' ability after receiving learning experiences. Hamdani (2011: 12) in (Rojiyyah et al., 2018) argues that the essence of learning outcomes is a change in

individuals who learn, not only about knowledge but also skills and appreciation in individual individuals to learn as well. In simple terms, student learning outcomes are the abilities achieved by students in learning, which indicates the level of students' ability to participate in a study program within a certain time according to a predetermined curriculum (Khasanah et al., 2022). These learning outcomes are often reflected as scores (learning outcomes) that determine the success or failure of student learning. Learning outcomes are the terminal of the education and teaching process. Based on the results of the pre-test observations of first-semester students in STIE Bina Karya illustrated that many students get low scores in terms of student learning outcomes.

In addition, students were not interested in learning English. They considered English lessons quite difficult to learn. In the previous learning process, lecturers often used the lecture method in delivering the subject material. This learning becomes monotonous and not varied, and learning activities are only teacher-oriented, so students are less active in the ongoing learning process. The teacher need to aware on students learning style (Sianturi & Sipayung, 2023). Therefore, delivering English material requires appropriate learning approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques. The lecturers should transfer knowledge and creativity, motivate and give a spirit to students as educators. They become role models in their real life as well (Haratikka & Sony, 2022). Thus, lecturers need to create inspiring and students' learning interests. The method is often equated with the term approach and technical/strategic, so they are also often interchanged in their use. The method is a way to achieve the educational goals set or the right and fast way to achieve the goals of education. The educational method is how appropriate the content or educational material is taught. A creative instructor always looks for new methods of solving problems, not fixated on a certain monotonous method but choosing other appropriate variations. One way to make the class atmosphere relaxed but still able to improve student learning outcomes is to use the role-playing method.

Role-playing is an alternative that can be taken. According to Russell & Shepherd (2010) said Role-playing is a form of experiential learning. So that students can experience the situation themselves. Herlina (2015) said that the use of role playing in learning activities provides many benefits for students. Handayani & Noviandari (2018) argue that role playing is

usually done in groups with other people. Besides that, Toding et al. (2021) also said that students have a lot of time to talk by implementing role-playing. Therefore, it can be said that role-playing is a way of mastering learning material through collaboration, imagination, and student appreciation. It is done by playing with other people to improve their abilities.

Role play can be grouped into two forms, scripted and unscripted role play. In details, those types of role-playing activities such as scripted Role Play and unscripted Role Play (Toding et al., 2021). Scripted role play involves interpreting either the textbook dialogue or speaking text in the form of speech. The main function of the text after all is to convey the meaning of language items in a memorably way. Unscripted Role Play is in contrast to scripted role play, the situations of unscripted role play do not depend on textbooks. It is known as a free role play or improvisation. The students themselves have to decide what language to use and how the conversation should develop. Some researchers agreed by using role-play techniques can make students actively participate in teaching and learning activities (Ayuningtias et al., 2019; Akmal, 2018). This techniques also provides a great source of motivation to help students become more confident and active in speaking English (Gusmuliana et al., 2021). To do this activity, good preparation from the teacher and students is really necessary. There are some kinds of role play in the teaching and learning process. This research used scripted role-play materials. It means that the students make the dialogue in a group and present it in the classroom.

Research of Suryani (2015) showed that the role-playing method has a significant effect on improving the speaking ability of high school students. This study focused on the teacher's ability to improve students' speaking skills at the pre-intermediate level. The research results showed that teaching speaking by using role-play has a significant effect on improving the pre-intermediate students' speaking abilities. However, in this study, researchers not only developed students' speaking skills but also the learning outcomes of intermediate students based on their learning needs.

Rianti (2017) also conducted class action research which aimed to describe the application of role-playing to improve the students' learning outcomes. The conclusion of the research showed that the first cycle is still quite good with an average of 70.25, then from 27 students only 19 students or 70.37% achieve mastery individually. Students learning outcomes in cycle II are quite good with an average of 87.29, and 25 students

complete, or 92.59% achieve mastery individually. This research proved that the role-playing implementation can improve the learning outcomes. Besides that, Amalia, Asriati, and Maharida (2020) research the use of the Role-Play method to improve students' vocabulary at Handayani Sungguminasa. The research result is the role-playing method was successful to be implemented in teaching English vocabulary. The mean score of the pre-test was 50.33 and the post-test was 146.83. The result of the t-test also showed that the role-playing method was effective to improve students' vocabulary because the t-test, 43.97, is higher than the t-table, 1.699 (43.97>1.699). In other words, the role-playing method can help teachers to improve the student vocabulary. Three previous studies focused on elementary school students, but in this study the researchers focused on secondary students who came from non-English study programs. Besides that, in this study, the lecturer only gave a few topics and then the students made their own scenes, utterances, and roles.

Furthermore, based on the above issue and some previous research which have conducted by researchers, the researchers were interested to implement a role-playing method to improve student learning outcomes in learning English for specific purposes. This research aimed to describe the implementation of the role-playing method for STIE Bina Karya students.

Method

The researchers applied classroom action research (CAR) to conduct this research. This research was held from October 2022 to February 2023. There are two cycles in conducting this research. Each cycle consists of 4 stages namely: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection.

The population of this study was first-semester Economic students, which consisted of 8 classes in total. According to Arikunto (2006: 56) cited in (Hatmoko, 2015) "If the research subject is less than 100, it is better to take all of them so that the research is a population study. However, if the research subject is more than 100, it can be taken between 10-15% or 20-25% or more." Therefore, the researchers chose 70 students who were chosen randomly from Management and Digital Business Program Study. Random sampling technique is a sampling technique, where all population elements have the same opportunities and possibilities as samples. In the random sampling technique, the researchers took a sample by estimating that each sample has the same position in terms of what will be studied.

The instrument is one of tool in collecting the research data (Manurung et al., 2020). Data collection techniques in this study used questionnaires, tests, and observations as research instruments. It is better for an educator does not only teach and pay attention to students' language skills, but also helps, facilitates, and encourages students to have enthusiasm, good attitude, and motivation towards English (Songbatumis, 2017), so the researchers use questionnaire to collect data about student interest. The test was used to obtain student data and student learning outcomes. Meanwhile, observation was used to show data about student activity in the teaching and learning process. The data analysis technique used is to calculate the number of scores obtained by students divided by the total value multiplied by one hundred. Then the data calculation uses the grouping of the average student scores.

The mean score of the students was classified in to four levels as follows:

Table 1
Classification of Score

No	Score	Mark
1	Score 96 – 100	Excellent
2	Score 86 – 95	Very good
3	Score 76 – 85	Good
4	Score 66 – 75	Fairly good
5	Score 56 – 65	Fairly
6	Score 36 – 55	Poor
7	Score 0 – 35	Very poor

(Depdikbud, 2017)

There are ten essay tests given which have to be answered by the students. The student's correct answer was divided by the number of items and times 100 to get the score for each student. After getting the students' scores, they can be categorized by using the table above. Student interest questionnaires were analyzed based on the number of students answers, "very like" or "very dislike."

Findings and Discussion

Findings

To determine the students' abilities, they were given pre-test before applying role-playing method. The researcher conducted this research in two cycles. Every cycle consisted of 3 parts, namely planning, acting and reflecting After applying role-playing method, students were given post-test.

1. Pre-test

Table 2
The Students' Result in Pre-Test

Score	Criteria of Assessment	Frequency	Percentage
96 – 100	Excellent	-	-
86 – 95	Very good	-	-
76 – 85	Good	-	-

Score	Criteria	Frequency	Percentage
66 – 75	Fairly good	-	-
56 – 65	Fairly	-	-
36 – 55	Poor	34	48,57%
0 – 35	Very poor	36	51,42%
	Total	70 students	

The pre-test will be held on October 3, 2022. The students are given 10 essay test numbers to measure their abilities before applying the Role-Playing method. Based on the data in the pre-test above, no one scored more than 65. There were 34 students (48.57%) who scored 36-55, and 36 students (51.42%) who scored less than 35. The criteria for their assessment are categorized as poor and very poor.

2. Planning

There are several activities carried out in the planning section, namely: determining several interesting social issues to be discussed by students, the lecturer presented some material related to the topics, assigning several students to study the scene before teaching and learning activities, and preparing observation sheets and instruments to observer that should be used in cycles I and II.

3. Acting

First, the lecturer greeted students, checked the attendance list, explained the core competencies that ought to be achieved, and delivered the material briefly. Before the students play their scenes, they choose their friends in their groups. It can be 3 or 4 people in one group. Each group should discuss their topic using some economic vocabulary terms in their conversations for about 20 minutes. Topics included giving help and suggestions, handling complaints from customers, giving directions, and offering goods and services to buyers. After that, the researcher as the lecturers gave a signal to start. The researcher called several students to play the prepared scenes. Another group observed the appearance of their friends and wrote their conclusions on the observation sheet provided. The lecturer also allowed other groups to present their ideas and conclusion based on their friends' performance. Finally, the lecturer concluded the topic in general. After that, the lecturer gave a post-test after applying the method.

Cycle I

Table 3
The Students' Post-Test in Cycle I

Score	Criteria of Assessment	Frequency	Percentage
96 – 100	Excellent	-	-
86 – 95	Very good	-	-
76 – 85	Good	-	-
66 – 75	Fairly good	14	20%
56 – 65	Fairly	52	74,28%
36 – 55	Poor	4	5,7%
0 – 35	Very poor	-	-

Total	70 students

From the table of students' scores in cycle I, it can be seen that the student's learning outcomes increased from the pre-test result. In the pre-test, there were no students who got scores more than 65. However, there were 14 students (20%) got scores more than 65, and 52 students (74,28%) got 56-65 after applying the role-playing method. Then, only 4 students (5,7%) left got a score less than 36. As a result, some students still failed the test in Cycle I. Therefore, the researcher considered had to go through cycle II.

Cycle II

The teaching and learning process in cycle II was held by paying attention to the revisions in the previous cycle. It was considered that some mistakes did not occur again in this cycle. The post-test data in cycle II were presented in the following table.

Table 4
The Students' Post-Test in Cycle II.

Score	Criteria of Assessment	Frequency	Percentage
96 – 100	Excellent	1	1,42%
86 – 95	Very good	5	7,14%
76 – 85	Good	36	51,42
66 – 75	Fairly good	23	32,85
56 – 65	Fairly	5	7,14%
36 – 55	Poor	-	-
0 – 35	Very poor	-	-
	Total	**70 students**	

In cycle 2, almost all of students got scored above 65. Even, there were one student (1,42%) got score above 95 or excellent categories. While, students who did not score above 65 were only 5 students (7.14%). This showed that the research was successful because more than 80% of students got above 65, so the next cycle research did not need to be continued.

After getting students' learning outcomes in learning English for specific purposes by improving the role-playing method, the questionnaires were analyzed to know the student interest. It used google-form to get the data.

Figure 1
Students' Interest in Learning English

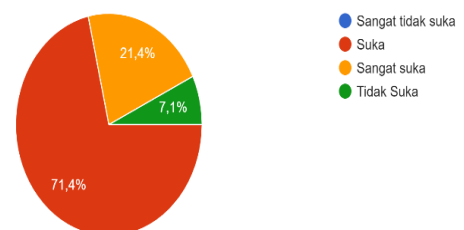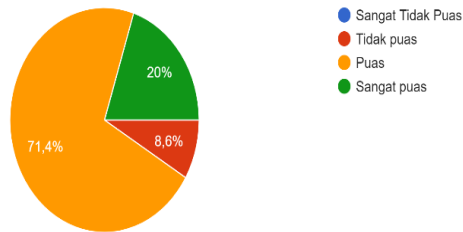Apakah anda menyukai pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris
70 jawaban

- Sangat tidak suka
- Suka
- Sangat suka
- Tidak Suka

21,4%
7,1%
71,4%

Figure 2
Students' Satisfaction in Learning English

Apakah anda puas dengan pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris pada semester ini?
70 jawaban

- ● Sangat Tidak Puas
- ● Tidak puas
- ● Puas
- ● Sangat puas

20%

71,4%   8,6%

The diagram above showed that 50 students (71.4%) answered "like" learning English, and 15 students (21.4%) answered "very like" learning English. Meanwhile, only 5 students (7.1%) did not like learning English. Likewise, 50 students (71.4%) said they were satisfied with learning English that semester, and 14 students (20%) said they were very satisfied. Only 6 students (8.6%) said they were not satisfied with learning English that semester. This data showed that the role-playing method can improve students' interest which come from non-English study program in learning English.

4. Reflecting

Table 5
Result of Students' Learning Outcomes

	Pre-Test	Post Test in Cycle I	Post-Test in Cycle II
Students' Average	35,73	61,14	77,36
Students who got score > 65	-	14 students (20%)	65 students (92,85%)

The table above described the average score obtained by 70 students. Students learning outcomes improve based on the pre-test and post-test in cycles I and II. In the pre-test, the average of students' learning outcomes is 35.73. In the post-test cycle I, the student learning outcomes increased to 61.14 after implementing the role-playing method. However, in cycle I only 14 students (20%) scored more than 65, so cycle II needs to be done. In cycle II, the average score of the students' post-test was 77.36 and there were 65 students (92.85%) who scored more than 65. The role-playing method can help students improve their learning outcomes, particularly ESP students.

Discussion

The role-playing method is not the only method that can be used to improve the learning outcomes of ESP students. Applying various methods, especially in matching teaching methods and topics, will help the teacher or lecturer to build an effective teaching process (Pande, 2013 cited in (Songbatumis, 2017). An educator must

apply many techniques or strategies in teaching. The role-playing method can be considered a solution for teachers or lecturers.

The similarities found in this study with other previous researchers can be seen in the research results. Research conducted by Krebt (2017) on Iraqi EFL students. They are hesitant with some activities like listening and speaking in college, they are unable to speak and use the language in real-life situations. The results of the study confirmed that role-playing techniques provide a kind of interesting environment for students to pay attention to learning and stimulate them to participate in role-playing techniques. Students can also take on a new identity and learn to use a foreign language for everyday interactions. This present study also showed that the role-playing method can attract students' interest in STIE Bina Karya majoring in Management and Digital Business in teaching English.

In addition, research was conducted by (Vân et al., 2022) on students majoring in English. This research was conducted to examine the effect of using role-playing techniques in improving the speaking skills of EFL students in a large university located in Southern Vietnam. This study concluded that implementing role-playing can give a positive impact on the development of learning outcomes and student achievement in the process of learning English.

However, this research mainly would like to prove the implementation of the role-playing method to student learning outcomes according to their needs or specific purposes. This study wanted to measure students' ability to master the four English skills, not to measure students' vocabulary or speaking ability improvements.

Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that: the Role-Playing method can improve student learning outcomes. There is an increase in the average student learning outcomes. In the initial test, the average of student learning outcomes was 35.73. Then in cycle I, the average of student learning outcomes increased to 61.14. In the pre-test, students got "poor and very poor". In cycle 1, only 4 students (5.7%) got "poor" scores, and 65 students others (94.3%) got "fairly" and "fairly good" score, but no students got "good" scores.

In cycle II, the average value of student learning outcomes increased again from 61.14 to 77.36. In cycle 2, students who scored "good" reached 60% (42 students) and "fairly good" 32.85% (23 students). Meanwhile, only 5 students (7.14%) did not score above 65.

In addition, questionnaire data from 70 students showed that 50 students (71.4%) answered "like", 15 students (21.4%) answered "very like" but there were 5 students (7.1%) who said "dislike" learning English. Likewise, 50 students (71.4%) said they were "satisfied", 14 students (20%) said they were "very satisfied", and only 6 students (8.6%) said they were "not satisfied" with learning English that semester. This data proved that the Role-Playing method can not only improve student learning outcomes but can also increase non-English study program students' interest in learning English for specific purposes. However, it is suggested that the next researchers conduct deeper research to develop this topic, such find out the difficulties of implementing the role-playing method for ESP students or how to improve students' fluency in speaking English by using the role-playing method, and so on.

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