

Communicative English Training Using the (Role-Play) Method for Souvenir Traders at the Sasak Pottery Craft Center, Penujak Village

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Abstract

This community service program aims to improve English communication skills for souvenir sellers of pottery crafts in the Sasak handicraft Center, Penujak Village, Central Lombok Regency. The program utilizes a role-play-based training method, consisting of three main sessions: Theoretical Learning, where participants learn vocabulary, phrases, and basic communication techniques for interacting with tourists; Practical Role-Playing, where participants practice roles as buyers or sellers using prepared scenarios and receive feedback from instructors; and Realistic Simulation, where participants engage in real-life interactions with foreign tourists. The program also includes initial observations, preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The program's partners are 30 souvenir sellers from Sasak Pottery. Evaluation is carried out through direct observation of the participants' use of English vocabulary and phrases. The results show that: 1) Participants have gained theoretical knowledge of basic communication concepts, and 2) participants are able to apply vocabulary and phrases in their communication skills with foreign tourists, especially in selling products. This training is expected to have a positive impact on the well-being of the community, particularly the craftsmen and souvenir sellers in Penujak Village.

Keywords: English Language Training, Role Play Method, Pottery Craftsmen, Sasak Pottery, Penujak Village

INTRODUCTION

Penujak Village, located in West Praya District, Central Lombok, is known as a center for typical Sasak pottery crafts which play an important role in the local economy. Located about 30 minutes from Kuta Beach, this village is a popular tourist destination for tourists looking for typical Sasak pottery souvenirs. Most of the population are pottery craftsmen, spread across seven hamlets specializing in different products, such as large barrels in Andong Hamlet and jugs in Terandon Hamlet. Even though it is known internationally, pottery remains the main source of livelihood for the local community (Terasne, et al., 2023).

However, souvenir traders in Penujak Village face big challenges, especially in terms of limited English communication skills. These limitations hinder their ability to interact with foreign tourists effectively, which can lead to lost business opportunities and difficulties in promoting and selling their products. The lack of language training appropriate to the needs of traders exacerbates this situation, leaving many of them unable to communicate well with international customers.

To answer this problem, the Community Service team from the Mandalika University of

Education, through the Faculty of Culture, Management and Business (FBMB), proposed an English language training program with a role-play approach. The role-play method offers a practical and interactive approach, where participants can practice real-life scenarios in a controlled environment. This method was chosen because it not only improves speaking and listening skills, but also builds traders' confidence in using English when making business transactions. The main focus of the training is relevant communication strategies, such as explaining products and negotiating prices, to help merchants interact more effectively with tourists and increase their sales.

Method *role-play* in language learning is based on experiential learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of learning through direct experience and reflection. According to Wiraharja (2023), *role-play* gives participants the opportunity to communicate authentically, increasing their confidence in using English outside the classroom. This approach allows participants to practice communication in realistic simulated situations, making it particularly relevant for souvenir traders who interact with tourists. Besides that, *role-play* also

helps reduce the anxiety that often hinders second language learners (Machida, 2015).

Research also shows the importance of context in language learning. Sato (2022) emphasizes that the use of appropriate communication strategies, such as requests for clarification and repetition of phrases, can significantly increase the effectiveness of communication in a business context. For souvenir traders, these strategies are important to overcome misunderstandings and help in negotiating with foreign tourists. Realistic scenarios used in training, such as product explanations and handling customer questions, help traders apply their language skills directly in business interactions.

Besides that, *role-play* is also effective in developing broader communication skills, such as *storytelling*, which is very valuable in the tourism sector. Storytelling allows traders to tell the cultural and historical meaning behind the products they sell, making interactions more interesting for tourists. Mutiaraningrum and Meniwati (2021) stated that the integration of storytelling in English language training can help participants attract the audience's attention while conveying important information. In the context of selling handicrafts such as pottery, storytelling skills can significantly increase product attractiveness and boost sales.

Several studies have discussed the benefits of role-play in language learning, especially in improving communication skills in practical contexts (Wiraharja, 2023; Ampatuan & Jose, 2016). However, most of this research focuses on formal educational environments, and there is little research that discusses its application in vocational training for craftsmen and traders in the tourism sector. In addition, there is a gap in the literature regarding the specific challenges faced by souvenir traders in tourism areas such as Lombok, where this sector is the main driving force of the economy.

Research by Sato (2022) on communication strategies highlights the importance of contextual training, but little has been discussed about how these strategies can be adapted to the needs of souvenir traders who interact every day with international tourists. Likewise, although storytelling is recognized as

a valuable tool in tourism communication (Mutiaraningrum & Meniwati, 2021), there is a lack of research explaining how this technique can be integrated into language training programs aimed at craftspeople.

Thus, there is a gap in the application of the method *role-play* to meet the communication needs of souvenir traders, especially in terms of developing linguistic and cultural skills in real interactions. Through this Community Service program, it is hoped that this gap can be overcome, so that traders can improve their ability to interact with foreign tourists and compete in the global market.

The main aim of this program is to improve the English communication skills of pottery souvenir traders in Penujak Village, Central Lombok, through role-play-based training. This program aims to help traders interact more effectively with foreign tourists, especially when it comes to selling their handicraft products. The novelty of this program lies in the application of a role-play method specifically designed to meet the needs of local craftsmen in the tourism sector, an area that has rarely been explored in previous research.

The implementation of this program includes three main components: first, theoretical instruction regarding basic English phrases and communication strategies; second, practical role-play exercises that simulate real-world interactions; and third, a live simulation where traders practice their skills with foreign tourists. With a focus on the context of product sales and price negotiations, this training program aims to overcome the linguistic challenges faced by souvenir traders and increase their confidence and competence in using English in business transactions.

METHOD

The method of implementing activities in the Community Service program is based on *Role Play*. This was chosen because it provides an opportunity for participants to directly practice the skills they have learned, improving their understanding of communication. As explained by Machida (2015), participation in the scenario *role play* helps merchants be better prepared to

face communication challenges in a business context. This method involves four main stages:

1) Preliminary Survey

Conducted to identify the needs and level of English language skills of souvenir traders in Penujak Village through direct observation, ensuring that the training material meets the participants' needs.

2) Preparation

- a. Training materials focus on scenarios *role play* interaction with tourists, supported by the book "Learn English by Role Playing" by Adrian Doff. Scenarios include welcoming guests, providing information, handling complaints, and offering services, so that participants are prepared to face real situations in the world of tourism.
- b. The instructors consist of four experienced lecturers in the fields of Drama, English for Tourism, Business English, and English for Specific Purposes, with support from two students who have completed related courses.
- c. Participant recruitment as many as 30 craftsmen from Sasak Pottery Dua Sekawan were recruited through outreach, with a focus on traders who were interested in improving their English communication skills.

3) Implementation

- a. Session Learning Theoretical: Participants are introduced to vocabulary and basic communication techniques in English.
- b. Play Session Practical Roles: Participants practice the roles of sellers or buyers to practice English communication, with direct feedback from the instructor.
- c. Realistic Simulation Sessions: Simulated interactions with foreign tourists provide real-life experiences for participants to practice their skills.

4) Evaluation

This evaluation activity is carried out simultaneously between the service team and participants to assess the results of the training. Evaluation is carried out through scenario-based dialogue tests such as buying and selling products, product questions and

answers, and price negotiations, to measure the success of the training that has been implemented. The service team gives tests in the form of vocabulary and phrases that have been learned by the participants, then the dialogue is recorded to observe how they are implemented.

This test consists of five criteria: accuracy to assess the extent to which vocabulary and phrases are used correctly; fluency, which measures how fluently the participant speaks without annoying pauses; context appropriateness to ensure the phrases used are relevant to the situation; pronunciation to see accuracy in pronouncing words; and response to assess participants' speed and accuracy in responding to situations or questions. Each criterion is assessed with a score of 1 to 5, so the maximum total score is 25.

To obtain more meaningful numerical data, the participant's final score was calculated using the formula $F_s = (R \times 100) / hR$, where R is the participant's score and hR is the maximum score. After the participants' final scores are known, they are classified based on their level of speaking ability: (80%-100%) Very Good category, (70%-79%) Good category, (60%-69%) Fair category, (50%-59%) in the Poor category, and below 50% in the Very Poor category.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This community service has been carried out in the form of Communicative English Training Using Methods (Role-Play) for souvenir traders at the Sasak pottery craft center in Penujak village. All activities run according to the previously prepared schedule. Implementation of this program includes various activities designed to improve the communication skills of traders. The activities carried out in implementing the program are as follows:

In the first session, the service team leader explained in general terms regarding the implementation of the activity for 30 minutes, followed by a brief explanation about the importance of understanding how to communicate using good and effective English

when talking to tourists who are consumers or customers and the importance of understanding basic concepts. English in various situations, especially for buying and selling goods or products, such as greeting tourists, explaining products, asking prices, and offering help.

To increase the knowledge of training participants, the service team handed over a book entitled *Learn English by Role-Play* by Adrian Doff. This book focuses on using vocabulary that is easy to memorize. Vocabulary is arranged into complete sentences and applied through *role-play* fun with short dialogues (*basic dialogue*) which covers various topics relevant to buying and selling products. These topics include: greetings (*greetings*), describing the product (*describing product*), asking for price (*asking for price*), price negotiation (*price negotiation*), offering help (*offering assistance*), payment transactions (*payment transaction*), and completing the purchase (*completing a purchase*). All of these topics are put into practice through simulation scenarios designed to improve participants' communication skills in the context of buying and selling. Apart from that, this book is also equipped with picture illustrations that support existing scenarios, such as pictures of traders and buyers in buying and selling situations, illustrations of products being explained, as well as conversation sketches to facilitate participants' understanding in carrying out *role-play*. These illustrations help participants understand the context visually and support them in applying vocabulary and phrases appropriately in real-life scenarios.

The second session began with building of knowledge activities or building participants' knowledge regarding short dialogues in the context of buying and selling goods. The aim of this activity is to identify participants' initial communication skills in using English. For this reason, participants are first introduced to basic English vocabulary related to buying and selling, such as words for greeting, asking for prices, negotiating prices, and offering products or services.

After participants understand the vocabulary, they are invited to practice it in oral communication in English through simple dialogue. This process helps measure the extent

to which participants are able to use this vocabulary in daily conversations related to buying and selling transactions.

The participants' initial ability to communicate using English can be visualized in the following diagram, which shows the level of vocabulary understanding and ability to use phrases related to buying and selling.

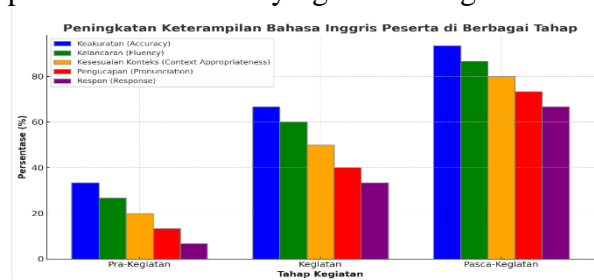


Diagram 1. Improving Participants' English Communication Skills

Diagram 1 shows that the training participants' communication skills in using English have increased significantly. This can be seen from the drastic increase, where the average participant ability increased from 20.80% in the pre-activity stage to 80.00% in the post-activity stage. At first, the participants' communication skills in English were relatively low, but they remained diligent in following the guidance of the instructor appointed by the team. For example, when some participants are asked to pronounce words *thirty* or (30) thirty, they confidently pronounce the word, but the pronunciation sounds like *thirteen*, which is similar to the pronunciation of the word (13) thirteen, or vice versa. The team immediately corrected the error by providing the correct pronunciation for "thirty," and participants were asked to repeat it several times in sequence. *drill* until their pronunciation is completely correct.

Apart from that, it was seen that some participants wrote certain vocabulary before asking the instructor for its meaning in Indonesian, and some of them asked their friends first before confirming the meaning of the words. Seeing this, the instructor quickly informed them that they did not need to be confused or embarrassed to ask the instructor directly about things they did not understand.

Furthermore, during conversation training, participants seemed always willing to be involved, and several participants changed

partners because they felt that the roles they were given were not suitable. Despite this, they still showed perseverance and high enthusiasm. Participants who were waiting for their turn also looked very ready and enthusiastic, even before being asked to come forward. This shows the participants' high motivation and commitment to continue learning and improving their communication skills in English, even though some of them still need assistance from the instructor. Based on pre-activity findings *building of knowledge*, it can be concluded that participants experienced difficulties in five aspects of communication, namely: aspects *accuracy, fluency, suitability of the context of pronunciation, and response*,

Based on these problems, the service team decides on activities *role-play* will focus more on conversational practice using basic level buying and selling vocabulary and phrases. To support this activity, a story scenario about "selling the product" will be prepared, according to the participants' needs.

The second session is the core activity, namely role-play. Before the activity started, the team invited several participants to help each other decorate the "Dua Sekawan" art shop, which at that time was a place to buy and sell goods. This decoration activity aims to provide a more realistic atmosphere and support role-play scenarios, so that participants can feel more involved in the simulation.

Apart from determining the main roles, such as seller and buyer, the team also appointed two other team members as observers. Their task was to observe how English vocabulary related to buying and selling was used in conversation by the actors. They were also asked to note things that needed to be evaluated or improved in their use of the vocabulary. In this way, observers not only monitor the course of the role-play to ensure all participants play their roles according to the scenario, but also provide useful feedback. This feedback focuses on improving participants' language skills in the context of buying and selling, including appropriate use of vocabulary, clarity of communication, and strategies for interacting with buyers or sellers.

The session began with the training team introducing the theme of buying and selling,

emphasizing the importance of effective communication between sellers and buyers. To start, the team divided participants into small groups and selected two participants from each group to play out a case with the story 'Selling the Products.' During the "Dialogue" between the two participants it went as follows: The buyer said, "This product doesn't look like the picture. It feels different." The seller then responded, "I'm sorry about that. Would you like a refund or a replacement?" The buyer answered, "I want the right product, not a refund. Can you send the correct one?" and the seller confirms, "Yes, I will make sure the next one is correct." At this point, the team stopped the story for a moment and gave directions and invited all participants to discuss. They were encouraged to think more deeply about how to deal with the situation by being asked provoking questions such as: "What is the best way to handle buyer complaints?", "Did the seller provide the right solution?", and "What can the seller do to keep customers satisfied?" After the discussion is complete and the problem is understood, the team and participants together determine the roles of sellers and buyers to continue the role play. At first, some participants felt confused and uncomfortable in playing their roles. However, the team immediately invited participants to discuss together, providing directions and examples of how this role should be played. These discussions help reduce confusion and build participants' confidence. However, there were some participants who were more confident and had a special interest in certain roles, so they immediately chose the role that suited their wishes without hesitation. This creates a more dynamic atmosphere and encourages participants to become more involved in role-play activities.

After the first role-play was finished, the team invited all participants to discuss and evaluate the results of the role-play. In this discussion, several participants provided input regarding their experiences, including the challenges they faced and what could be improved. Based on the results of the discussion and evaluation, the team decided that the role play should be repeated a second time.

In this replay, participants are expected to be able to use more appropriate vocabulary and

play their roles with more confidence. The buying and selling interactions that had previously been carried out were repeated this time with improvements to the aspects that had been mutually agreed upon during the evaluation. This replay gives participants the opportunity to apply learning from previous experiences and improve their communication skills and understanding in the context of buying and selling.

To determine the improvement in participants' abilities, two teams filled in and analyzed the data on the assessment sheet that had been prepared in advance. Based on the results of the analysis obtained, the communication skills of the training participants obtained a relatively high score, where the average score was 85% with details based on five aspects related to accuracy of 82%, fluency of 81%, appropriateness of context of 88%, pronunciation of 89% and response of 81%. Of the five assessment aspects, the aspect of mastery of vocabulary and the aspect of fluency in speaking were the most prominent shown by the participants, because basically the participants had sufficient vocabulary about buying and selling products which supported the aspect of fluency in speaking which had been obtained through direct experience from foreign tourists.

After the second session was finished, the team held a discussion to compare the situations that occurred in the role play with buying and selling situations in real life. This discussion aims to provide participants with a deeper understanding of how the skills they learn can be applied in real contexts. To make this experience more realistic, in the third session, Role-play activities are carried out outdoors by visiting the nearest tourist destination, namely Kuta Beach, which is not far from the location of the service activities. This session lasts for a full day, giving participants the opportunity to practice their skills in buying and selling interactions in a more authentic and dynamic environment.

Before participants interact directly with tourists, they first carry out a role-play training session for approximately one hour at a beach location. In this training session, participants played their roles very thoroughly, both as sellers and buyers. Their enthusiasm was very visible

from their seriousness in practicing the dialogue and buying and selling situations they had studied previously.

Even though they were watched by several beachgoers who were enjoying their holidays, the participants still carried out their roles confidently and without shame. This activity not only improves participants' English skills in the context of buying and selling, but also provides valuable experience in interacting with foreigners in a more dynamic and real place.

In this simulation, the service team was assisted by two students who acted as coaches. They accompany and provide direction to participants during the simulation process. After the training is complete, participants are allowed to join the souvenir sellers who have been hanging around the beach area to sell their pottery products directly to foreign tourists on Kuta Beach. This direct interaction provides an opportunity for participants to practice all the communication skills they have learned, from greeting, offering products, to closing transactions well. The service team continues to accompany participants by providing direction and guidance, while reminding them to always smile and often say "Thank you very much" to guests as a sign of appreciation and friendliness.

Based on the results of the evaluation of the course of English communication skills training using the role-play method applied, in general the participants have shown maximum enthusiasm and effort but the participants experienced difficulties, especially in two aspects of speaking, namely: First, in the aspect of accuracy he went to the market yesterday," even though it should be, "He went to the market yesterday." This is because this is the first time the past tense has been introduced, whereas in Indonesian there is no past tense. Apart from that, the participants also had difficulty with pronunciation, such as when they pronounced the word "thirty" pronounced like "thirteen," which, although it sounds similar, has a very different meaning (30 and 13). In English, however, after they understood the difference between the suffix's teen and ty, they felt more concerned about the pronunciation of a word, or in other words, they didn't want to make a mistake when they wanted to pronounce it a second time.

For future training, it is recommended to focus on these two aspects, with more specific exercises to help participants overcome these obstacles and improve their speaking skills in English.

CONCLUSION

Program implementation Devotion to the Community in form Communicative English Training Using the Role-Play Method for Souvenir Traders at the Sasak Pottery Craft Center, Penujak Village has been successfully held according to the schedule and objectives that have been set. This program is proven to improve the English communication skills of souvenir traders, which is very important in interaction. Participants not only gain a better understanding of English communication but are also able to understand everyday vocabulary and phrases, and practice their language skills in real situations, either through role play or direct simulations with tourists.

The evaluation results showed that there was a significant increase in the participants' abilities. Before the training, most participants only mastered the basics of English. However, after the training, more than 85% of participants were able to understand and use vocabulary and phrases in daily conversations with tourists. Method *role-play* proven to be able to provide an interactive and fun learning experience, which encourages active participation of participants. With better skills, it is hoped that traders can increase sales of their products and contribute to the welfare of the local economy.

SUGGESTION

To ensure the sustainability and positive impact of this program, several suggestions made include: (1) English language training needs to be carried out on an ongoing basis with more in-depth material, including negotiation and marketing skills; (2) Simulations of interactions with real foreign tourists need to be carried out more frequently to provide more realistic challenges; (3) Participants are expected to continue practicing English in daily life so that the skills they acquire continue to develop; (4) Collaboration with the local tourism sector can expand the impact of the program, and (5)

Further monitoring and evaluation is needed to assess the long-term impact of training on the language skills and sales of traders. With these suggestions, it is hoped that the program can make a sustainable positive contribution to skills development and the local economy.

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