

DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOR IN LEARNING GERMAN LANGUAGE USING ROLE-PLAY ACTIVITIES

Chuleewan PRANEETHAM¹

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this classroom research were to develop student's assertive behavior in learning the German language by using role play activities and to study the levels of student satisfaction towards role-play activity learning method. The target group was 31 students, purposively chosen from those who studied in the course of German for communication 2. The research was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2017 at the International School of Tourism, Surat Thani Rajabhat University, Thailand. Research instruments were lesson plans and satisfied evaluated questionnaire. Observation techniques were used to measure the development of assertive behavior in students. The percentage, mean, and t-test were used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that: 1) The assertive behavior of students increased after using role-play activities. 2) The students' satisfaction in role play activities was at high level. Moreover, the study revealed that the students' post-test scores were higher than the pre-test scores with statistical significance ($p < 0.01$).

Keywords: Development, Assertive behavior, Role-play, Learning, Students

INTRODUCTION

The Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF: HEd) system in Thailand is a policy of an internal quality assurance processes that lead appropriate points of comparison in academic standards for institutions. The graduates should commit and engage in lifelong learning, can communicate effectively, know how to use information technology, and have the ability to take the initiative in individual and group activities. The graduates are expected to reach the five domains; namely, ethical and moral development, knowledge, cognitive skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility, and analytical and communication skills, and learning outcomes at each level in each of these groupings (Office of the Higher Education Commission, (2009). The education, learning, and teaching in Thailand have been reformed by encouraging learners to learn and participate more in the classroom in order to develop themselves according to the potential of learners. Teachers provide students knowledge with an emphasis on learners, focus on learning by self. Organizing active learning and learning activities that emphasize role and participation of learners is one way to make learning more profound. Students have the ability on synthesis analysis that enables them to recognize and create conceptual experiences (Kilgour et al, 2015). Role-play in problem-based learning is a learning strategy in higher education (Chan, 2012). Role-

¹ Suratthani Rajabhat University, Thailand

play activity is a learning-centered teaching style, focus on learning by self. Learners can truly learn and understand, that is the ultimate aim of teaching.

Each day, everyone will interact with other people, hence proper expression behavior is important in everyday life. People who do not act appropriately often have negative consequences for the person who has such behavior and interact negatively with other people. Those who do not express or behave properly often feel that they are misunderstood or used and exploited. In addition, they may feel angry about the results or may be showing hostility to other people and feel bad about themselves. Those who cannot express their opinions or feelings may have the feelings of guilt, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem, and lack of confidence. These can cause difficulties in working and they may face problems in dealing with other people (Wechayaluck, 2015). On the other hand, the assertive behavior can help a person to have a better personality, have confidence in themselves, dare to speak out in front of others, participate with others, be able to adaptable, and they will be accepted by others.

The International School of Tourism (IST) provides three curriculums, first is Bachelor of Business Administration Program (Global Management of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry: English Program), second is Bachelor of Arts Program (Tourism: Thai Programme), and third is Bachelor of Arts Program (Airline Business: Thai Programme). The IST focuses on students' knowledge and skills development in the tourism industry to reach the international standards. The students from this faculty should perform effectively in the service industry, ready to enter the labor market in all aspects, have a good command of spoken and written English and third language, as of its identities, which consist of good personality, service mind, language fluency, and environment maintenance. Hence, beyond the English language, each student must choose a foreign language provided by the IST. Seven provided foreign language courses are Bahasa Melayu, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Russian, French, and German. Students are required to study five consecutive elective language courses or five semesters, namely: basic language, language for communication 1, language for communication 2, language for tourism, and language for business.

Researcher as a teacher has used the teaching style with the Q & A, focus on the language structure, dialog, discussion, and use of learning and teaching materials from books, YouTube, and internet. The observation of the students' behavior in the previous course of German language found that the students rarely asked and answered the question. They were not courageous enough to make eye contact with the teacher and to show their opinions. Some students could not apply the knowledge learned in communication with opportunity and situation appropriately. Based on the assessment of the German-speaking skills for communication 1 of the students, it was found that most of the students were unable to basic communicate in everyday life. Most of the student's speaking skills achievement was low.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the development of students' assertive behavior in learning German language by using role-play activities in the course of German for communication 2. The use of role-play activities can lead to developing assertive behavior because it allows learners to express themselves appropriately, have fun with their learning activities, interact with classmates, and have a chance to express fully. The result of the development of assertive behavior will help students achieve the purpose of learning course and standards of higher education. Appropriate behavior and self-confidence are very necessary for everyday life. Students with good and appropriate expression and behavior will lead to desirable graduates according to the standard framework of higher education that is knowledge and intellectual skills, have the responsibility, can use the knowledge to prevent and solve problems, be able to analyze, and ready to move to both domestic and international competition.

The Purpose of the Research

The objectives of this classroom research were:

- 1) To develop student's assertive behavior in learning the German language by using role play activities
- 2) To study the levels of student satisfaction towards role-play activity learning method.

METHODOLOGY

The research design was implemented in steps by step as follows:

1. The samples in this study were 31 undergraduate students of International School of Tourism students, Suratthani Rajabhat University who registered the German for communication 2 course and studied in the 2nd semester of 2017 academic year.
2. The instruments used for gathering data were:
 - 2.1 The instruction for German for communication 2. The learning instruction consisted of 5 topics which were: 1) giving directions, 2) making an appointment, 3) shopping at the market, 4) hotel reservation, and 5) dining in the restaurant
 - 2.2 Pre-test and post-test of each topic.
 - 2.3 A questionnaires with a five-level rating scales on opinion towards the role-play activity learning method.
3. The content and structural validity were determined by Item Objective Congruent (IOC) with 5 experts in the aspects of education, psychology, and social research methodology.
4. Observation techniques were used to measure the development of students' assertive behavior.
5. The frequency, percentage, mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (SD), and t-test were used to analyze the data.

RESULTS

The respondents of this study were 31 undergraduate students who were learning German for communication 2 during the 2nd semester of the 2017 academic year. Most of them were female with 80.6%. The ages were 21 years old with 45.2 %, and studied the second year. The results of the study are shown in tables 1-4 below.

Table 1: Comparison results of students' assertive behavior using role-play activity

Assertive behavior using role-play activity	Pre-test		Post-test		t-value	p-value
	(\bar{x})	SD	(\bar{x})	SD		
Students present well and have a natural way of speaking.	2.90	0.65	4.39	0.62	-9.309	.000**
Students have the courage to express themselves.	3.48	0.85	4.81	0.48	-13.206	.000**
Students participate in all stages of the activities	3.58	1.09	4.77	0.50	-7.616	.000**
Students accept the opinions of other people.	3.68	1.01	4.81	0.40	-7.428	.000**
Students have a good personality.	4.52	0.72	4.84	0.37	-3.780	.000**
Total	3.63	0.36	4.72	0.23	-22.281	.000**

Table 1 shows that, students' assertive behavior through the role-play activity in pre-test and post-test had the difference of statistically significance level of 0.01. In other words, the students' assertive behavior scores earned from the post-test scores were higher than from pre-test scores.

Table 2: Student' achievement scores from pre-test and post-test for each topics

Topics	Scores	Pre-test		Post-test	
		(\bar{x})	Percent- age	(\bar{x})	Percent- age
Topic 1	30	11.13	37.10	18.26	60.90
Topic 2	30	12.39	41.30	21.81	72.70
Topic 3	30	15.39	51.30	24.13	80.40
Topic 4	30	19.48	64.9	25.06	83.50
Topic 5	30	15.35	51.2	23.87	79.60
Total	150	73.74	49.16	113.13	75.42

Topics: 1) giving directions, 2) making an appointment, 3) shopping at the market, 4) hotel reservation, and 5) dining in the restaurant

Table 2 shows mean score of students' achievement in pre-test and post-test of each topic. Each topic has 30 questions for pre-test and 30 questions for post-test. The five topics of learning instruction comprised of topic 1) giving directions, 2) making an appointment, 3) shopping at the market, 4) hotel reservation, and 5) dining in the restaurant. The results indicate that the overall mean score of students' achievement in pre-test was 73.74 out of 150 with the percentage of 49.16. The overall mean score of students' achievement in post-test was 113.13 out of 150 with the percentage of 75.42.

Table 3: Comparison between pre-test and post-test of students

	No. of Students	Full scores	(\bar{x})	SD	t-value	p-value
Pre-test	31	150	73.74	15.93	-17.88	.000**
Post-test	31	150	113.13	11.97		

The finding reveals that there was a statistically significant difference (at the level of 0.01) between the achievements of students in pre-test (mean = 73.74, SD = 15.93) and post-test (mean = 113.13, SD = 11.97) by using the role play activities in learning process.

Table 4: Satisfaction towards role-play activity learning method

Satisfaction towards role-play activity learning method	(\bar{x})	SD
Instructor	4.35	0.73
Teaching materials and contents	4.37	0.74
Teaching and learning methods	4.37	0.73
Measurement and evaluation	4.32	0.67
total	4.35	0.72

Table 4 shows that, overall, the students' towards role-play activity learning method was at "good" level (Mean = 4.35). Based on data analysis, the students' satisfaction in term of instructor was at the highest level (Mean = 4.35). Satisfaction in teaching materials and contents (Mean = 4.37), in teaching and learning methods (Mean = 4.37), and measurement and evaluation (Mean = 4.32) respectively.

DISCUSSION

The results found that the assertive behavior of students increased after using role-play activities. This is consistent with research of Lohaprasert (2013) and Wechayaluck (2015) which found that the role-play activities could develop students' assertive behavior. It showed that the performance of the students after using role-play activities was considerably higher with male and female students. Patsat and Rujiranukul (2016) mentioned that after students took part in the development of assertive behavior of second year students in the faculty of education activities, the students had higher assertive behavior in all the three aspects (verbal, action, and opinion expression) at .05 statistical significance. In the present, instructional management encourages students to know and understand by themselves, focuses on student-centered learning and the activities of the students to participate in. Self-managed learning or learning-centered approach is encouraged more in teaching and learning. Using role play is another way to teach students and let them participate in the study and allow the learners express their feeling, thought, ideas, and proper gesture. While learning the learners also have fun and enjoy learning. Kilgour et al. (2015) stated that role-play was a tool to facilitate learning, reflection, and social awareness. Role-playing made students feel and understand real social situations. In the preparation and application of activities by means of a good role-playing, it took a lot of time. Students needed to think and learn new things.

The study revealed that the students' satisfaction in role play activities was at good level. The samples in this study mentioned that role-play was a fun activity. Various situations in the role-play encouraged them to enjoy the activities and to be creative. They had more opportunity to speak German. Most of the students agreed that using role play improved their German speaking skills. Despite the grammatical errors, the instructors provided guidance and correction without blame. However, it was found that the classroom was not suitable for role-playing because the size of the room was too narrow to allow the student to easily do the activity. The lack of frequent learning by some students made it difficult to observe and discern progress and errors.

After using the role-play activities in learning process students' post-test scores were significantly higher than their pre-test scores ($p < 0.01$). In other words, the students' achievement scores earned from the post-test scores were higher than from pre-test scores. This is consistent with research of Moontadee et al. (2016) which examined student's achievement scores in English speaking skills through role-play activities. It was found that the achievement scores using role-play activities were significantly higher than that before using the role-play activities ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, it was found that role-play activity allows students to speak English more.

CONCLUSION

Role-play is a learning-centered teaching style and a learning strategy in higher education which can lead to enhance proper assertive behavior and self-confidence that are very necessary for everyday life. The role-play activities are real activities that happen in the daily life of students. It encourages students to practice speaking skill and appropriate behavior. Students have no fear and enjoy learning the language. Using of role-play activity helps learners gain knowledge, motivate them in learning, and improve their achievement in learning. They can apply knowledge in the real situation. Therefore, it is recommended to use the role-play activity as a tool in classroom learning for others subjects as well. Instructors should design activities and tests using role-play to promote the development of assertive behavior, communication, and to meet the needs of the learners.

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