

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a brief overview of several theories that underpin the research. The theories concern Speaking skills and the Role Play technique.

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Nature of Speaking Skills

Speaking plays a crucial role in English language proficiency (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020). Effective speaking skills are crucial for academic success, interpersonal relationships, and professional development, as they enable individuals to express themselves confidently and interact meaningfully with others in diverse settings (Jean & Perse, 2024). It is also stated by Causarina & Ahmadi, (2024) effective communication requires good speaking skills, which can be improved through different factors like teaching techniques and personal practice. Studies show that students frequently face difficulties with elements like pronunciation, fluency, and body language, which are crucial for effective communication.

In addition, according to Brown (2007) asserts that Speaking skills are communicating effectively through appropriate language use, fluency, and context-appropriate interaction. It includes mastering conversational conventions and understanding pragmatic constraints, which are essential for capturing the listener's attention and proposing topics of conversation.

This study takes the position that speaking skills are not merely about linguistic output, but also about how learners navigate anxiety, cultural expectations, and limited real-life interaction in English. Therefore, speaking skills are explored here not only through their technical components but also through their psychosocial impact on learners within the studied setting.

2. Macro and Micro in Speaking Skills

Multiple skills are required to understand speaking skills, either by focusing on smaller parts of the language or larger elements. According to

(Brown, 2007), there are micro and macro skills in speaking that represent a spectrum of possible objectives in the assessment of speaking competence.

a. Macro skills

Macro skills in the context of speaking refer to broader and more comprehensive abilities necessary for effective communication. According to (Brown, 2007) these include the following aspects:

- 1) Fluency: The ability to speak smoothly and without frequent pauses or hesitations.
- 2) Coherence: The ability to organize ideas logically and clearly so that the Message conveyed is easily understood.
- 3) Pragmatics: Understanding the social and cultural context that influences communication, including the appropriate use of language in different situations.
- 4) Discourse: Management: The ability to manage conversations, including turn-taking, topic shifts, and maintaining the flow of discussion.

b. Micro skill

Micro skills refer to the specific, detailed abilities that contribute to effective speaking and communication. According to (H. D. Brown, 2007), these skills are more focused and technical compared to macro skills. Key components of micro-skills include:

- 1) Pronunciation: The right generation of sounds, pitch, and stretch designs in discourse.
- 2) Grammar: The utilization of redress syntactic structures and rules in spoken dialect.
- 3) The suitable determination and use of words and expressions to communicate meaning precisely.
- 4) Listening Aptitudes: The capacity to get it and translate talked dialect, which is fundamental for reacting suitably in discussions.
- 5) Articulation: The clarity and exactness with which sounds and words are created. In the crucial part of learning a language, both

macro skills and micro-skills are essential in improving one's speaking proficiency. Macro skills are broader abilities like fluency, coherence, pragmatics, and discourse management, necessary for meaningful and efficient communication.

In this study, these skills were not only acknowledged but also integrated into assessment criteria during the classroom action cycle. Pronunciation and vocabulary were prioritized in the rubric due to their prominence as learning barriers, while macro skills like fluency and coherence were developed through repeated role-play to enhance real-time language use. Both skill sets are essential and complementary; micro skills ensure linguistic accuracy, whereas macro skills support coherent and contextually appropriate communication.

B. Component of Speaking

According to Brown (2007) the components of speaking skills include pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, coherence and cohesion, pragmatics, and discourse management. These elements are essential for effective communication and play an important role in assessing a learner's speaking ability.

1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation holds a vital role in learning the English language, as it significantly influences the clarity and effectiveness of spoken communication (Fatimah et al., 2024). Mastery in producing sounds accurately covering elements like intonation, stress, and rhythm is essential for ensuring comprehensibility. According to Pennington & Revell (2019), Pronunciation is needed not only to speak but to communicate and give meaning to others, that is, to make meaning in a form that can be heard and understood.

2. Fluency

Fluency refers to the ability to speak in a smooth and natural manner, without frequent interruptions or hesitation. Producing spoken language can be difficult and sometimes discouraging, as it requires mastery of various elements such as accent, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency

itself. As a crucial aspect of oral proficiency, fluency is commonly evaluated through timing-related features like speaking rate and the occurrence of pauses, according to (Ruslan et al., 2022) and Peltonen (2023).

3. Grammar

The correct application of grammar, which involves using proper sentence structures and language rules, plays an important role in learning a language. According to (Andriani et al., 2021), grammar is a key foundation for developing core language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also provides a structured framework for effective communication. In line with this, (Marlina & Sulastrri, 2023) explain that mastering grammar improves both speaking and writing abilities while minimizing the risk of misunderstanding. Therefore, grammar is widely acknowledged as a fundamental aspect of successful language learning.

4. Vocabulary

A strong vocabulary, which includes the appropriate use of words and expressions across various contexts, plays a vital role in effective communication. Vocabulary can be divided into active and passive types, both of which influence one's ability to express thoughts clearly. (Robiya et al., 2019) highlight that vocabulary is a fundamental component of language skills, directly impacting speaking and writing performance. To enhance vocabulary learning, (Andriani et al., 2024) suggest that incorporating educational games into lessons can boost student participation and expand their vocabulary knowledge.

5. Coherence and Cohesion

Coherence refers to the logical arrangement of ideas that allows a message to be understood as a unified whole. Cohesion, meanwhile, involves the use of linguistic devices such as linkers, conjunctions, and discourse markers to connect sentences and ensure the smooth flow of communication (Bogachevska, 2023). Çetin & Bayat (2020) also emphasize that both coherence and cohesion play a crucial role in achieving effective communication. Cohesion deals with grammatical and lexical relationships

within and between sentences, while coherence focuses on the logical and semantic connections across larger parts of the text. When combined, these two elements enhance clarity and comprehension, resulting in more structured and meaningful interaction

6. Pragmatics

Understanding the social aspects of communication involves knowing how to use language appropriately depending on the context and audience. Pragmatics in language deals with the origin, function, and influence of signs within the situations in which they occur, emphasizing how meaning is shaped by context and how it affects interactions between users and systems (Buda & Primiero, 2024). Similarly, Anita et al., (2023) highlight that a pragmatic perspective enables students to recognize, distinguish, and apply language effectively in everyday communication, thereby enhancing their language acquisition process.

7. Discourse Management

The ability to manage the flow of conversation, including turn-taking and topic maintenance. According to Brabra et al., (2022) dialogue management is crucial in conversational systems as it manages interactions between users and the system, tracking and maintaining context, resolving ambiguities, and controlling the flow of dialogue for a natural experience

This research, however, adapts these components dynamically to measure progress over time in role-play activities. The use of paired dialogues provides natural contexts for these elements to manifest. Students' improvement is not only tracked via tests but also observed in classroom behaviour and confidence, indicating that the role-play approach influences both linguistic and affective domains of speaking.

C. Principles of Teaching Speaking

The principles in teaching speaking are essential for developing effective oral communication skills in learners. Theories and principles of teaching speaking skills are outlined based on the views of experts. (Bygate, 1997) outlines key principles for teaching speaking in his book *Speaking*, several key

principles of teaching speaking are highlighted, aimed at enhancing communicative competence in second language learners: outline several key principles, including:

1. Balanced Approach to Fluency and Accuracy

A balanced Approach to Fluency and Accuracy is essential for a well-rounded strategy that includes activities aimed at developing both fluency (smooth and natural speaking ability) and accuracy (correct grammar and pronunciation). Focusing too much on one aspect may limit overall proficiency, as the goal is to achieve both fluency and accuracy in harmony (Zhao, 2024).

2. Knowledge compared to Skill

Knowledge compared to skills is essential in assisting students as they transition from merely understanding language regulations such as grammar and vocabulary to effectively applying them in practical communication situations. This shift from passive knowledge acquisition to active development of speaking abilities empowers learners to engage confidently in various real-life contexts. As Sevarakhon (2024) highlights, the development of communicative competence plays a key role in helping students move beyond theoretical understanding toward confident and meaningful use of language in authentic interactions.

3. Task-Based Learning

Engaging students in communicative tasks that simulate real-life conversations is considered highly effective in enhancing their speaking abilities. These types of activities not only encourage learners to use the target language actively but also foster greater motivation and participation in class. Sultan et al., (2024) found that students became more confident and increasingly involved in speaking tasks when they were given meaningful opportunities to communicate, suggesting that such interactive methods contribute significantly to the improvement of speaking skills.

4. Feedback and Error Correction

Providing timely feedback is essential for student development, particularly in activities that emphasize fluency and naturally involve frequent errors. While such tasks often tolerate mistakes to encourage spontaneous language use, it remains important to address inaccuracies in activities focused on precision to ensure correct language application. As emphasized by Jacobsen et al., (2025), quality feedback enables learners to reflect on their performance and make meaningful improvements, especially in language learning where both fluency and accuracy are crucial.

In particular, task-based learning and feedback are central to the implementation of role play in this study. Fluency is encouraged during initial enactments, while accuracy is supported through reflective feedback and re-enactment. Thus, this study applies and extends Bygate's principles to a context where communicative exposure is minimal, and learner anxiety is high.

D. Speaking Assessment

Assessment is a critical aspect of education, as it helps to understand students' capabilities. Evaluation is an effective method for gathering data and making inferences about students' competencies, as well as the quality and effectiveness of the instructional process based on various sources of evidence (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). In this study, the designing tasks for assessment of speaking skills is according to Brown, (2004) The following are the types of speaking assessment tasks without stating an objective:

1. Imitative Task: Students imitate speech from audio. Examples: dictation, imitation of dialog, repetition of phrases.
2. Intensive Task: Assesses comprehension of details from speech. Examples: directed response, reading aloud, sentence completion.
3. Responsive Task: Students provide short and relevant responses. Examples: answering questions, paraphrasing, giving instructions.
4. Interactive Task: Tests the interaction between participants. Examples: interview, role play, group discussion.
5. Extensive Task: Assesses speaking skills in a broader context. Examples: oral presentation, picture-based storytelling, repeating a story.

Out of all types of speaking assessment tasks, the researchers chose the role play method as an interactive task because it encourages active student engagement. This method allows students to communicate in real-life situations, enhancing their speaking skills and facilitating social interaction. Role play is considered effective for assessing and developing students' speaking abilities in a realistic context. The reason is that these tasks simulate authentic conversational situations. In a school where English is rarely used outside the classroom, role play becomes not just an assessment tool but a learning strategy. Thus, assessment in this research is integrated into instruction, reflecting the learner's growth in real-life communication.

E. Role Play Technique

1. The Concept of Role Play

Role play is a method in education where students play different roles in different situations in order to improve their language and communication skills as well as encourage engagement and cooperation with their peers (Faroza, 2023). As cited in Luo (2024), Role-play is an educational technique where students assume particular roles in simulated scenarios to improve their communication abilities. (Henisah et al., 2023) stated that role play is an enjoyable method of teaching speaking skills, involving students taking on the personas of different characters. This method boosts students' speaking abilities and promotes their engagement in the teaching and learning process. Moreover, according to (Ximena & Cifuentes, 2024). Explained that Role-playing helps students to apply English in real-life situations, enhancing their vocabulary and sentence formation.

This study adopts role play as both a linguistic and behavioural tool. It aims to encourage active use of language and reshape classroom interaction patterns, moving from passive, teacher-centered instruction to student-centered exploration. The researcher's position is that roleplay provides an alternative pathway for learners who struggle with abstract learning, as it invites emotional and social engagement that is often absent in traditional

instruction. Thus, it bridges theory and practice by situating language learning in scenarios that resonate with students' lived experiences.

2. The Procedure of Role Play

Procedures for role-playing in language learning are organized steps designed to assist students in practicing conversation by pretending to be in everyday situations. In the role-play strategy, there are steps required. Here is the sequence of the nine steps in the role-playing model developed by (Joyce et al ., 1980 & Shaftels, 1967) Warm Up the Group: An activity to create a comfortable and familiar atmosphere among participants before starting the role play.

- a. Select Participants: Selecting participants who will play a role in the role play either randomly or based on certain criteria.
- b. Set the Stage: Providing the context and background for the role play including the situation and characters to be portrayed.
- c. Prepare the Observers: Prepare the participants who will be observing, by telling them what to look for during the role play.
- d. Enact: Carry out the role play where participants interact according to the predetermined scenario.
- e. Discuss and Evaluate: Hold a discussion after the enactment to evaluate the participants' performance and provide feedback.
- f. Reenact: Re-perform the role play taking into account the feedback given earlier for improvement.
- g. Discuss and Evaluation (Reenactment): Hold another discussion after the reenactment to evaluate the changes and improvements made.
- h. Share Experience and Generalize: Invite participants to share their experiences and discuss the application of learning in real situations.

This research does not treat the model as a fixed formula but as a flexible framework for adapting the procedures. For instance, the selection of participants and warm-up stages were modified to ensure psychological safety and inclusivity among students, especially those with high speaking anxiety.

Such adjustments reflect the researcher's stance that pedagogical models should be responsive to context, not merely replicated.

3. Advantages of Role Play

The role-playing technique has its advantages. According to Ly (2024), role-playing activities provide several advantages for language learners and can improve speaking proficiency by developing a supportive learning environment, encouraging collaboration, enhancing cultural understanding, and promoting critical thinking, making language learning more interesting and meaningful. In addition, role-playing helps vocabulary acquisition by allowing students to use new words in context, leading to better retention. It also supports grammar improvement, as students apply grammatical structures in authentic scenarios and receive immediate feedback (Sari & Hamzah, 2023; Soori et al., 2023; Yang, 2024). Participating in role play improves speaking skills by providing students with hands-on opportunities to practice pronunciation and vocabulary in an effective and engaging way, resulting in notable progress in these aspects as shown in research conducted by Bahriyeva, (2021); Rahayu, 2022; Rosdiana, 2023).

In addition, Role-play gives students the opportunity to practice communication in a variety of social contexts, helping them to develop effective communicative competence by simulating real-world interactions into more fun (an cited in Wei & Li, n.d.(2024). Moreover, role-play creates a supportive learning environment where students feel more comfortable practicing speaking without fear of judgment, which is crucial in addressing speaking anxiety (Shamsudin et al., 2023; Henisah et al., 2023).

In this study, role play not only aids linguistic growth but also reduces behavioral issues by giving students purpose and context for participation. It also builds peer collaboration, which is vital in conservative classrooms where learners are often hesitant to speak. The researcher's interpretation is that such psychological engagement is not a byproduct, but a central function of role play, particularly in settings where communicative competence is overshadowed by rote learning.

4. Teaching Speaking Using Role Play

Teaching speaking using role-play is widely recognized as an effective strategy to develop students' communicative competence in English. This method provides learners with the opportunity to practice speaking in realistic contexts, which improves not only their fluency and vocabulary usage but also their confidence and interaction skills (Henisah et al., 2023 ; (Andre et al., 2023). In this study, these steps were directly applied in the classroom during the implementation of the role-play technique. The instructional procedure was adapted from the role-play model developed by Joyce et al., (1980) & Shaftels (1967).

The steps used to teach speaking through role-play in this research are as follows:

a. Warm Up the Group

Start with a warm-up activity that aims to create uncomfortable and familiar atmosphere among students. For example, have a short game or light discussion relevant to the Speaking topic.

b. Select Participants

Select students who will play a role in the role-play. The selection can be done randomly or based on certain criteria, such as speaking ability or interest in the topic to be acted out.

c. Set the Stage

Provide the context and background for the role-play explain, the situation to be acted out and the characters involved, so that students understand their roles and the purpose of the activity.

d. Prepare Observers

Prepare the students who will be observers by telling them what to look out for during the role play. For example, they can be asked to pay attention to pronunciation, vocabulary usage, facial expressions, and participant interactions.

e. Enact

Carry out the role-play where students interact according to the predetermined scenario. Ensure that every student has the same amount of speaking proficiency opportunity to participate and contribute to this activity.

f. Discuss and Evaluate

Once the role-play is complete, hold a group discussion to evaluate the participants' performance. Ask students about their experience, their feelings during the role-play, and the effectiveness of the communication that took place.

g. Reenact

Ask the students to perform the role-play once again taking into account the feedback that has been given.

h. Discuss and Evaluate (Reenactment)

After the second performance, hold another discussion to reflect on the improvements made. Encourage students to compare their first and second attempts, focusing on aspects like fluency, confidence, body language, etc. Guide the discussion with questions such as:

- 1) What improvements did you notice in your second speaking performance?
- 2) How did applying the feedback affect your second speaking performance?

i. Share Experience and Generalize

Wrap up the activity by helping students connect their role-play experience to real-world situations. Discuss how the skills practiced such as active listening, clear expression, and confidence can be useful in daily life, presentations, interviews, etc. Prompt their reflections with questions like:

- 1). How does this role-play experience relate to real-life situations?
- 2). How can you use these speaking skills outside the classroom?

By selecting meaningful and culturally relevant themes, this research asserts that role play is more than a technique it becomes a transformative act of

communication that integrates linguistic, emotional, and moral dimensions. The reflective stages are especially important, as they allow learners not only to correct errors but also to reconstruct how they perceive themselves as English speakers. In this way, role play is positioned as a holistic tool for language development.

F. Study of the Relevant Research

Many researchers researched Role-Play techniques. The prior studies will be discussed in the following order:

Several studies have been conducted (Elsa et al., 2021) to improve speaking skills. Firstly, the earliest action research conducted by Hernandez et al., (2021) aimed to improve the development of English speaking skills in tenth grade students at a public high school in Ambato, Ecuador. The method used was to survey hundreds of students to gather their impressions of the use of communication games in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class, along with a pre-test to assess their English level before implementing the selected games. The findings showed that communication games, including role-playing games, contribute significantly to the development of speaking skills. Their research shows that such interactive activities help reduce anxiety and build confidence in students, leading to increased oral participation, improved fluency, and a wider vocabulary.

Secondly, the study conducted by Rahmanullah et al., (2022) aimed to examine the effect of the role-play teaching method on improving learners' vocabulary, grammar mastery, and syntax skills. The study employed a pre-test–post-test equivalent group design and involved several male secondary school students from The Knowledge School, located in Khall, Dir Lower District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan. The research findings revealed that Role Play had a positive impact on students' speaking skills, including improved pronunciation and increased vocabulary. Many students agreed that Role Play was a fun method that improved their confidence and overall speaking ability, as the experimental group showed better results in

vocabulary improvement, grammar mastery, and syntax ability compared to the control group.

Thirdly, another research conducted by (Yang, 2024) indicates that engaging in role-play exercises boosts classroom interaction by promoting active involvement among EFL students. This approach establishes a secure setting for practicing communication skills, assisting students in facing their fear of criticism while linking actual situations with their educational encounters. The purpose of Yang's study is to investigate the effectiveness of role-play in enhancing communicative competence among EFL learners. The method involves implementing role-play activities in the classroom and assessing their impact on students' speaking skills through both qualitative and quantitative measures. The findings reveal that role-play significantly improves students' speaking abilities, reduces anxiety, and enhances their confidence in using English in real-life situations.

This study fills that gap by applying role play in an Islamic private school context. It addresses the specific challenges of students who have limited English interaction outside the classroom and high speaking anxiety. The researcher not only confirms the general effectiveness of role play but also highlights how it can be adapted to religious and culturally bound learning environments. Thus, this research positions itself as both a continuation and an extension of previous studies, grounded in theory yet contextually sensitive to the needs of a unique educational setting.