

The Influence of Using Role Play on Students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation: A Self-Determination Theory Perspective

Fatih Reza Rasendriya¹, Aan Erlyana Fardhani²

Department of English Education, University of Jember
rezarasendriya910@gmail.com, fardhanierlyana@unej.ac.id

Abstract: Speaking skill is one of the key skills in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Theoretically, one method that has the potential to foster students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation is Role Play, which fulfills three Basic Psychological Needs in Self-Determination Theory (Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness). Therefore, this research aimed to investigate the influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. This research used a quantitative approach with a Quasi-Experimental Design of the Non-Equivalent Control Group Design type. The research sample consisted of 72 Science students in the 11th grade at a state senior high school in Jember Regency, divided into a control class and an experimental class. Data were collected using speaking motivation questionnaire adapted from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) and were then analyzed using Gain Score calculations, Normality Test, and Independent Sample T-Test. The research findings showed that the use of Role Play did not have a significant influence on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation ($Sig. = 0.363$). This finding indicated that the implementation of Role play has not been able to provide a significant influence when the three Basic Psychological Needs were not optimally fulfilled and the duration of learning activity was limited. Therefore, the implementation of Role Play needs to consider these two factors in order to foster students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation.

Keywords: Role Play; Self-Determination Theory; Intrinsic Motivation; Speaking Skill; Speaking Motivation

1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking skill is one of the key skills in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Through speaking skill, individuals can express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings verbally in the form of language that can be understood by others. As mentioned by Rao (2019), that having good speaking skill can help people convey their ideas and opinions effectively. In addition, speaking skill also plays a key role in supporting effective communication and individuals' participation in various academic, social, and professional context. However, in the context of EFL in Indonesia, students' opportunities to use English in daily life are still limited, meaning that most speaking practice takes place only in the classroom. This situation requires teachers to choose teaching methods that provide students with opportunities to actively practice speaking during the learning process.

One of the key factors in encouraging students to actively participate in speaking activity is motivation. This research used Self-Determination Theory developed by Ryan & Deci (2017) and focused on Intrinsic Motivation, which is a type of motivation that comes from inside the individuals. According to this theory, Intrinsic Motivation can be grown when three Basic Psychological Needs are fulfilled, namely the Need for Autonomy, Need for Competence, and Need for Relatedness. One of the teaching methods that theoretically has the potential to facilitate the fulfillment of these three Basic Psychological Needs is Role Play. Through Role Play, students have the opportunity to choose their roles or characters, create and

develope conversations, rehearse before presenting in front of the class, and collaborate with group members to complete speaking tasks (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

A number of previous studies have shown that Role Play has a positive contribution to English language learning, particularly in terms of speaking skills and motivation to speak. Safitri & Solusia (2023) found that the use of Role Play Method significantly enhanced students' speaking skills. Next, Doan (2024) revealed that the use of Role Play in EFL speaking classes increased students' motivation, participation, and enthusiasm in speaking the target language at a high level. The similar findings were also reported by Sanjaya & Kastuhandani (2025), who stated that Role-Playing Games (RPGs) can motivate students to speak through interaction between players, the presence of goals, and positive feedback from peers. Furthermore, Dincer & Yesilyurt (2017) mentioned that students are more intrinsically motivated when speaking English, reinforced by autonomy-supportive EFL teacher behaviors, such as listening to students carefully, being aware of students' progress, strengths, and weaknesses, aiding students when they have difficulty in speaking, letting student express their ideas freely, presenting choices to students in class, etc.

Those findings indicated that Role Play has the potential to support speaking lessons, while Self-Determination Theory explained the psychological conditions that foster Intrinsic Motivation to speak English. However, those previous studies still discussed both aspects separately. Therefore, further research that combined Role Play and Self-Determination

Theory was needed to examine the influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL).

Research Question

Based on the background described earlier, this research aimed to answer the following research question: "Is there any significant influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation?"

Research Objective

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether there is a significant influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this research presents the theoretical foundation that supports the implementation of the research. This section describes the main concepts related to the research focus, including Speaking Skill, Role Play used in Teaching Speaking, Self-Determination Theory, as well as Research Hypothesis formulated based on a review of the theory and findings of previous studies.

2.1 Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is one of the production skills in English that needs to be mastered by individuals in order to communicate well orally. As explained by (Rao, 2019), among the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), speaking skill is considered crucial for learners of English as a second or foreign language because it enables direct communication.

In learning English as a foreign language (EFL), speaking skill does not only require mastery of vocabulary and grammar, but also the ability to communicate in real-life situations. This is in line with the statement by Akhter et al. (2020), who mentioned that without speaking skill, non-native speakers will have difficulty communicating with people who use a different language, especially English.

Brown (2004) categorized speaking into five different types, namely Imitative, Intensive, Responsive, Interactive, and Extensive Speaking. This research focused on Interactive Speaking, which refers to a speaking activity that involves the exchange ideas, opinions, and responses among participants during an interaction. This type of speaking was chosen because it aligns with the characteristics of learning through Role Play, which provides students the opportunity to communicate actively through simulations of real-life situations.

2.2 Role Play used in Teaching Speaking

Role Play is a learning method that involves students to portray a specific role or character in situations that are similar to real life (Maulana & Lolita, 2023). Through this method,

students practice using English to communicate naturally and meaningfully with friends about what happens in everyday life. Forms of Role Play can include dramas, simulations, and demonstrations of real-life cases related to a particular topic (Erturk, 2015).

In this research, the implementation of Role Play referred to the procedure explained by Jannah et al. (2020), namely dividing students into several groups, giving different topics to each group, as well as asking students to prepare conversation scripts, rehearse, and perform in front of the class. This procedure was designed to give students the opportunity to actively practice speaking, collaborate with group members, and use English in real-life communication context.

2.3 Self-Determination Theory

This research used Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Ryan & Deci (2017), as the theoretical framework to explain students Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. This theory differentiates motivation into two types, namely Intrinsic Motivation and Extrinsic Motivation. This research focused on Intrinsic Motivation, which is a type of motivation that arises from inside each individual or their own desires, not because of encouragement or coercion from others.

According to the Self-Determination Theory, Intrinsic Motivation can be built when the Need for Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness are optimally fulfilled. In this research, to foster students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation, the researcher implemented Role Play, because this method has the potential to facilitate the fulfillment of students' three Basic Psychological Needs. Through Role Play, students were allowed to choose roles or characters, create conversation scripts, determine scenarios based on the given topic (Need for Autonomy), practice conversations during rehearsals (Need for Competence), as well as interact and collaborate with their group members (Need for Relatedness).

2.4 Students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation is a type of motivation that arises from inside each individual or their own desires, not because of encouragement or coercion from others. According to Ryan & Deci (2017), behavior driven by Intrinsic Motivation is undertaken because of an interest in the activity itself, while the satisfaction derived comes from the sense of enjoyment and feeling of being capable while performing the activity. In the context of English language learning, particularly speaking, Intrinsic Motivation refers to students' desire to speak English because they enjoy the process of communication, are interested in the material, and feel satisfied with their personal progress.

In speaking lessons, Intrinsic Motivation has an essential role because it encourages students to participate more actively in speaking activities and to keep trying when they face challenges in using English. Dincer & Yesilyurt (2017)

found that students' Intrinsic Motivation to speak English was higher than their Extrinsic Motivation and Amotivation. This finding indicated that students might have an internal encouragement to develop their English speaking skill based on their own happiness, satisfaction, desire, and interest. Therefore, in this research students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation was understood as their internal encouragement to engage in English speaking activity due to their interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and personal desire to participate in such activity, not merely because of external factors such as grades, reward, or punishment.

2.5 Research Hypothesis

Based on the presented literature review, the Alternative Hypothesis (Ha) in this research is as follows: "There is a significant influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation".

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology used in the research, including Research Design, Context, Participants, Data Collection, and Data Analysis Method. This description provides an overview of the process conducted to examine the research hypothesis.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research used a quantitative approach with a Quasi-Experimental Design, specifically Non-Equivalent Control Group Design (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Sugiyono, 2023). In this design, the researcher utilized existing group at the school without randomly creating groups.

This research involved two classes, namely an experimental class and a control class. The experimental class received treatment using Role Play, while the control class received different treatment from the experimental class, namely conventional methods, such as lectures, question and answer sessions, and discussion.

Both classes were given questionnaires during the Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment stages to measure students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation before and after the treatment. The research design is illustrated in the following table.

Table 3.1 Research Design

Class	Pre-Assessment	Treatment	Post-Assessment
Experimental	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control	O ₃	-	O ₄

Source: (Sugiyono, 2023), modified by the researcher

3.2 Research Context

This research was conducted in the 11th-grade Science class at a state senior high school in Jember Regency, East Java, in the academic year 2025/2026. This school implemented *Kurikulum Merdeka*, which emphasized the

comprehensive development of student competencies, including English language skill.

In the context of English language learning, speaking skill was one of the competencies that needed to be developed to enable students to communicate in various situations and for various purposes. Therefore, this research employed Role Play as one of the teaching methods to support the development of students' speaking skill.

3.3 Research Participants

The research participants were 11th-grade Science students at a state senior high school in Jember Regency. The research population consisted of seven 11th-grade Science classes, with a total of 252 students. The research sample was selected using cluster sampling, because the sample was determined based on existing classes (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

Before selecting the sample, a Homogeneity Test was conducted using the final exam scores in English subject to ensure that the population had relatively equal abilities. The results showed a significance value of 0.384 (Sig. > 0.05), meaning that the population was homogeneous and the sample could be selected randomly. Based on the random selection process, XI Science 1 was designated as the control class, while XI Science 7 was designated as the experimental class.

3.4 Data Collection Method

The research data were collected using a speaking motivation questionnaire adapted from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI). From the seven subscales in the IMI, this research used four subscales aligned with Self-Determination Theory, namely Interest/Enjoyment, Perceived Competence, Perceived Choice, and Relatedness. The questionnaire initially consisted of 23 items that were adapted into Indonesian to make them easier for respondents or students to understand.

In addition, this questionnaire also used a six-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree. Some items marked with an (R) were analyzed using reverse scoring to reduce the tendency of respondents or students to give the same answer repeatedly and to encourage them to read each statement more carefully before responding.

Before being used in the research, the questionnaire was first pilot-tested to determine its validity and reliability. The Validity Test results showed that 19 of the 23 items were deemed valid, while the other four were invalid, meaning they were not used during the data collection process in either control and experimental classes. The 19 valid items still represent the four subscales of Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in this research, as listed in the following table.

Table 3.2 Valid Questionnaire Items

Subscales	Items
Interest/Enjoyment	6 items

Perceived Competence	5 items
Perceived Choice	4 items
Relatedness	4 items
Total	19 items

3.5 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis in this research used Inferential Statistics to examine the research hypothesis. The Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment score for each students were first calculated as Gain Score using the following formula.

$$\text{Gain Score} = \text{Post-Assessment Score} - \text{Pre Assessment Score}$$

Next, the Gain Score data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. The analysis began with a Normality Test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov, because the sample size exceeded 50 respondents or students (Ningsih et al., 2019). After confirming that the data fulfilled the assumption of normality, the research hypothesis was examined using Independent Sample T-Test to determine whether there was a significant difference between students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in the control class and experimental class. The results of this analysis served as the basis for determining whether the use of Role Play had a significant influence on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of data analysis and the discussion regarding the influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. The analysis was conducted on the Gain Score data, namely the difference between the Post-Assessment and Pre-Assessment scores in the control class and experimental class. The research findings are presented through Normality Test and Independent Sample T-Test, then discussed from the perspective of Self-Determination Theory and previous research findings to explain the factors related to the research findings.

4.1 Research Findings

4.1.1 Results of Normality Test

The Normality Test was conducted on the Intrinsic Speaking Motivation Gain Scores in the control class and experimental class. The results of Normality Test are presented in following table.

Table 4.1 Normality Test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov

	Class	Statistic	df	Sig.
Gain Scores	Control	.080	36	.200
	Experimental	.131	36	.124

Source: SPSS 26, modified by the researcher

Based on Table 4.1, the significance value of the Gain Scores in the control class was 0.200, while in the experimental class was 0.124. Both significance values were higher than

0.05, meaning that the Gain Scores in both classes were found to be normally distributed. Therefore, the researcher conducted a parametric test using Independent Sample T-Test.

4.1.2 Results of Independent Sample T-Test

Independent Sample T-Test was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference between students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in the control class and experimental class after the treatment. The results of Independent Sample T-Test are presented in the following table.

Table 4.2 Independent Sample T-Test

	Class	N	Mean	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gain Scores	Control	36	5.50	70	.363
	Experimental	36	7.50	67.309	

Source: SPSS 26, modified by the researcher

Table 4.2 indicated that the Mean Gain Scores in the experimental class (7.50) was higher than in the control class (5.50). however, the significance value of 0.363 was higher than 0.05. Thus, the difference was not statistically significant. Therefore, the Alternative Hypothesis was rejected and the Null Hypothesis was accepted, concluding that the use of Role Play did not have a significant influence on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in this research.

4.2 Discussion

The findings of this research showed that the use of Role Play did not have a significant influence on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. Based on the Mean, the students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in the experimental class was higher compared to the control class (7.50 > 5.50). However, based on the results of Independent Sample T-Test, a significance value of 0.363 was obtained, indicating that there was no significant difference between students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation in the control class and experimental class.

There were two main factors that explained why the findings of this research were not significant. The first factor was the suboptimal fulfillment of three Basic Psychological Needs, namely the Need for Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness, among all students. According to Self-Determination Theory from Ryan & Deci (2017), Intrinsic Motivation can be built when the Need for Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness are optimally fulfilled. In this research, Role Play was designed to facilitate these three needs.

The Need for Autonomy was facilitated by giving students the flexibility to choose roles or characters, create and develop conversations, as well as determine the scenarios or plots of the drama. These actions were forms of autonomy-supportive EFL teacher behaviors, namely letting student express their ideas

freely and presenting choices to students in class (Dincer & Yesilyurt, 2017). Next, the Need for Competence was facilitated by allowing students to practice conversations with their group mates before performing in front of the class. This practice was expected to help students feel capable, effective, and confident in portraying characters and delivering conversations. This is related to the findings of Doan (2024), who stated that students must feel confident when portraying a character in Role Play activity in order to make them motivated to speak. Then, the Need for Relatedness was facilitated by dividing students into groups, thus enabling collaboration and interaction among them. This is in line with Sanjaya & Kastuhandani (2025), who mentioned that Role Playing Games can motivate students to speak through interactions among players or students.

Nevertheless, the fulfillment of these three Basic Psychological Needs was not optimal for all students. This indicated that the impact of learning experienced by students was not entirely the same. In other words, the fulfillment of the Need for Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness was not evenly distributed among all students. This suboptimal situation was particularly noticeable in the Need for Competence, because even though students were allowed to practice, some of them still did not feel capable and confident enough in portraying characters and delivering conversations.

The second factor was the limited duration of the treatment. This research was conducted during three meetings in two weeks. That duration did not provide enough time for some students to practice and develop their speaking skill to the maximum. Consequently, students' opportunities to build a sense of capability, effectiveness, and confidence in using English and executing the Role Play scenarios they had created were also limited. In fact, a sense of capability and confidence is an essential component of the Need for Competence, which is one of the core elements of Intrinsic Motivation.

These findings can be compared to the research by Safitri & Solusia (2023), who implemented Role Play over eight meetings and found a significant effect on speaking skills. Compared to that research, the treatment in this research took over a shorter period. This difference in duration indicated that students might need more time to understand their roles or characters, develop conversations, practice, receive feedback, and build confidence in Role Play activity.

In general, the findings of this research revealed that the use of Role Play did not automatically result in a significant difference in Intrinsic Speaking Motivation compared to conventional methods. The effectiveness of Role Play in fostering Intrinsic Speaking Motivation did not only depend on the method used, but also on the extent to which the Need for Autonomy, Need for Competence, and Need for Relatedness were truly fulfilled, as well as whether students were given sufficient time to experience the learning process in depth.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This section presents conclusion and suggestions based on the research findings and discussion regarding the use of Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. The conclusion summarizes the main findings of the research and the factors related to those results, while the suggestions are provided as considerations for teachers, students and future researchers in developing speaking lessons and conducting further research on Role Play and Intrinsic Speaking Motivation.

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it was concluded that the use of Role Play did not have a significant influence on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. This was confirmed by the results of Independent Sample T-Test, which obtained a significance value of 0.363 (Sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05). Therefore, the Alternative Hypothesis which stated that "There is a significant influence of using Role Play on students' Intrinsic Speaking Motivation" was rejected.

These insignificant results were related to two main factors. First, the fulfillment of the Need for Autonomy, Need for Competence, and Need for Relatedness was not optimal and was not experienced equally by all students, particularly in terms of a sense of capability and confidence when portraying characters and delivering conversations. Second, the Role Play treatment was conducted over only three meetings in two weeks, thus some students did not have sufficient time to practice intensively and optimally build Intrinsic Speaking Motivation.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the findings and conclusion of this research, several suggestions are offered as considerations to support speaking lessons using Role Play and to further research on Intrinsic Speaking Motivation. For English teachers, the implementation of Role Play should not only focus on the activity itself, but also the fulfillment of the Need for Autonomy, Need for Competence, and Need for Relatedness during the learning process. Teachers are also suggested to provide sufficient time for students to understand their roles or characters, develop conversations, practice, receive feedback, and build confidence in using English.

In line with that, students are suggested to actively participate in speaking activities, particularly Role Play, and maximize the practice opportunities provided by the teacher. Active involvement in the learning process and consistent practice can help students gain a deeper learning experience, develop their speaking skill, and build their Intrinsic Speaking Motivation.

In addition, future researchers are suggested to conduct a similar research regarding Role Play and Intrinsic Speaking Motivation with a longer treatment duration and a higher

frequency of meetings. Future researchers are also suggested to identify how the three Basic Psychological Needs can be fulfilled during the speaking learning process, as well as to explore students' perspectives and experiences while participating in Role Play activity, including factors that encourage or discourage their motivation to speak English.

6. REFERENCES

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