The importance of "role play" in EFL classes

АБДУЛЛАЕВА ФЕРУЗА ТУЛКИНОВНА
Сурхандарья, Школа №30, УЗБЕКИСТАН

ABDULLAYEVA FERUZA TULKINOVNA
Surkhandarya, School №30, UZBEKISTAN

As we know, role-play is a technique that allows students to explore realistic situations by interacting with other people in a managed way in order to develop experience and trial different strategies in a supported environment. Depending on the intention of the activity, learners might be playing a role similar to their own or could play the opposite part of the conversation or interaction. Learners are given particular roles to play in a conversation or other interaction. They may be given specific instructions on how to act or what to say. The learners will then act out the scenario and afterwards there will be reflection and discussion about the interactions, such as alternative ways of dealing with the situation. The scenario can then be acted out again with changes based on the outcome of the reflection and discussion.

According to my experiences, I can say that role-play is a very flexible teaching approach because it requires no special tools, technology or environments, for example, learner could work through a role-play exercise just as effectively in even a lecture hall as in a seminar room.

Role-play is a well-known strategy that helps students to familiarize themselves with new social environments. Role-play is a strategy in which students are required to act specific roles through saying, doing and sharing (Altun, 2015). As a teacher we usually use "role play" as to encourage our learners to make connections between vocabulary, experiences and the content that is being studied. The learners are introduced to new vocabulary and then given the chance to use the words in context through role- play. The process of role- playing the words helps to increase the students' understanding of the words and how to use the words in a real world context.

The use of role-play activities develops communication skills and students are encouraged to master and enrich vocabulary learning through conversational activities. Students find difficulty in learning English language vocabulary because of vocabulary limitations, misuse of words, and use of wrong words, inappropriate terms, or poor pronunciation (Afdillah, 2015).

Additionally I can mention that using role-play can enhance students' exposure to language, which is considered as the key factor to speed up the language learning process. Students via producing speech in role-play activities can enhance their communicative competence. Moreover, conduct of role-play activities can provide a stress free learning environment where students enjoy using the language. Especially on learning vocabulary, it is important because of the relationship between vocabulary and overall learning development.

There are several broad reasons for using role-play as a teaching strategy for learning vocabulary. It is a major strategy in the communicative approach and has many advantages, as it can encourage forms of social interaction that provide an important stimulus to use the language in real life and challenge learners' existing beliefs. In addition, it is suggested by many researchers that effective learning takes place when teachers challenge students with problems and facilitate the process of finding the solution (Vincent & Shepherd, 1998; Piaget. 1972). Most importantly, role-play engages learners in activities that bring realism to their learning and help them to apply it in real situations.

Role-play strategies have proven their effectiveness in teaching English to learners, as role-play can

increase students' enthusiasm, self-confidence, and empathy, and encourage critical thinking. Role-play is a teaching strategy that models vocabulary learning in a cost-effective, controlled, and fun way for both students and teachers (Kuipers & Clemens, 1998; Huang and Shan, 2008; Altun, 2015).

For summing up, I can honorable mention that teachers should apply "role-play" strategy in teaching English for developing all language skills, EFL learners should be encouraged to use role-play to enhance their vocabulary proficiency, EFL syllabus developers are advised to integrate the use "role-play" in the English curriculum for EFL classes.

USED LITERATURE:

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