บทบาทสมมติเพื่อเสริมความมั่นใจการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษ
เพื่องานนิเทศศาสตร์ของนักศึกษา
How the Role-Plays Can Be Increased Students' Self-Confidence
in Using English for Communication Arts

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาการใช้ทบาทสมมติในการเสริมสร้างความมั่นใจการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่องานนิเทศศาสตร์ของนักศึกษา โดยเน้นการเก็บข้อมูลจากการวัดทัศนคติประกอบการใช้ทบาทสมมติเป็นวิธีการในการเรียนรู้ในชั้นเรียน กลุ่มตัวอย่าง 64 คน เป็นนักศึกษาที่ลงทะเบียนในภาคเรียนที่ 2/2551 ซึ่งการวัดความมั่นใจของนักศึกษานั้นเป็นนามธรรมที่ยากแก่การหาความเป็นวัตถุวิสัยได้ ผู้วิจัยจึงใช้แบบทดสอบที่ผ่านการตรวจสอบโดยผู้เชี่ยวชาญแล้วนำไปวัดผลก่อน และหลังการใช้ทบาทสมมติเพื่อเปรียบเทียบผลที่ได้ โดยใช้สถิติค่าร้อยละ ค่าเฉลี่ย และส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และสถิติทดสอบสมมติฐาน t-test ผลการวิจัยพบว่าบทบาทสมมติสามารถเสริมสร้างความเชื่อมั่นในการใช้ภาษาอังกฤษเพื่องานนิเทศศาสตร์ และทำให้นักศึกษาเกิดเจตคติที่ดี และเกิดความสนใจต่อการเรียนรู้วิชาภาษาอังกฤษเพื่องานนิเทศศาสตร์ได้ดีขึ้น

Abstract

This study was aimed to investigate how the role-play can be increased students' self-confidence in using English for Communication Arts—Comm. Arts, as well as, the students' attitudes towards the use of role-play in English for Communication Arts class. There are 64 students who registered in second semester 2008 at Rambhai Barni Rajabhat University--RBRU. Since students' confidence was difficult to determine and measure objectively, the technique required information from the students through pre and post questionnaires. The data were two periods collected, before and after Role-play using in English for Communication Arts class. And the data were thereby formulated and tabulated in terms of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The hypothesis was tested by a pair sample test. The findings of the study indicated that role-plays could increase the majority of the students' confidence to use English for Communication in Comm. Arts. field, and also showed that most students had positive attitudes and interesting activity toward the use of role-play in Comm. Arts course.

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1. Introduction

According to the course description "English for Communication Arts" shows that

> "This course provides students with the opportunity to practice and develop English language skill such as speaking, listening, reading and writing in the English language used in everyday life and in the workplace, especially in jobs related to newspaper, magazine, journalism, acting, advertising, film, broadcasting, public relations and internet. This course will focus on the development of English speaking in various situation and reading skills."

After years of study, many students know a great deal about English language without being able to use it, even to express their own intentions. Most of the high school graduates in Thailand, for instance, after having studied English for about eight years, are still unable to communicate effectively in English. The reasons for this failure,according to recent studies, depend on various factors. (Saetan, Kulaya, 1991, pp. 1-6)

Moreover, Krashen (1982) suggests that attitudinal factors such as motivation, self-confidence but with low anxiety generally do better in second language acquisition. Maurice (1986) in supporting this view, notes that these factors may play key roles in learning as well.

The problems show that the students' lack of self-confidence obstruct them form making progress in speaking and listening skills. It's a pity that they cannot exploit the supportive environment. The students' response mentioned above could also be interpreted that their problems reflect the teaching process to which they have been exposed.

From the researcher's experience as an instructor and observer, students rarely have opportunities to participate in class activities while studying, so most of them lack of self-confidence in using the target language, and this is probably caused by the following:

1. The teaching process in some class still emphasized the study of grammar and reading more than listening and speaking. In past decades, that examination placed emphasis on testing students' reading ability and their knowledge of grammar, the manner of teaching was dictated by the nature of the entrance examination.

2. Many English language teachers, as the researcher, have been accustomed

to the traditional style of language teaching form the time they themselves were school students and found it too difficult to change. Therefore, they will often teach in the same way as they were taught. That's why, in teaching grammar, a teacher explains rules of the language usage with examples. Students listen, copy down the rules, and try to understand and memorize them. After that, the exercises on the rules are drilled in chorus, using some kinds of substitution tables.

The lesson then, ends with some written exercises, as for reading skills a teacher teaches the meaning of new vocabulary first. Then, students read the passage and try to understand what they have read by translating it into Thai. If there are some idioms or complicated structures, the teacher would give more explanation of them, mostly in Thai and sometimes helped students to translate them. After that students answer the comprehension-check questions about the details of given passage. Most of this time, the teacher dominates class activities. He or she takes roles of an instructor who knows everything, teaching vocabulary, giving explanation on difficult structures, asking questions to check students' comprehension, giving feedback only on correctness of students' work, and so on.

Very often there are several students who are not called on to answer by the teacher and they never have a chance to speak a word during English study.

3. Most teachers use Thai more than English while teaching, because it is easiest way to make student understand the lessons. And yet, this reduces the chance for the students to practice listening and speaking. Even in a conversation class, what students mostly have to do is to learn the dialogues by heart and recite them like parrots.

4. Dialogues from the texts use in the university are mainly aimed at familiarizing students with grammatical rules rather than preparing students for real life communication. In this way students are not really trained to use English in life-like situations.

As the results, the students lack of experience of using language communicatively. They also feel that they do not learn much about the knowledge of the social rules of language use from the texts.

To the researcher's mind, this may be another cause that makes language students unable to effectively use English for communication.

Since all these problems seem to be caused by the teaching process which

does not provide sufficient opportunities for the students to practice using the targeted language, the researcher decided to introduced role-play to English for Communication Arts class in the belief that it may help the students gain more self-confidence to use English for Communication Arts field. This observation is base on the following opinions about role-plays.

According to Yawkey (1979) role-play is a good activity to develop students' communicative competence. The research of Hiranburana and Tiencharoen in 1982 confirmed this opinion. They also find that role-play can provide opportunities for students to get more involving in class room activities and encourage them to express their ideas and feeling without the fear of making mistakes.

In the light of the students' reasons for their lack of self-confidence mentioned previously, it is hoped that the provision of role-play will be able to help students gain more self-confidence to communicate in English.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

Since role-play is expected to provide some advantage that support language learning as mentioned above, this study is aimed at determining the use of role-play in class as followings:

(1) To study the students' attitudes towards the use of role-play in class

(2) To compare between before and after the students' self confidence to communicate in English.

1.2 Hypothesis

The role-play can be increased the students' self-confidence to communicate in English for Communication Arts.

1.3 Benefits of the Study

Based on the general and specific purposes of this study, the findings and discussion of this study shall yield some advantages in role-play approach on student's self-confidence in using English for Communication Arts applications:

1. The results and finding of this study will generate the students' confidence in using English for Communication Arts field.

2. The results and findings of this study will provide some learning activity for practical creating of English for Communication courses comparing with the needs of student. Such learning programs are deemed profitable because it is possible to use the underlying needs to stimulate their participation in using English for Communication.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

This chapter is divided into 4 parts as following: (1) What is the role-play? (2) The thinking of Self-Confidence (3) Situation Learning Theory and (4) Related Research.
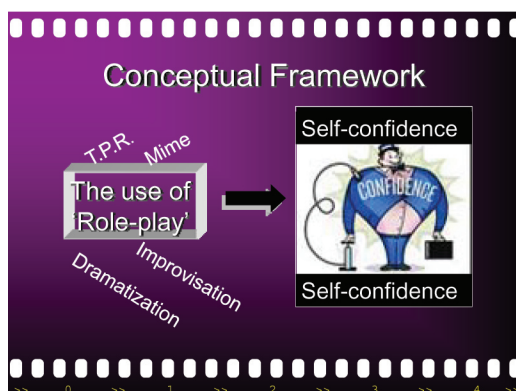
Note from: research hypothesis

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

1.4.1 What is the role-play?

In conclusion, most definitions of role-play are similar in that, it is a type of dramatic activity in which students take role of themselves or other characters, while the definitions mainly differ in the degrees of control or improvisation utilized. Some people see role-play as a fairly controlled activity while other see it as a free one.

However, some definitions of role-play are the same as or closely similar to those of simulation. Therefore, some people may view that role-play and simulation are the same activities, while others may feel that they are different. For example, according to Sturtridge (1977), role-play is an activity in which each student is given a card consisting of a situation, a role-play he has to take and recommended language he can use in his performance, whereas in simulation, the participants are given a task providing details of the situation and personal information for them to carry out by using their own language and idea.

Besides, Ken Jones (1982) point out that simulation is not a game or role-play. To him, it is an activity carried out by students, not by a teacher. Students have to solve the problem, make their own decision on the given task, while the teacher is only responsible for controlling the time for each task and clarifying each student's responsibility. Jones also states that in simulation, it is up to the participants to suit the language to the occasion.

It should also be noted that the definition of simulation is still controversy. Stevens (1985) comments that the small number of research using simulation as an experimental study is caused by the lack of and accepted definition of simulation. He exemplified that while Garvey (1971) considers that simulation includes

activities providing artificial environments or experiences for the participants, Jones (1980) contends that simulation consists of 'real people' behaving in n a real way in an artificial situation which provides a context for their participation. Since the students involved in this study are usually exposed to the conventional language class, most of them are rather shy and passive. Hence, they may find it too difficult to immediately perform real role-play. To solve this problem, role-play use in this study is divided into four main stages. The first three stages are used in order to relax students and to familiarize them with actions, movement, facial expressions and gestures as well as to help them practicing speaking with appropriate pronunciation and intonation.

Stage 1: T.P.R. (Total Physical Response) : in this stage, the students will have to follow a command that they hear. This is aimed at familiarizing the students with listening and body movement in order to help them feel more relaxed.

Stage 2: Mine : Students will have to use gestures and facial expressions for communication without any words. The purpose of this stage is to sensitize the students to physical actions and expression and train them to interpret others' gestures and expressions as well.

Stage 3: Dramatization : In this study, dramatization is limited to the use of script dialogues to develop correct pronunciation, appropriate intonation, gestures and expressions. Students being encouraged to interpret what they have read will bring it to life by animated voice and body. This activity is expected to help students feel more confident that their language is comprehensible.

Stage 4: Improvisation : In this stage which is real role-play, students are encouraged to practice communicating in English by using cue-cards which provide information such as location, character and situation. It is the most demanding form of role-play as it closely resemble real-life language use which itself is improvised.

These stage of role-play may be different from those in other studies of the same area. This is because the researcher of this study thinks these adapted stages of role-play allow for the development of students who are used to conventional classroom practice. We also expects that exposure to these stages of role-play may help students gain more confidence to use the target language for communication. In addition, they are adapted to suit the level of English speaking ability of the students in the researcher's home teaching

situation.

1.4.2 The thinking of Self-Confidence

From the researcher's point of view, which is based on Krashen's acquisition theory (Krashen, 1982), language teachers can help students to gain self-confidence of this kind by providing them with, (1) the language needed and knowledge of social rules of the language use, (2) an opportunity to practice using the language, and (3) a supportive classroom atmosphere.

At present classroom activities that provide these factors are available in various texts in the area of second or foreign language acquisition.One of the basic types of these activities is role-play. Since most role-plays are, by nature, communicative and student-centred, the researcher expects that role-plays can be important keys in enhancing students' confidence in using English to some extent. Consequently, in the following parts, the measurement of this kind of self-confidence will be discussed and the literature and research related to role-play and its effect on students' language acquisition and personal growth will be reviewed.

1.4.3 Situated Learning Theory

Lave posits that learning is unintentional and situated within authentic activity, context, and culture. (Jean Lave, and Etienne Wenger, 1991)

In contrast with most classroom learning activities that involve abstract knowledge which is and out of context, Lave argues that learning is situated; that is, as it normally occurs, learning is embedded within activity, context and culture. It is also usually unintentional rather than deliberate. Lave and Wenger (1991) call this a process of "legitimate peripheral participation."

Knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts - settings and situations that would normally involve that knowledge. Social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning-learners become involved in a "community of practice" which embodies certain beliefs and behaviors to be acquired. As the beginner or novice moves from the periphery of a community to its center, he or she becomes more active and engaged within the culture and eventually assumes the role of an expert.

Other researchers have further developed Situated Learning theory. Brown, Collins & Duguid (1989) emphasize the idea of cognitive apprenticeship: "Cognitive apprenticeship supports learning in a domain by enabling students to acquire, develop and use cognitive tools

in authentic domain activity. Learning, both outside and inside school, advances through collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge."

Situated learning is related to Vygotsky's notion of learning through social development.

1.4.4 Related Research

According to Flowers, Amanda (2006) studies the research topic of *Categorization of interactive storyteller techniques in live role play.* From these observations, a taxonomy of storytelling techniques for use in interactive environments has been developed and categorized. The paper discusses each technique the gamemasters used, why it works, and gives concrete examples of the techniques in action, as well as discussing the most commonly observed problems that will cause difficulty in interactive storytelling environments.

Jung, Younbo (2007) studies the topic of *Role enactment in interactive media : A role-play perspective.* The results of two experiments in order to provide preliminary empirical evidence to support the utility of the role-play perspective. Not only do the results confirm the usefulness of a new role-play perspective to understand our psychological and

behavioral reactions from the role enactment in interactive media, but also they suggest that altering contextual features of interactive media could influence the degree to which people conform to role play.

Anderson, Ruthann Smith (2008) studies the *Counselor gender self-confidence and social influence in counseling: Counselor perceptions of the therapeutic alliance.* Results revealed that harsh and soft power bases, gender self-definition, gender self-acceptance, and biological sex combined to significantly predict the quality of the working alliance, explaining 11.8% of the variance. Harsh power base was the strongest significant predictor in the equation. Results indicated that as harsh power base scores increased, the quality of the working alliance decreased. As gender self-definition scores increased, the quality of the working alliance decreased. As soft power base and gender self-acceptance scores increased, the quality of the working alliance increased.

Kyriakopoulos, Pelagia (2008) studies that *Using practiced improvisation and role-play to improve oral communication skills for English second language learners.* The results show that participants were able to use the English language

with more effectiveness, fluency and accuracy. They were also able to use the target vocabulary and English expressions appropriately. Participants were also more engaged and felt less stressed about using the English language to communicate.

Maes, Betty L. (2008) searches that *Action research study of a videotaped role-play used in training newly-hired sales people in a mid-sized financial institution.* Participants affirmed that all four iterations were needed and attributed their learning to several factors: the instructor's skill; relevant materials; constructive and supportive feedback; active involvement in the modification of the role-play; and the videotaped role-plays. These findings are consistent with adult learning theories espoused by Knowles's which state that adults engage in self-directed learning, they connect new material to existing knowledge, their learning needs are prompted by real world events, and that adults are primarily competency-based learners.

The related research, will help researcher to discuss about the result of this study, and show how does the role-play important to learning activities. At least, the researcher believe that role-play can develop students' self-confidence in English communication skill.

2. Research Methodology

To provide the background of experimental teaching, this part explains the materials, stages of role-play, and procedures employed in the experiment.

The treatment of this study was carried out all first semester (in the year 2008) by the teacher purposive selecting of 64 students. The class met for 3 hours a week; i.e. on Wednesday and 2 periods on Friday The materials used in this study were 7 units edit from many kind of media sources. The content of the materials focused on English for Communication Arts field which was expected to be able to fill the students' communicative needs.

Each period of the experimental teaching consisted of various activities of role-play. The reasons for using these various activities were as follows:

1. To make lessons more interesting by using variety of activities of role-play.

2. To prepare students for improvisation activity which is consider real role-play in this study. In their performance, students have to move, use gestures, or facial expressions and speak out clearly. If they are familiar with these activities, they will find it easier to take part in their performance.

3. To relax students: In the present researcher's opinion, improvisation activity is rather hard for students if they have to do it every period without other activities.

4. In each part of data collecting, the questionnaires should be mainly use before and after the learning class, and analyzed by using statistics i.e. percent, mean, S.D., and pair sample test.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

There are 64 students, which the data obtained from the student questionnaire shows the difference of the students' confidence in using English for Com. Arts before and after their exposure to the treatment. This data was analyzed twice. First, the results from all students were compared to see whether confidence change. Second, it was analyzed to show how many students' confidence increased.

The results from the first analysis show that the students' confidence to communicate in English for communication Arts before and after the experiment was significantly different at the level .05

These results indicate that the students' confidence increased after their exposure to the treatment.

Table 1 The usage of role-play change students' confidence in using English for Comm. Arts

The students' confidence	n	percent
unchanged	10	15.9
decreased	6	9.1
increased	48	75.0
total	64	100

From the table one, it can be concluded that the use of role-play can increase the students' confidence to communicate in English to some extent. The most significant point is that the majority of the students 75 percent felt that their confidence was improved after the experiment.

Moreover, the hypothesis testing was only the role-play can increase the students' self-confidence to communicate in English for Comm. Arts.

Table 2 The pair sample test of before and after use of role-play in regard to students' confidence in using English for Comm. Arts

treatment	before		after		t	P. value*
	mean	S.D.	mean	S.D.		
You don't know the answer, you answer right away	2.17	.935	2.78	.947	.564	.052
If you cannot understand the teaching, you ask immediately	2.12	.701	2.42	.662	2.58	.011
In class activities, you use English only	1.64	.675	1.70	.675	.434	.062
You are the representative to report in front of the class,	1.70	.561	1.76	.563	.314	.050
Your opinions comment on both good and weak points	2.50	.835	2.82	.842	.728	.044
You perform a play in the school exhibition	2.78	.584	2.96	.704	1.36	.011
You ask a foreigner, you want to know	1.95	.575	2.04	.652	1.52	.012
Outside the class you enjoy speaking English with friends	1.70	.705	1.92	.741	1.02	.043
You always have a good time speaking, though sometimes you make mistakes	2.10	.669	2.23	.660	1.18	.041
You politely welcome a group of foreigners, trying to use as much English as you can	2.40	.609	2.50	.642	.80	.025
You directly ask them for asking directions	1.96	.649	2.07	.755	.910	.022
You introduce yourself and go on talking with pleasure	2.46	.755	2.51	.756	.354	.033
total	2.08	.235	2.80	.239	.147	.001

* P. value < 0.05

According to the table 2 shows the data analyzed pretest and posttest and confirm the hypothesis testing that the usage of role-play can be increased the students' confidence in regard to using English for Comm. Arts. Before and after the experiment was significantly different at the level .05

From the results of the study, it should be note that through role-play could increase the confidence in using English for Communication Arts of the majority of students. Thus, this part will discuss the reasons for positive effect.

3.2 Discussion

For these reasons, the researcher of this study expect the role-play can probably provide student with: a) fluency practice which helps the students to use the target language without feeling embarrassed, b) opportunities to practice listening and speaking skills, thus, negotiating meaning in an ongoing manner, c) some necessary knowledge on social rules of the language use.

Language needed and knowledge of social rules of the language use. For example, the students learned how to start and to end conversation. They learned what to say in various everyday life situations. This kind of knowledge made them feel more certain that their language and manners would be accepted when they contacted with foreigners.

In the study started that role-play provided the students with a lot of opportunities to practice using in meaningful situations, both in and outside class. In class they were encouraged to practice speaking in pairs and groups. Outside class they rehearsed their performances. They revealed that more they practiced, the more they become confident in using the language because they felt that the results of frequent practice had improved their listening and speaking skill.

The usage of role-play in regard to increase the students' confidence in using English for Comm. Arts, the finding to depend not only on role-play, but also other factors like students' language efficiency, their personality, attitude and motivation, the teacher' s class management, and extra resources.

The findings appeared to be accordance with the belief that student will be able to learn another language better and have more confidence to use it for communication if they are provided with sufficient opportunity to practice using the target language in life like situations without anxiety.

In the present, researcher's opinion, role-play activities can lend themselves to this belief, but teachers who use them should also take into account other factors that influence students' language efficiency as mentioned in order that the use of role-play can be more beneficial to students.

4. Conclusion

The findings of the study indicated that role-plays could increase the majority of the students' confidence to use English for Communication in Comm. Arts. field, and also showed that most students had

positive attitudes and interesting activity toward the use of role-play in Comm. Arts course. However, the teacher should consider, and observe the students' participation behavior during the learning in the class, and should be communicated by telling the condition to the student clearly so that some student don't serious about their acting, when they are presenting in front of the class.

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