IMPROVING STUDENT COMPETENCY IN MAIL MANAGEMENT THROUGH ROLE PLAYING LEARNING METHOD IN A RECORDS MANAGEMENT COURSE

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the implementation of role-playing learning methods to improve students' ability in mail management in archives management courses. The mechanism used in this study is classroom action research with the Kemmis & Taggart model. Data collection has assisted through pre-test, post-test, observation, and interview. The study was conducted in two stages, known as Cycle I and Cycle II. Planning, acting, observing outcomes, and reflecting are the four tasks that make up each cycle. The outcome of this study shows that the adoption of role-playing methods can improve students' understanding and ability in letter management. The pre-test and post-test outcomes show a very significant increase in student competence. Additionally, the defined learning objectives can be completed. Students find role-playing techniques to be more captivating, which enhances engagement and learning effectiveness.

Keywords: mail management, role-playing, records management, classroom action research

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of transforming students to achieve stipulated competencies as the outcome of the educational process they follow. These competencies include knowledge, ability/skill development, or attitude change [1]. At every level of education, from elementary to higher education, there are learning activities, namely the process of learning the students have been arranged, implemented, and evaluated so that students will achieve learning goals effectively and efficiently [2]. Communication occurs during the learning process to deliver messages in the form of learning materials that are delivered to students by teachers [3]. Appropriate learning techniques are required for the message to be sent effectively.

Records Management is one of the courses that have to be enrolled by students of the Digital Office Operationalization program, Akademi Komunitas Negeri Putra Sang Fajar Blitar (AKN Blitar). This course studies records management in government institutions or companies as well as the creation, use, storage, control, depreciation, and destruction of records. As one of the providers of vocational education, AKN Blitar is obligatory to provide graduates who are ready to work as stated in Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning Higher Education, that vocational education is a higher education diploma program that prepares students for jobs with certain applied skills to applied undergraduate programs [4]. According to [5], vocational education is a learning process that prepares students to enter the workforce after completing their education, so methods in the teaching and learning process should be diversified to conditions such as work. To achieve this goal, in the learning process, lecturers as educators must be creative and innovative in determining the inerrant learning methods so that learning outcomes can be fulfilled optimally.

One of the subjects encompassed in the Records Management course is the Management of Incoming and Outgoing Mail with the Agenda Book System and Control Cards. Based on observations and interviews with several students shows that although students can make and fill out forms used in mail management, students are not able to understand well about procedures for handling letters. The lecture, discussion, and practice methods that have been applliancing are still ineffective because they have not been able to meet all learning outcomes. Therefore, a neoteric innovation is essential in the

development of learning methods. Role-playing is an effective learning technique because vocational education must produce graduates who are qualified for the workforce and because learning environments should match those seen in the workplace. By utilizing the Mini Office laboratory, which has been designed to resemble an office, lecturers can assign students to play roles in the hope that students can understand more about mail management and all learning outcomes can be accomplished.

Learning Methods

To achieve the arranged learning objectives, an educator chooses the methods before the learning process begins. The learning method has described as a procedure used to carry out plans that have been established in the form of actual and practical activities to achieve learning objectives [6]. The terminology of learning methods also described by [7], learning methods are defined as components of the way of learning that educators must do in delivering learning materials to achieve learning objectives. The selection of learning methods needs to be adjusted to the learning objectives and characteristics of the learning material [8]. The excerpt on learning methods can be appropriate if it is appropriate to the purposes and subject matter. The success of the implementation of learning strategies merely depends on how educators use learning methods because a learning strategy only can be implemented through the use of learning methods [6]. Among the techniques frequently used in the learning process are lectures, question-and-answer sessions, group discussions, and demonstrations [9]. One of the learning methods that directly involves students in learning is role-playing. This learning method is very suitable for learning materials that involve real-life problem situations [10].

Role-Playing Methods

The role-playing method is a way of mastering learning material through development and appreciation so that students can develop the ability to observe, apply, communicate, and draw conclusions [8]. Through the role-playing method, students can understand and reflect on a role and do direct practice as if they were in real conditions [11]. By this method, students can be directly involved in learning, so they can master learning materials based on creativity and imagination developed when performing their respective roles [12]. According to [8], some things that need to be taken into account when implementing the role-playing method into practice are (1) topic determination, (2) determination of each member's role, (3) creation of worksheets (if necessary), (4) quick dialogue exercises, and (5) role-playing itself. The role-playing method has several advantages compared to other learning methods, namely [11]:

1. Provide opportunities for students to learn to understand and express their roles and learn specific skills following their roles;
2. Make students more able to recall the subject they studied and the role it played;
3. More interesting for students because it is more miscellaneous and not tedious; and
4. Learners can find appropriate techniques or ways concerning their roles based on experience and observation of their peers.

According to [13], the role-playing method can also awaken the spirit of optimism in students and foster a sense of community. The results of research conducted by [14] show that this method can improve students' speaking skills because it provides many opportunities for students to practice and practice directly. Several studies conducted on students in higher education also showed positive results, namely that the role-playing method can improve the ability to argue, communicate, discipline, hard work, character, competence, cooperation, courage in expression, self-confidence, and student activeness [15], [10], [16], [17], [18], and [19]. Although it has many advantages, the role-playing method also still has disadvantages [11], including:

1. It takes quite a long time;
2. Require creative educators in determining topics and cases; and
3. If the selection of actors is not right, then the roles performed are less than optimal.

Records Management

Records management is an archival management and management activity, which includes policies, archival development, both human resource development and archival systems, and records management in a national archive system supported by human resources, facilities and infrastructure, and other resources [20]. Records management functions to maintain the balance of records in terms of creation, document movement, recording, forwarding, distribution, use, storage, maintenance, movement, and destruction [21]. Archive management is influential to do considering that the archive is needed as a source of correct information in decision-making by parties in need [21]. The student's ability in mail management, both incoming and outgoing letters, is a fundamental competency that is very important in the Records Management course because this competency determines success in the next stage of records management.

2. METHODS

The method used in this study is classroom action research. Classroom Action Research is a type of research that describes both processes and results to improve the quality of learning [22]. The purpose of PTK is to enhance the quality of the learning process so that the activities carried out must be in the form of better actions than the usual activities. In other words, the actions given to students must be more effective, efficient, creative, and innovative [23]. Classroom action research has several advantages, including enhancing the caliber of learning processes and results, enhancing academic knowledge, fostering the research culture, enhancing educator professionalism, and developing educator skills and learning innovation [24].

By conducting classroom action research, educators can understand what is happening in the classroom, and evaluate learning methods and media for further improvement [23]. This class action research uses the Kemmis & Taggart model. This model is a tool consisting of four parts: planning, execution, observation, and reflection. Observation activities must be accomplished as soon as possible after an activity is over [23]. Data collection is implemented through observation, pre-test, and post-test of students. Data collection includes observation and pre-test results before the application of role-playing learning methods, in conjunction with observation and post-test results after the application of role-playing learning methods. The instruments given to students include questions about:

1. Letter management ability consisting of knowledge, skills, and attitude.
2. Effective learning refers to how well students and lecturers have implemented the learning process.

The instruments assessed by observers include the readiness of lecturers in administering material and instruction at the beginning of learning, mental dexterity, and student motivation in the teaching and learning process, student activeness in the learning process, the ability of students to present material following the role obtained, the ability of lecturers to evaluate learning outcomes, and the ability of lecturers to foster student interest in learning. The data analysis technique that will be used in this study is qualitative descriptive by explaining the capability of students in managing letters before and after using the role-play method. There will also be described the role-play model carried out in the sub-subject of mail management with an agenda book system and control cards in the records management course.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two cycles, cycle I and cycle II, must be carried out for data collection according to the class action research paradigm that is applied. The study's findings are crucial when assessing whether the role-playing technique might assist students accomplish the predetermined learning objectives. There are three learning outcomes on this subject namely, students can understand the procedures of mail handling with the Agenda Book and Control Card systems, students can make forms needed in mail handling using the Agenda Book and Control Card systems, and students can fill out forms used in mail handling using Agenda Book and Control Card systems.

3.1 Implementation of Cycle I

The stages of implementation of activities carried out in cycle I include:

1. Planning.

   At this stage, lecturers arrange the learning material to be learned. Things that will be done at the planning stage include: lecturers analyze content standards to determine learning outcomes, lecturers compile learning programs following learning outcomes, lecturers determine the place or environment as a source of learning, as well as the time needed; lecturers construct study groups and compile learning scenarios, lecturers make student worksheets following learning outcomes, and lecturers prepare assessment tools to determine student understanding.

2. Implementing actions

   At the stage of implementing actions, lecturers carry out learning activities by the learning plan that has been formed. The learning methods used are lectures, discussions, questions and answers, and practice. Activities carried out include: lecturers conveying learning outcomes before learning activities begin, lecturers delivering material on mail management with the lecture method, lecturers open discussion and question and answer sessions with students, lecturers providing practice questions for student practice, namely making and filling out forms used in mail management, and lecturers provide pre-tests and check practice results to evaluate learning outcomes.

3. Observation

   At the observation stage, observers assess the readiness of lecturers in administering material, student motivation in the learning process, student activeness in the learning activity, the ability of lecturers to evaluate learning outcomes, and the ability of lecturers to cultivate student interest in learning. The conclusion of observations shows that during the learning process, lecturers have had a good readiness and understanding of the material presented. Students systematically adhere to learning activities, but student engagement and motivation throughout the discussion and Q&A sessions are insufficient. The ability of lecturers to evaluate learning outcomes is quite good, but the lecturers' capability to encourage student interest in learning needs to be improved.

4. Reflection

   The reflection stage has concluded to determine the results of implementing actions in cycle I through observation and pre-test. The pre-test is executed by asking students to fill in several essays and practice questions to find out whether students have met the learning outcomes. The following table shows the result of the pre-test that has completed during cycle I.

Table 1. Pre-test result in cycle I

No.	Indicators	Average Score
1	Students understand the flow of mail management with the Agenda Book system	4,73
2	Students know the forms used in the Agenda Book system	4,40
3	Students can create Agenda Books and Disposition Sheet forms	3,80
4	Students can fill out the Agenda Book and Disposition Sheet forms	4,07
5	Students know the parts involved in managing letters with the Agenda Book system	3,67
6	Students understand the flow of mail management with the Control Card system	4,20
7	Students know the forms used in the Control Card system	4,00
8	Students can create forms, Letter Preliminary Sheets, and Control Cards	3,27
9	Students can fill out the Letter Preliminary Sheet and Control Card forms	3,53
10	Students know the parts involved in managing mail with Control Cards	3,27

11	Students recognize the name of the office equipment and supplies used in mail management	4,07
12	Students be capable of using archival equipment in mail management	4,67

Based on the table above can be ensured that after the implementation of actions in cycle I, students' understanding and ability in mail management are still very lacking. Students do not understand enough about the procedures for managing letters delivered through the lecture method. In practical learning, students have been able to create and fill out disposition sheet forms and agenda books according to the examples given by lecturers. But after a pre-test by giving different cases without examples, only a few students were able to complete it well.

3.2 Implementation of Cycle II

The stages that have been accomplished in cycle II are:

1. Planning.

    Lecturers created the subject matter and teaching strategies at this point. Role-playing is the form of instruction in this instance, hence the planning that has to be done are:

    a. Lecturers prepare case studies and scenarios for students to act. There are four examples of cases to be demonstrated by four groups, i.e.: incoming mail management with an agenda book system, outgoing mail management with an agenda book, incoming mail management with control cards, and outgoing mail management with control cards.

    b. Lecturers compile guidelines for the implementation of role-playing methods. The rules are drafted as activity sequences, with flowcharts or procedure drawings added for each of the mail-handling scenarios.

    c. Lecturers prepare laboratory rooms, equipment, and tools that will be used in learning activities. The laboratory used in this learning activity is a Mini Office laboratory that has a layout like a real office so that it will make it easier for students to carry out their respective roles. The equipment prepared includes a reception desk, chief desk, chairs, workstations, computers, printers, filing cabinets, and lateral files. The equipment prepared is forms used in the mail management and office stationery, consisting of agenda books, expedition books, disposition sheets, mail delivery sheets, control cards, ring binders, hanging maps, perforators, and ballpoint pens. Additionally, lecturers create a table board that is set up on a predetermined table and describes the position or function of every element.

    d. Lecturers prepare assessment tools to evaluate students' understanding and competency.

2. Implementing Actions

    At this point, lecturers are taking part in the planned learning process as researchers. The actions taken consist of:

    a. The lecturer divides the class into four groups of six students each.

    b. The lecturer asked students to determine the role of each group member, namely one person as the recipient and sender of letters, one person as a letter registration, one person as a letter referrer, one person as a chief, one person as a processing unit, and one person as an archivist administrator.

    c. The lecturer gives time to students to learn the material and scenarios to be demonstrated.

    d. Students practice roles and dialogue accompanied by lecturers. Before practicing their roles, students occupy positions according to their respective roles. In this stage, in addition to practicing dialogue and mail management procedures, students also practice filling out forms in mail management and using equipment in archive storage. If there is something they do not understand, students can ask the lecturer.

    e. Students perform role-playing according to the scenario assigned to each group. Students demonstrate how to handle letters using the instructions that have been provided.

    f. The lecturer requested that each group's student representative provide a report on the learning objectives for group discussion.

g. The lecturer concluded the learning material, followed by conveying impressions of the learning method by student representatives.

3. Observation

At this stage, lecturers inscribe student activities to obtain data on learning outcomes. To get valid results, lecturers choose colleagues or other lecturers as observers. The aspects assessed by observers in this cycle are the same as those in cycle I. The outcome of observations shows that during the learning process, lecturers have had a good readiness and understanding of the material presented. Students follow learning activities well and in an orderly manner. Student activity has immensely increased, as evidenced by the number of students who ask questions when there is something they do not understand. Cooperation between group members is also outstanding. The students help each other if other friends have difficulties. The ability of lecturers to evaluate learning outcomes is quite good, and with this role-playing method, the endowment of lecturers to foster student interest in learning has also increased.

4. Reflection

The objective of this step is to assess the actions that have been implemented comprehensively. An evaluation is then conducted based on the gathered facts to enhance the subsequent course of action. The reflection stage has been completed by reviewing the outcomes of the actions taken in cycle I through observation and post-test. To determine whether the students have achieved the learning outcomes, a post-test has been constructed in which students had to complete several essays and practice questions. The following table illustrates the outcomes of the post-test that was conducted in cycle II:

Table 2. Post-test result in cycle II

No.	Indicators	Average Score of Pre-Test	Average Score of Post-Test
1	Students understand the flow of mail management with the Agenda Book system	4,73	8,15
2	Students know the forms used in the Agenda Book system	4,40	8,23
3	Students can create Agenda Books and Disposition Sheet forms	3,80	8,31
4	Students can fill out the Agenda Book and Disposition Sheet forms	4,07	8,54
5	Students know the parts involved in managing letters with the Agenda Book system	3,67	8,15
6	Students understand the flow of mail management with the Control Card system	4,20	8,00
7	Students know the forms used in the Control Card system	4,00	8,15
8	Students can create forms, Letter Preliminary Sheets, and Control Cards	3,27	8,23
9	Students can fill out the Letter Preliminary Sheet and Control Card forms	3,53	8,23
10	Students know the parts involved in managing mail with Control Cards	3,27	8,15
11	Students recognize the name of the office equipment and supplies used in mail management	4,07	8,92
12	Students be capable of using archival equipment in mail management	4,67	8,85

The outcome of the post-test, conducted after the implementation of actions in cycle II, showed that students' understanding and ability in mail management increased significantly compared to the

completion of the pre-test in cycle I. It proves that the use of role-playing learning methods is very applicable for use in this subject. Role-playing methods can be adopted to achieve predetermined learning objectives. Students have been able to understand the procedures for handling incoming and outgoing mail with the Agenda Book and Control Card systems, can make forms needed in managing incoming and outgoing mail with the Agenda Book and Control Card systems, and can fill out forms used in handling incoming and outgoing mail with the Agenda Book and Control Card systems.

Based on the results of observations and evaluation questionnaires given to students can be seen that in students' opinion, this role-playing method is more fun and makes it easier for students to understand the learning material when compared to other methods. The role-playing approach moreover improves students' activeness, cooperation, and communication skills. The results of observations of student and lecturer performance, as well as student activity in this learning activity, will be used as a reference to make improvements in the following lecture.

4. CONCLUSION

The application of role-playing techniques in learning activities can enhance students' proficiency in managing letters with an agenda book system and control cards, according to the findings of research and data analysis. This improvement can be evident from the comparability of pre-test results in cycle I with post-test results in cycle II. There was a significant increase in value, which was around 200%. For students, learning using the role-playing method is considered more delightful and fun hence it can increase student activeness, cooperation, and communication skills. For educators, the role-playing method can be a form of learning innovation that can improve the quality of learning, especially in archives management courses. For educators at vocational universities, this method is very suitable for use in lectures that require practice with conditions that resemble a work environment. For this method to work well, educators must prepare intriguing scenarios and choose subjects that are appropriate for the allocation of learning time.

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