

Challenges in Performing Role-play as an Assessment: Students' Views

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Abstract

Spoken English lesson prepares students with the basic interactive skills such as exchanging greetings, expressing thanks and apologies, making request, seeking information and services and a lot more. However, the students still encounter the challenges when it comes to role-playing. The major challenges in implementing role-play in foreign language classroom are the play acting, chaos in the classroom, the lack of grammar work and lack of chances to participate. This study is aimed to seek the information on the challenges faced by students during an assessed role-play task. Hence, a quantitative survey research is designed to gather collective information of students' insight on the possible hitches they may encounter when performing a role-play. The selection of this method is justified by the need to understand whether there is statistically significant difference of the students responses based on their different groups. Data from this study may provide useful information for language educators in developing curriculum, assessments, and methodology of teaching.

Keywords: Role-Play, Challenges, Assessment, Language

Introduction

Role-play contributes greatly to language pedagogy. Tedious atmosphere in classroom can be transformed into an exciting one by having a role-play of the situation that we always have in our real life such as conversations with a shop assistant to ask where certain items are stored or whether we can return a faulty item we may have bought before. Through role-play, students are not only exposed to the language use but also to the communicative aspect such as being cooperative and interactive to enhance the learners' participation (Dailey, 2009). Thus, it shows that role play does not only involve speaking but it integrates other skills such as to understand the situation, to listen to what the other person is saying and at the same time to think what to say when it is our turn to speak. Apart from the skills mentioned above, the students also need to recognize the words used by the other students, the purpose of using those words, the attitude and also the gestures.

Moreover, role-play is a good way of preparing students to face real life situations. Teachers help the students by providing them knowledge about language according to the situation so

that the students can communicate successfully. Other than that, role-play offers students a chance to discover their language abilities and shortcomings. Therefore, it helps learners to overcome their language fear into a positive one. Thus, it is believed that role-play activity has a tremendous effect on the learners' communicative and affective skills.

Spoken English lesson prepares students with the basic interactive skills such as exchanging greetings, expressing thanks and apologies, making request, seeking information and services and a lot more (Brown & Yule, 2000). In other words, students are prepared to be able to express themselves verbally in the target language. Their ability to perform a speaking task in the target language is measured through the speaking assessment. Students' performances are evaluated based on their control of language, their ability to understand the issue and topics well as their participation and strategies used in communicating with others. Previous studies (MuhdSyahir, 2016; Liu, 2010) have reported that the implementation of role-play as a speaking assessment helps students to be more confident as it arouses their motivation in speaking English than using other oral English tests.

However, there are instances where timid students often fail when the important parts are assigned to them. Thus, making the role-plays seem uninteresting especially when they act in front of the whole class for the very first time. Some students also prefer teachers to have a very low visibility as observers (Halapi & Saunders, 2002). Other than that, it is also reported that the students are likely to switch to their mother tongue when the instruction is not clear. Thus, there is a need to have a clear instruction or statement for the task assigned to the students. For example, clear specification of the role each student is to play and what purpose to achieve during the role play.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to discover the challenges or problems faced by the students in a role-play activity. Besides that, the researchers would like to find out if there is any difference based on the respondents' gender and SPM English grades. Data from this study may provide useful information for language educators in developing curriculum, assessments, and methodology of teaching.

Literature Review

The need in communicative skills is increasing in the higher institutions as it has become the main tool in assessing the students' communicative ability. The most popular way to measure students' ability in communicative skills in English language classroom is through dramatization and role-play. Raz (1985) asserts that role-play is the very operational in teaching foreign or English language because it has advantageous effects in the students' communicative competence and motivation.

However, the students still have to encounter the challenges when it comes to role-playing. Sato (2001) claims that the major challenges in implementing role-play in foreign language classroom are the play acting, chaos in the classroom, the lack of grammar work and lack of chances to participate. There is quite a number of students surrounded with fear and anxiety and that affects the process of communication in foreign language (Curran, 1972). According to Makita (1995, p. 2), educators need to play an important part in overcoming the low-anxiety situation to become more comfortable and effective classroom.

Another problem faced by the students when conducting role-play is in term of psychological aspect in which becomes the major problem to introverted students. Sano (1989) states that the students tend to feel nervous when making oral presentation in front of an audience. Some students may be unwilling to participate and others may feel apprehensive (Kerr, Troth and Pickering, 2003:171). There may also be implementation problems (McGregor, 1993:217) and other factors that might intrude on its efficiency are time and space.

There are several other challenges that the students face when doing role-play and one of them is role-play can be tough to be conducted when the students are not familiar with the situation. Based on Brookins (2005), role-play seems so easy to do but it can be very difficult and dreary if it does not apply real-life situations and it can be harder if the students do not take it seriously. Brookins (2005) proclaims that to be someone who can multi-task when doing role-play is a problem as well. This is because role-play requires the students to do multiple tasks at the same time; to act out the assigned role, to apply the new skills and to fit with the time allocated as well. The major problem comes out because not all students are able to multitask. When the task cannot be fulfilled properly, this can lead to failure in learning the skills required (Brookins, 2005).

Some people think that conducting a role-play is quite easy as the students just need to act out the scene assigned to them. Yet, it can be troublesome if the students do not have the communicative ability and skills required. Bluelow (2015) claims that an effective role-play needs well-organized planning, efforts and ample resources and skills before it can be conducted.

In order to overcome the problem in role-playing, Toister (2015) suggests using alternative named experiential learning before conducting role-play as this type of learning is quite similar to role-play. The students can practice applying and learning the new skills in genuine situation where it can assist the students to act in the role-play more genuinely.

Overall, role-play can be very beneficial in improving communicative ability among students as long as the educators can avoid the pitfalls. The main element in making sure role-play can be operative when the students have enough rehearsals and effective planning.

Methodology

Research Design

This study aimed to seek the information on the challenges faced by students during an assessed role-play task. Hence, a quantitative survey research was designed to gather collective information of students' insight on the possible hitches they may encounter when performing a role play. The selection of this method was justified by the need to understand whether there is statistically significant difference of the students' responses based on their different groups.

Sample/Participants

This study involved 200 participants. Purposive sampling was employed where the sampling was done based on the requirement of the different groups (nominal) in this study. The researcher did selection to make sure the number of respondents in the different groups (which were determined based on their different characteristics) was proximate.

Research Instruments

In this study, a set questionnaire was used. There were two sections in the questionnaires: Section A contained items on students' background information, and; Section B enclosed 10 Likert-scale items that involved statements that would allow student to share the weightiness of possible challenges encountered in a role-play performance.

Data Collection Procedure

The selected students were required to complete the questionnaires immediately after they had completed the role-play assessment. This was an important procedure to ensure the genuineness of their responses as the questions required their insight on their experience during the performance of the role-play.

Method of Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires were gathered and the analysis was done using SPSS software version 20. Descriptive analysis was used for the first research question in order to find out items with the highest means. This provides information on the students' perceptions whether role-play help to overcome some aspects of their inhibition. For the second research question, independent Sample T Test was used to compare the means between genders group to see whether there is a significant difference between the mean of responses. Next, to identify whether there is any significant difference according to participants' SPM English grade, ANNOVA test was used.

Data Analysis

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	78	50.0	50.0	50.0
Valid Female	78	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	156	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2a: Distribution of Respondents According to Grade Obtained in English for SPM

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A+	1	.6	.7	.7
A	20	12.8	13.5	14.2
A-	22	14.1	14.9	29.1
B+	39	25.0	26.4	55.4
B	30	19.2	20.3	75.7
C+	23	14.7	15.5	91.2
C	13	8.3	8.8	100.0
Total	148	94.9	100.0	
Missing Missing	8	5.1		
Total	156	100.0		

Table 4.2b: Grouping Respondents According to Grades in SPM A(A+, A and A-), B (B+, B, and B-) and C (C+ and C)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A	43	27.6	29.1	29.1
B	69	44.2	46.6	75.7
C	36	23.1	24.3	100.0
Total	148	94.9	100.0	
Missing 99	8	5.1		
Total	156	100.0		

4.1: Respondents background information: Table 4.1, 4.2a and 4.2b illustrate the number of respondents in this study. As shown in table 4.1, 78 male (50%) and 78 female (50%) respondents participated in this study. Table 4.2a shows the number of respondents according to their English SPM results where 1 respondent (0.7%) obtained A+, 20 respondents (13.5%) obtained A, 22 respondents (14.9%) obtained A-, 39 respondents (26.4%) obtained B+, 30 respondents (20.3%) obtained B, 23 respondents (15.5%) obtained C+ and 13 respondents (8.8%) obtained C in their SPM English examination. In Table 4.2b, the respondents are classified into 3 groups according to their English SPM results: A, B and C. A total number of 43 participants are in Group A, 69 participants in Group B, and 36 participants in Group C.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics: List of Items with Mean 4.00 and Above

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I was nervous	155	1	6	5.32	1.080
I was afraid that the examiner could not understand what I was going to say	156	1	6	5.12	1.141
I did not know some words that I wanted to use in my sentences	155	1	6	5.10	1.068
I was afraid to speak because I worried that I might make grammar mistakes	156	2	6	4.97	1.302
I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English	156	1	6	4.96	1.324
I needed more time for preparation	156	1	6	4.89	1.361
I was not sure whether my performance fulfilled the given task	155	1	6	4.86	1.203
I did not feel confident because my English is not good as my partners' / group members' (I felt intimidated)	156	1	6	4.66	1.322
I could not think clearly during the role play performance	156	1	6	4.51	1.262
I was worried that my partner/group members would not be able to react spontaneously if I add up unplanned scenes or dialogues	156	1	6	4.49	1.380

I was afraid that my partner / group members could not understand what I was going to say	156	1	6	4.46	1.416
I did not know how to act out spontaneously	155	1	6	4.15	1.555
I did not have enough time to prepare because I took too much time to construct my sentences	156	1	6	4.12	1.546
I did not know suitable time to interrupt	156	1	6	4.10	1.301

4.2: Problems faced by students during a role play: Table 4.3 describes items with the average mean of 4.00 and above. The 5 items with the highest mean are: “I was nervous” (M=5.32, SD=1.080), “I was afraid that the examiner could not understand what I was going to say” (M=5.12, SD=1.141), “I did not know some words that I wanted to use in my sentences” (M=5.10, SD=1.068), “I was afraid to speak because I worried that I might make grammar mistakes” (M=4.97, SD=1.302) and “I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English” (M=4.96, SD=1.324)

Table 4.4: Independent Samples Test: Comparing Means between Male and Female Respondents

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I did not know how to act out spontaneously	Equal variances assumed	2.415	.122	4.237	153	.000	-1.004	.237	-1.473	-.536
	Equal variances not assumed			4.242	149.397	.000	-1.004	.237	-1.472	-.537
My partner/group members had difficulty to speak and pronounce words correctly so it was difficult for me to understand him/her/them	Equal variances assumed	.585	.446	3.344	154	.001	.731	.219	.299	1.162
	Equal variances not assumed			3.344	152.912	.001	.731	.219	.299	1.162
I was afraid that the examiner could not understand what I was going to say	Equal variances assumed	6.611	.011	4.971	154	.000	-.846	.170	-1.182	-.510
	Equal variances not assumed			4.971	136.036	.000	-.846	.170	-1.183	-.510
The time given for the role play performance	Equal variances assumed	1.694	.195	2.518	124	.013	.622	.247	.133	1.112

was too long	Equal variances not assumed			2.505	118.255	.014	.622	.248	.130	1.114
	Equal variances assumed	12.616	.001	5.395	153	.000	-.860	.159	-1.176	-.545
I was nervous	Equal variances not assumed			5.378	122.307	.000	-.860	.160	-1.177	-.544

Table 4.5: Comparing Means Between Male and Female Respondents for Items With Significant Difference

Gender		I did not know how to act out spontaneously	My partner/group members had difficulty to speak and pronounce words correctly so it was difficult for me to understand him/her/them	I was afraid that the examiner could not understand what I was going to say	The time given for the role play performance was too long	I was nervous
Male	Mean	3.65	3.51	4.69	3.51	4.88
	N	77	78	78	65	77
	Std. Deviation	1.345	1.421	1.241	1.276	1.214
Female	Mean	4.65	2.78	5.54	2.89	5.74
	N	78	78	78	61	78
	Std. Deviation	1.594	1.306	.848	1.496	.711
Total	Mean	4.15	3.15	5.12	3.21	5.32
	N	155	156	156	126	155
	Std. Deviation	1.555	1.409	1.141	1.416	1.080

4.3: Differences between genders: Independent T-Test was done to find out any significant difference of responses between male and female participants. The result is interpreted in Table 4.4, where only items with significant differences are displayed. There are 5 items listed which are: “I did not know how to act out spontaneously” ($t(153)=-4.237, p=0.000$), “My partner/group members had difficulty to speak and pronounce words correctly so it was difficult for me to understand him/her/them” ($t(154)=3.344, p=0.001$), “I was afraid that the examiner could not understand what I was going to say” ($t(154)=-4.917, p=0.000$), “The time given for the role play performance was too long” ($p(124)=2.518, p=0.013$) and “I was nervous” ($t(153)=-5.395, p=0.000$). Table 4.5 shows the difference of means between both genders for the items listed in Table 4.4. From table 4.5, Female respondents had more problems to act out spontaneously, felt and more nervous, and they are more concerned that the examiner could not understand what they were going to say compared to male respondents. Contrariwise, male respondents had significantly higher means for “My partner/group members had difficulty to speak and pronounce words correctly so it was difficult for me to understand him/her/them” and “The time given for the role play performance was too long”. However, the mean scores for both items are low indicating that male participants did not claim both statements as serious issues although the mean scores are significantly higher than female respondents.

Table 4.6: One-Way ANOVA: Comparing Means Between Group A, B, and C

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I did not understand the question because I did not know what the question asked	Between Groups	12.641	2	6.320	4.066	.019
	Within Groups	225.386	145	1.554		
	Total	238.027	147			
I did not have any ideas to respond to my partner/group members during the role play	Between Groups	12.687	2	6.344	3.297	.040
	Within Groups	279.016	145	1.924		
	Total	291.703	147			
I had difficulties to understand what was said by my partner/group members because they used advanced language	Between Groups	28.664	2	14.332	9.260	.000
	Within Groups	224.417	145	1.548		
	Total	253.081	147			
I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English	Between Groups	23.003	2	11.501	6.819	.001
	Within Groups	244.565	145	1.687		
	Total	267.568	147			
I was afraid to speak because I worried that I	Between Groups	19.281	2	9.640	5.932	.003

might make grammar mistakes	Within Groups	235.658	145	1.625		
	Total	254.939	147			
I did not feel confident because my English is not good as my partners' / group members' (I felt intimidated)	Between Groups	31.147	2	15.573	9.735	.000
	Within Groups	231.961	145	1.600		
	Total	263.108	147			

Table 4.7: LSD Multiple Comparisons: Comparing Means Between Group A, B and C

LSD							
Dependent Variable	(I) SPM	(J) SPM	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
I did not understand the question because I did not know what the question asked	A	B	-.284	.242	.243	-.76	.19
		C	-.796*	.282	.005	-1.35	-.24
	B	A	.284	.242	.243	-.19	.76
		C	-.512*	.256	.048	-1.02	-.01
	C	A	.796*	.282	.005	.24	1.35
		B	.512*	.256	.048	.01	1.02
I did not have any ideas to respond to my partner/group members during the role play	A	B	-.687*	.270	.012	-1.22	-.15
		C	-.343	.313	.275	-.96	.28
	B	A	.687*	.270	.012	.15	1.22
		C	.344	.285	.229	-.22	.91
	C	A	.343	.313	.275	-.28	.96
		B	-.344	.285	.229	-.91	.22
I had difficulties to understand what was said by my partner/group members because they used advanced language	A	B	-.602*	.242	.014	-1.08	-.12
		C	-1.207*	.281	.000	-1.76	-.65
	B	A	.602*	.242	.014	.12	1.08
		C	-.605*	.256	.019	-1.11	-.10
	C	A	1.207*	.281	.000	.65	1.76
		B	.605*	.256	.019	.10	1.11
I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English	A	B	-.686*	.252	.007	-1.18	-.19
		C	-1.045*	.293	.001	-1.62	-.46
	B	A	.686*	.252	.007	.19	1.18
		C	-.359	.267	.181	-.89	.17
	C	A	1.045*	.293	.001	.46	1.62
		B	.359	.267	.181	-.17	.89
I was afraid to speak because I worried	A	B	-.541*	.248	.031	-1.03	-.05
		C	-.984*	.288	.001	-1.55	-.41

that I might make grammar mistakes	B	A	.541*	.248	.031	.05	1.03
		C	-.443	.262	.093	-.96	.07
	C	A	.984*	.288	.001	.41	1.55
		B	.443	.262	.093	-.07	.96
I did not feel confident because my English is not good as my partners' / group members' (I felt intimidated)	A	B	-.783*	.246	.002	-1.27	-.30
		C	-1.222*	.286	.000	-1.79	-.66
	B	A	.783*	.246	.002	.30	1.27
		C	-.440	.260	.093	-.95	.07
	C	A	1.222*	.286	.000	.66	1.79
		B	.440	.260	.093	-.07	.95

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table 4.8: Mean of Selected Items for Group A, B and C

SPM		I did not understand the question because I did not know what the question asked	I did not have any ideas to respond to my partner/group members during the role play	I had difficulties to understand what was said by my partner/group members because they used advanced language	I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English	I was afraid to speak because I worried that I might make grammar mistakes	I did not feel confident because my English is not good as my partners' / group members' (I felt intimidated)
A	Mean	2.09	2.91	2.21	4.37	4.49	4.00
	N	43	43	43	43	43	43
	Std. Deviation	1.211	1.250	1.186	1.381	1.437	1.327
B	Mean	2.38	3.59	2.81	5.06	5.03	4.78
	N	69	69	69	69	69	69
	Std. Deviation	1.214	1.375	1.263	1.271	1.306	1.360
C	Mean	2.89	3.25	3.42	5.42	5.47	5.22
	N	36	36	36	36	36	36
	Std. Deviation	1.348	1.556	1.273	1.251	.971	.959
Total	Mean	2.42	3.31	2.78	4.95	4.98	4.66
	N	148	148	148	148	148	148
	Std. Deviation	1.272	1.409	1.312	1.349	1.317	1.338

4.4 Differences between grades obtained in SPM English: In order to find out whether there was any significant difference according to respondents' SPM English scores, the respondents were classed into 3 groups (as shown in Table 4.2b) according to their scores: Group A (for respondents who score A+, A and A-), Group B (for respondents who score B+, B, and B-) and Group C (for respondents who score C+ and C). One-Way ANOVA test was carried out to compare the means. Items with significant difference are presented in table 4.6. There are 6 items listed which are: "I did not understand the question because I did not know what the question asked" ($F(2,145)=4.066$, $p=0.019$), "I did not have any ideas to respond to my partner/group members during the role play" ($F(2,145)=3.297$, $p=0.040$), "I had difficulties to understand what was said by my partner/group members because they used advanced language" ($F(2,145)=9.260$, $p=0.000$), "I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English" ($F(2,145)=6.819$, $p=0.001$), "I was afraid to speak because I worried that I might make grammar mistakes" ($F(2,1415)=5.932$, $p=0.003$) and "I did not feel confident because my English is not good as my partners' / group members' (I felt intimidated)" ($F(2,145)=9.735$, $p=0.000$).

Next, LSD comparison was done to see the means comparison between each group as presented in Table 4.7. Table 4.8 spells out the means of score for each group. From table 4.7 and 4.8, it was found that:

1) Group C had a significantly higher means for "I did not understand the question because I did not know what the question asked" ($M=0.242$) compared to Group B ($M=2.38$) and Group A ($M=2.09$), however, all the 3 means score are low indicating that generally participants from all groups did not have problems to understand the questions.

2) Group B had significantly higher means for "I did not have any ideas to respond to my partner/group members during the role play" ($M=3.59$) compared to Group A ($M=2.91$). However, both mean scores are quite low indicating that generally respondents from both groups did not have problems in searching ideas to respond to their partner or group members.

3) Group A had significantly lower means for "I had difficulties to understand what was said by my partner/group members because they used advanced language" ($M=2.21$) compared to group B ($M=2.81$) and Group C ($M=3.42$). However, all mean scores are quite low indicating that the respondents generally do not have problems with understanding their partner or group members.

4) Group A has significantly lower means for "I had ideas to speak but I could not translate them to English" ($M=4.37$) compared to Group B ($M=5.06$) and Group C ($M=5.42$). The means scores for all 3 groups were high, indicating that all respondents generally had problems in translating their ideas to the target language. However, this problem seems to be a significantly bigger issue for Group B and Group C compared to group A. the difference between Group B and Group C is not significant.

5) Group A has significantly lower means for "I was afraid to speak because I worried that I might make grammar mistakes" ($M=4.49$) compared to Group B ($M=5.03$) and Group C ($M=5.47$). The means score for all 3 groups were high, indicating that all respondents were concerned that they might make grammar mistakes in their speech during the role play

assessment. However, it appears that Group B and Group B were significantly more concerned on this issue compared to group A. the difference between Group B and Group C is not significant.

6. Group A has significantly lower means for “I did not feel confident because my English is not good as my partners’ / group members’ (I felt intimidated)” (M=4.00) compared to Group B (M=4.78) and Group C (M=5.22). The means score for all 3 groups were high, indicating that all respondents felt intimidated which affect their confidence. However, Group B and Group C were significantly more intimidated compared to group A. the difference between Group B and Group C is not significant.

4.5 Summary

From the analysis, in general, this study has found out that some of the challenges faced by students during a role play include feeling inhibition, fears of intelligibility as interpreted by the examiner, groping for words to be used during speech, fear or making grammatical mistakes in speech and problems in translating ideas to the target language.

This study has also found out that female respondents were significantly more concerned on their ability to act out spontaneously. Besides that, compared to male respondents, female respondents were also significantly more nervous, and they were significantly more concerned that the examiner might not be able to understand them.

When compared by their English SPM Scores, this study revealed that B and C scorers were significantly more intimidated compared to A scorers. Moreover, compared to A scorers, B and C scorers were significantly more concerned that they might not be able to translate their ideas to the target language. B and C scorers were also significantly more worried that they might make grammatical mistakes in their speech.

Discussion and Conclusion

The objective of the study is to determine the perception of the students towards the challenges that they face when they do role-play as an assessment. According to the finding that has been discovered, it is proven that the feeling of inhibition when speaking in English and fears of intelligibility as interpreted by the examiner are the major problems faced by the students. The students do not have the confidence to use the target language because they are afraid that the other group members and the lecturer will judge them. There are few studies have proven that students are inhibited to speak the target language because it is often influenced by other people that makes the speaking anxious student does not feel comfortable using the language. An analysis of sources of foreign language speaking anxiety showed a correlation between a) anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, and b) anxiety and perception of low ability in relation to peers and native speakers (Kitano, 2001). Hieu (2011) and Zang (2006) cited in He and Chen (2010) explain that students are fear of making mistakes as they are worried that their friends will laugh at them and receive negative appraisals from their peers if they make mistake in speaking English. Saurik (2011) recognizes that most of English

students feel introverted when they speak the language because they think they will make mistakes when they talk. Tsui cited Nunan (1999) says that student who lack of confidence about themselves and their English necessarily suffer from communication apprehension.

Apart from feeling inhibited, groping for words (vocabulary) to be used during speech, fear of making grammatical mistakes in speech and problems in translating ideas to the target language are the other challenges faced by the students. The students are afraid that they do not have enough vocabulary when using the language. In addition, when using the language, they are fear of making grammatical mistakes that makes them reluctant to speak in English. Many of the students think that grammar is the most difficult component and when they do not master grammar well, this makes them feel shy and reluctant to speak English. The researcher also finds vocab as the causes of students' speaking problem because vocabulary creates the main element that should be mastered by every student if they want to be able to speak English well (unknown, 2000). Burns and Joyce claims that vocabulary or content words is the first noticeable elements of spoken language to develop. Many learners lack the necessary vocabulary to get their meaning across and inadequate strategic and communication competence can be another reason as well for not being able to keep the speaking going (Rababa'h, 2005).

This study also found out that female students have more problem in acting spontaneously while male students tend to feel more anxious if the examiner does not understand what they want to deliver. However, there are no studies that have been done that can support this new finding. Hence, this study will focus further in term of gender difference.

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