



# The Effectiveness of Public Speaking in Developing Self-Confidence in Early Childhood Through Role Play Methods

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**Abstract:** Effective global communication requires public speaking skills, especially for Indonesian early childhood educators. This study, entitled "Is role-playing an effective way to improve students' speaking skills?", aims to improve students' oral communication skills through role-playing. This study used a Classroom Action Research (CAR) strategy at an early age. The results showed that the average speaking ability test scores increased significantly after the implementation of the role-playing method. In cycle I, there was an increase in the average score, followed by a further increase in cycle II after improvements in teaching strategies. In addition, students showed active participation and increased confidence in communicating using English. Empirical data show that the role-playing method is effective in improving students' speaking skills, as well as motivating them to be more active in the learning process.

**KEYWORDS:** *Public speaking, self-confidence, role-play, early childhood*

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## INTRODUCTION

Public speaking, often understood as daring to speak and stand out in front of others, is used by all groups to boost self-confidence. Public speaking is a learning tool for all ages, including early childhood, to foster language development. Children gain self-confidence through early childhood education (ECE) settings. However, not every child possesses this level of confidence. Children with low self-esteem are often shy, fearful, avoidant, timid, and even self-limiting. As a result, they have difficulty interacting with their classmates, hindering their ability to communicate and adapt. As children grow, they acquire and understand more languages. Early childhood is a fundamental process that demonstrates character formation and provides stimulation tailored to the needs of a child's growth and development. Early childhood, often referred to as the "golden age," is a time when children are highly receptive to various internal and external environmental influences. Children have a significant opportunity to develop a variety of skills and abilities during this stage, which will lay the foundation for their future development.

The activity of conveying a message to a group of people with various goals, such as providing knowledge, inspiring listeners, or simply telling a story, is called Public Speaking or public speaking skills. This goal is achieved by ensuring that the message delivered can be received and recognized by the audience. Effectiveness in public speaking depends on several factors, such as understanding the material, the speaker's confidence, the ability to manage the situation, and an

attractive appearance. This ability is very important in influencing the audience's mind until it leads to real action (Hojanto, 2016; Noer, 2018). A speaker who is able to convey content well and appropriately will have a strong impact on their listeners (Sirait, 2016).

One talent that must be developed and nurtured is social skills. These social skills refer to a person's ability to interact with their environment, such as the school environment. Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is an educational facility that provides fundamental guidance for the growth and development process. This development consists of six components: moral and religious development, cognitive (thinking), physical (gross and fine motor skills), social and emotional development, arts, and language. Language skills and the capacity to speak fluently can help shape a child's personality by enabling them to express themselves in front of a large audience and communicate socially. This is stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia.

According to Indonesian Regulation Number 137 of 2014, six developmental areas must be fully developed in early childhood, one of which is socio-emotional development. Humans are interdependent social creatures; therefore, socio-emotional aspects need to be developed from childhood. One important factor in socio-emotional development is self-confidence. Children need self-confidence to be able to interact and adapt to their social environment. Low self-confidence can hinder achievement because students often fear making mistakes when completing homework assigned by educators. Furthermore, due to a lack of confidence in their own talents, some children will seek help from others to complete these tasks. Parents want their children to develop strong self-confidence. When a child is confident, they believe in their talents and are less dependent on others.

The role-play method allows students to practice speaking in more realistic and contextual situations. Several previous studies, such as those by Lestari (2020), have shown that role-play can improve students' confidence and speaking skills. However, further research is needed to ensure this method is effective in a wider and more diverse range of situations. Role-play has been recognized as a method that is not only enjoyable but also capable of significantly improving students' language skills. One of the main advantages of role-play is creating a more interactive learning environment, where students can actively participate in the learning process and are motivated to learn. This aligns with the findings of Jozefowicz-Simbeni (2014), who showed that students involved in role-play experienced significant improvements in their speaking skills compared to conventional teaching methods. This institution is committed to creating an environment that supports children's social-emotional development, which can be enhanced by using innovative methods that have been proven effective, namely role-play. The role-play method is one of the learning methods used to help children develop their social and emotional skills through direct experience and interaction with peers. This requires children to play various roles in creatively designed situations, allowing them to explore their feelings, develop empathy, and improve their speaking skills in social contexts, express emotions appropriately, and interact positively with their peers (Daniau, 2016; Reunamo & Mukherji, 2007).

Role-playing, or role-playing simulations, is an effective learning method for developing social and emotional skills. Through this method, students can experience specific social situations firsthand, understand the roles of others, and develop empathy and communication skills. Furthermore, role-playing allows students to learn to collaborate, think critically, and manage their emotions in various situations. Therefore, social and emotional skills training through role-playing simulations is expected to be an effective strategy for improving students' emotional intelligence and social competence.

Role-playing, or role-playing simulation, has long been recognized as an effective pedagogical approach. Through this method, students are actively involved in acting out specific scenarios, allowing them to practice social and emotional skills in situations close to reality (Joyce,

Weil, & Calhoun, 2015). Research by Şahin and Korkmaz (2021) shows that role-playing can increase empathy, self-confidence, and conflict resolution skills in elementary school students. The advantages of this method are its flexibility in adapting to various scenarios and its ability to engage students emotionally and intellectually. However, some studies have also highlighted its drawbacks, such as the longer time required and the need for good facilitation skills from teachers (Bell, 2020).

## METHODS

### Design

This study applies the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method to assess the effectiveness of role-playing in improving students' speaking skills. This method consists of several systematic steps outlined below:

### Planning

Identifying problems faced by students in early childhood speaking skills. Developing an action plan that includes the use of role-play as a learning method. Select role-play materials and scenarios that are relevant to early childhood.

### Action

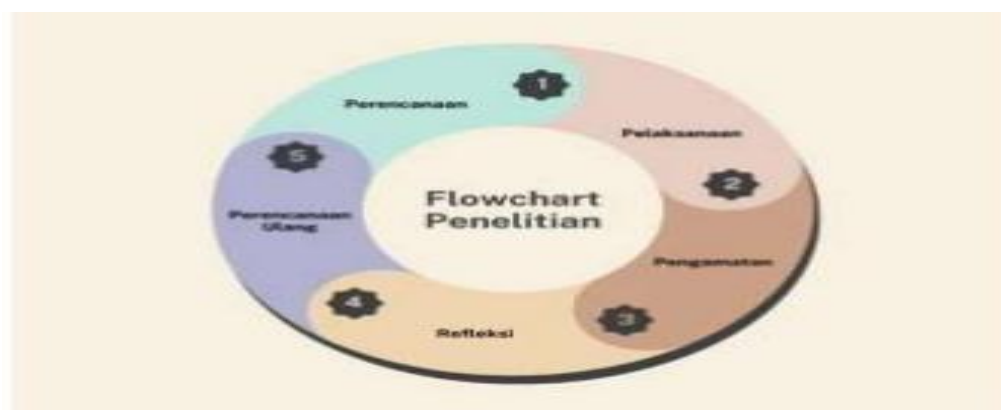
Conducting role-play activities in the teaching and learning process. Students are grouped into small groups to act out predetermined scenarios. Collecting data through observations, field notes, and video/audio recordings during the role-play.

### Observation

Observing and recording student progress in speaking skills during the role-play. Using a prepared assessment rubric to evaluate students' speaking skills.

### Reflection

Analyzing the collected data to determine the effectiveness of the role-play. Based on data analysis, make improvements and modifications to the action plan for the next cycle.



Gambar 1 Flowchart Penelitian

## Procedure

Table 1. Research steps

Step	Main Activities	Results	Expected results
Planning	Problem identification, action plan		A clear and structured action plan
Implementation	Implementation of role play, data collection		Effective implementation of role play, observation data
Observation	Monitoring student progress, assessing student performance		Student speaking ability assessment data
Reflection	Data analysis, action improvement		Recommendations and modifications for the next cycle

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

This study showed a significant improvement in students' speaking ability scores after participating in role-play exercises. Empirical evidence from previous research by Brown (2004) supports this finding, where the use of role-play in English learning significantly improved students' fluency and confidence in speaking. Brown stated that role-play provides a safe and supportive environment for students to experiment with English, which in turn improves their speaking skills.

Furthermore, research by [Livingstone \(1983\)](#) also showed that role-play helps students develop better oral communication skills. Livingstone observed that children involved in role-play activities experienced significant improvements in their understanding and use of more complex sentence structures. The table below highlights research findings from various specialists that support this finding.

[Magos and Politi \(2008\)](#) found similar results. They found that role-play not only improves speaking skills but also encourages verbal engagement and active participation in the learning process. Thus, role-play not only improves language skills but also increases student participation in learning activities. In conclusion, empirical data from various studies show that using role-play as a learning method is effective in improving students' speaking skills. This method not only improves speaking scores but also increases students' self-confidence, vocabulary usage, and active participation in the learning process.

During the study, observations showed that students were more active and engaged in learning activities when using the role-play method. This active participation included engaging in discussions, dramatic role-playing, and providing feedback to classmates. Research by Harmer (2007) also showed that role-playing can increase students' motivation and participation in English learning, which in turn improves their speaking skills.

To deepen the discussion regarding student activity and participation, let's look at several other studies that also support these findings. For example, research by [Livingstone \(1983\)](#) in the UK showed that the use of role-play in language teaching can improve students' communication skills. Livingstone noted that students involved in role-play were more likely to participate actively in class, showing significant improvements in their confidence and speaking ability. This is consistent with the findings of this study, which found that role-playing activities improve students' speaking competence. Another study by [Rao \(2019\)](#) in India also supports these findings. Rao found that role-playing not only improves students' speaking skills but also helps them understand the cultural and social context of the language being learned.

The role-play method is not only effective in improving speaking skills, but also helps students develop other oral communication skills such as listening, understanding, and responding effectively to conversations. Through role-play, students are taught to understand the context of a conversation and respond appropriately, which are essential skills in oral communication. Empirical research from various countries also shows positive results. For example, research in South Korea by [Kim \(2013\)](#) showed that students who participated in role-play experienced significant improvements in their speaking and listening skills compared to students who did not use this method.

Based on the results of this study, the use of role-playing is effective in improving various students' oral communication skills, including speaking, listening, comprehension, and responding. Empirical data from various studies support this statement, showing that role-playing not only improves students' speaking skills but also enriches their understanding of the social and cultural contexts of communication. Therefore, it is recommended that role-playing be used more widely in English language education in schools.

## Discussion

One important finding of this study was the increase in students' confidence in speaking English. Before participating in role-playing exercises, many students felt hesitant and afraid of making mistakes. However, after participating in several role-playing sessions, students showed a significant increase in confidence. Research by [Thornbury \(2005\)](#) supports this finding, showing that role-playing can help reduce speaking anxiety and increase students' self-confidence.

Self-confidence is a key factor in language learning. When students feel confident, they are more likely to take risks in speaking and try to use the language more freely. This is important in the learning process because it allows students to practice and improve their speaking skills effectively.

In the context of this study, students' increased self-confidence can also be seen through their active participation in role-play sessions. Students who previously tended to be passive and reluctant to speak began to show initiative and courage in participating in discussions and role-plays. This active participation indicates that students not only feel more confident but also more motivated to learn and interact using the language.

Thus, the use of role-play methods in English teaching is not only effective in improving students' speaking skills but also plays a significant role in boosting their self-confidence. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies, which indicate that role-play is a beneficial learning approach for reducing anxiety and increasing students' confidence in speaking English.

## CONCLUSION

Empirically, this study shows that students become more confident in speaking English after participating in role-play activities. This is supported by observations that demonstrate active student participation in learning activities. This active participation is an important indicator that students are not only developing their speaking skills but also fostering a love for the learning process itself.

Furthermore, previous research supports these findings. For example, a study by [Donnelly and Fitzmaurice \(2005\)](#) found that role-play can improve students' communication skills by providing a practical context for language use. Another study by [Livingstone \(1983\)](#) showed that role-play helps students overcome public speaking anxiety and improves their adaptability to different situations. Therefore, role-play is an effective and beneficial strategy for improving early childhood speaking skills.

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