

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discussed several points in, i.e. introduction that deals with background of the problem, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, objectives of the research, uses of the research and scope of the research. Below show how this research paper was organized.

1.1 Background of the Problem

English has become a very important language for students and it is regarded as a compulsory subject at elementary schools up to university levels. Students are pretty good at listening, reading and also writing yet it does not mean that they are able to speak well and communicatively. Seeing this phenomenon happen, the learners who cannot use English in speaking cannot be blamed because they just want to learn to speak though they do not get the right way to achieve their ability in speaking. In this case, English teachers have an important role in succeeding the learning process, especially the way teachers deliver the materials in the class.

Based on the pre-research, it was found that teacher just depended on the textbook, read the text, gave the tasks and became the only source of teaching materials in the class. Commonly, spoken test was done in written task rather than

oral activity. Learning speaking just became a matter of book-based activities and emphasizes largely on grammar rules instead of giving speaking practice. As a result, speaking target cannot be accomplished and the students cannot learn to communicate orally because language is solely from a book and written task.

Byrne (1984: 1) says that our concern as language teacher is not to inform our students about the language, but to develop their ability to use language.

Moreover, Van Ek in Johnson (1981: 103) stresses that aim of learning is always to enable the learner or teacher to be able to do something he/she could not do at the beginning of the learning process. Based on the ideas above, it is clear that the main purpose of teaching English for the students is that they are able to use English as means of communication communicatively based on the context and the situation. The failure may be caused by the methods, technique or technique used in teaching learning process that cannot motivate the students to learn well.

Speaking is one of the most essential language skills to master. It is reasonable because this skill requires many aspects like fluency, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and comprehension. Fluency is the way how students speak fluently and effectively with small pauses, and grammar is a combination of words formed to be sentences. Another element is pronunciation which is the way how the students pronounce every word in their speaking. Vocabulary is number of words possessed by the students. The last element is comprehensibility which is the understanding of an idea that is being said. Therefore, they become very difficult for most Indonesian students to master especially senior high school students.

Based on the pre-research, it was also found that SMA students still had crucial problems in speaking. The experienced difficulties of students produce sentences when they engaged in speaking. The difficulties were due to some factors such as accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility.

Moreover, Brown (2000) points out that one of the basic problems in foreign language is to prepare learners to be able to use the language. How the preparation done successfully depends very much on how we as the teacher understand the aim of teaching. It means that a good technique in teaching speaking would encourage students to practice speaking. One of the techniques that is suitable for teaching English especially speaking skill is Role Play Technique.

According to Silberman (1996), Role play consists of the acting out by the students of the situation and the ideas. It is clear that role play invites the students to play roles based on the situation given. Through this technique, a teacher might ask students to do, answer questions in the class, complete assignments and projects outside class, carry out anything else other than sitting passively in a classroom then you would find people who would classify is as active learning. In addition, it is also allows students to be creative and to put themselves in another person's place for a while.

Since the emphasis of teaching is the use of the language for communication, language errors are tolerated and seen as a natural outcome of the development of communication skills (Larsen-Freeman, 1986: 129) in Setiyadi (2006: 144).

Language Teachers are not suggested to correct all of students' errors. As long as

the ideas expressed in the target language can be understood, the minor errors may be ignored. Corrections are done when the errors may hinder the understanding of communication. Language teachers should provide their students with opportunities to express their ideas in the target language and the target language is used as a vehicle for communication in the classroom. During his pre-research in SMAN 1 Natar, the researcher found that most of the students have low ability in English spoken skill, reluctant to speak and have low motivation in speaking, because they think that speaking is difficult. That is why their speaking score has not achieved the standard applied in the school yet.

This problem made the researcher interested in doing the quantitative descriptive research to analyze the influence of implementing Role Play in teaching speaking. Although Role Play has been applied for long time, the researcher asked the teacher to use Role Play as his technique. He also prepared three lesson plans for teacher to teach speaking skill so that researcher was able to directly observe the situation and makes some reports. The researcher did pre-observation and conducted some discussion and confirmation with the English teacher especially to the first grade of SMAN 1 Natar.

Based on the background above, the researcher was interested in accomplishing his quantitative research entitled “The role of Role Play Technique in improving students’ speaking performance at the first year students of SMAN 1 Natar”.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

In line with the background of the problems above, the following problems can be identified as follows:

1. Teaching learning process is still teacher-centered learning, not student-centered learning. Therefore, the class is dominated by the teacher while students are not active. In short, teaching learning process nowadays still remains the focus on the teacher as the main source of learning (teacher-centered).
2. Teacher still used book-based learning to teach English especially speaking skill and did not try to apply other various techniques for teaching.
3. The students are not able to express their ideas orally and actively in English speaking.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

This research is limited to study the improvement of students' speaking performance before and after being taught through role play technique and also to investigate how this technique improves it in order to overcome the problems that have been mentioned.

1.4 Formulation of Problem

In line with the background previously discussed, the researcher formulated problem like the following:

1. Is there any significant improvement of Role Play Technique in speaking performance at the first grade of SMA N 1 Natar?
2. How Role Play Technique improves students' speaking performance?
3. In what aspect of speaking improved the most and the least?

1.5 Objectives of Research

1. In relation to the statement of the problem, the researcher wants to find out whether the Role Play technique gives positive effect toward students' speaking performance at the second grade of SMA N 1 Natar.
2. The researcher wants to find out how Role Play technique improves students' speaking performance.
3. The researcher wants to investigate in what aspect the students have the most improved and the least improved.

1.6 Uses of Research

The researcher expected the results of the research can be used as:

1. Theoretically, this research was expected to show whether the result is relevant or not to the previous theories and to find out the process of implementing Role Play towards students' speaking performance.
Moreover, this research could be used as a reference for the next researcher who concentrated on the similar scope of research.

2. Practically, this research hopefully can be the consideration in teaching speaking and can inform the teacher about the process and benefit of Role Play Technique.

1.7 Scope of the Research

The research focused on the implementation of teaching learning speaking through Role Play. This research was quantitative descriptive because the researcher tried to analyze and describe the effect of implementing Role Play in teaching speaking at the first year students of SMAN 1 Natar. In collecting the data, the researcher also conducted classroom observation and interviewed the students to strengthen the data and to analyse the process of learning through Role Play technique. The data were collected at SMAN 1 Natar with one class chosen randomly as sample of the research. The chosen class was X 8 which consists of 40 students.

1.8 Definition of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, the term used in this research is defined as follow:

- **Role Play** is dramatization of real life situation in which the students assume the roles (Hilles,1988).