ROLE PLAY: DISSOLUTION OF DISCOMFITURE FOR CONSPICUOUS COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

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ABSTRCT:

Communication is the process by which we exchange meanings, opinions, ideas or emotions with others. Role playing is a great way to improve student's communication skills. Role-play is extensively used in an English communication lab for learning English. Students' previous experiences of role-play may influence the way in which they engage in this method. Playing a role can become ineffective if people are unclear about what they are supposed to do. I discuss in this paper how to perform play a role and how the role plays help to the students in learning English. It also deals with the obligations of teachers and learners in role play.

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Introduction:

In modern days English language teaching has focused on spoken rather than the teaching of grammar. The main intention of the class room is to motivate the students to speak something in English without mistakes. In order to develop the learners' communicative ability, the teacher needs to create a scenario to teach the target language in vivacious way, active and interesting manner. In this way, role play can improve learners' speaking skills in any situation, and helps learners to interact with others in English. As for the shy learners, role play is an important task. By practicing role plays, one can easily improve communication skills and overcome the stage fright. It helps by providing a mask, where learners with difficulty in conversation are liberated. Additionally, it is fun and most learners will agree that enjoyment leads to better learning. Nunan (1989) describes the communicative tasks "as a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form." With some attention given to the needs of the learners, both the teacher and the learners should play active roles in the classroom, making language classes challenging and above all rewarding. Larsen-Freeman (1986) explains that role plays, whether structured or less structured, are important in the communicative approach because they give learners an opportunity to practice communicating in different social contexts and in different social roles.

Though there are many chapters in English that spotlight on communication skills, role play is also one of the important activities which will make the learners to communicate. In role play, the learners are introduced to the different learning styles—listening, remembering, discussing, writing and presenting. The activities in the form of role play, for example simulations and problem solving are fundamental in developing the communicative ability of the learners. As Jones (1982) highlights this notion in role-play for learning second languages that "In order for a simulation to occur the participants must accept the duties and responsibilities of their roles and functions, and do the best they can in the situation in which they find themselves." By simulation one can easily remember the expressions and sometimes learners evidently memorize it. Scarcella and Crookall (1990) elaborate how simulation facilitates second language acquisition. In three learning theories they discuss how learners acquire language when:

1. They are exposed to large quantities of comprehensible input
2. They are actively involved
3. They have positive attitudes.

The learners have to understand the questions to play their role so that they are able to improve their skills in English. According to Ladousse (1987), role play uses different communicative techniques and develops fluency in the language, promotes interaction in the classroom and increases motivation. Here peer learning is encouraged and sharing of responsibility between teacher and the learner in the learning process takes place.

Despite its widespread use, role-play is fairly consistently defined in the education and training literature. Van Ments (1989) defines role-play as "... one particular type of simulation that focuses attention on the interaction of people with one another. It emphasizes the functions performed by different people under various circumstances. The idea of role-play, in its simplest form, is that of asking someone to imagine that they are either themselves or another person in a particular situation. They are then asked to behave exactly as they feel that person would. As a result of doing this they, or the rest of the class, or both, will learn something about the person and/or situation. In essence, each player acts as part of the social environment of the others and provides a framework in which they can test out their repertoire of behaviors or study the interacting behavior of the group."

There are at least four reasons why you should include role play in all of our English courses.

1. The change of activity is always met by participants and will help to keep your sessions vigorous and interesting, as well as keeping the participants alert and active.
2. It helps to make them aware of gaps in their knowledge and the language that they need to practice and learn.
3. Role play gives the contributors the chance to practice the new language that they have been working on in the course.
4. Role play can help you to assess the progress of your participants; as they are fully involved in their activity you can watch their actions and also keep a check on their

language. You can deal with some of the points arising from your observations in the criticism session after the role play.

Role Play Rules:

Role play rules are mostly simple. Role plays must be focused; the objectives must be clear and understood; instructions must be clear and understood. Feedback needs to be explicit, relevant, achievable and given immediately. The learners should understand the role play which is crucial to learning and developing options of behavior. When the learners plan role play sessions, they will habitually tell teachers that they will enjoy the experience. What are role plays? How should one practice in role plays? Are there any roles for it? Role-play method will be selected according to whether the educational goal addresses knowledge, attitudes or skills. In the acquisition of knowledge, role-plays can be valuable to observe and then discuss—the knowledge of the role-players themselves is less important than the chance to observe, understand and incorporate information. For attitude development especially that which focuses on change of affect, then role-plays should be loosely structured so that players experience emotions spontaneously. While for skills acquisition, the opportunity for repeated opportunities with feedback is critical.

Long and Porter (1985) say that there are five pedagogical benefits with group work.
1. The group work may improve the quality of language practice opportunities
2. It can improve the quality of students talk
3. It can provide individual instruction
4. It can create a positive, effective climate in the classroom
5. It can increase the student's motivation

Role Play Objective:
- One should have very clear and comprehensible ideas about role play topic.
- If one has ordinary ideas, he or she may perform ordinarily so clear thinking and role play preparation result in clear outcomes.

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- Are you assessing skills or are you developing them? If you are assessing people, they need to know the competency level expected of them and the brief needs to have measurable outcomes. People also need to trust that the role play will have the same level of challenge for them and their peers.

- Are you giving everyone the same level of challenge, or are you flexing according to the level of skill demonstrated by each individual? The former is more recommended for assessment, the latter for development.

How Role Play Helps to the Students:

Communication in the classroom makes the learners to communicate with other learners. Role play permits students to develop an understanding of others' perspectives and encourages students to work with others in analyzing situations and developing workable solutions. It provides students an opportunity to apply concepts they have learned in a rich, realistic environment and gives them a chance to add insights into interpersonal challenges they are likely to face in their careers and private lives. It not only permits students to effectively difference problem-solving methods by role playing a situation several times from diverse perspectives but also offers a constructive channel through which feelings can be expressed and feedback processed.

How to Prepare for the Role Play:

In the early stages of the role play the learners are uncomfortable and uncertain so that they are mute in the whole session. Soon they began helping one another to decide who should speak. Towards the end, their shyness may leave them and they will begin prompting each other with ideas. A lot of planning and discussion needs to take place in pairs for students to set up their act. The words have to make sense. The act has to flow and the audience has to understand exactly what is going on. From a dramatic point of view, the action taking place between the lines is just as important as the words themselves. They are compelled to find out the meaning of certain difficult words in the article in order to prepare for the role play. The performance can also be enhanced with costumes that the teachers can help create. This activity promotes discussion, agreement, and disagreement, argument, sharing of ideas, practice and presentation. They should

plan for role-play how to perform on the dais and carefully look at the expressions that they utter. They should know their partners dialogues also so that he is able to tell without mistakes. Students in the audience may be challenged to summarize the content of each of the performances. The text demands their focus, understanding and an interpretation of what they have viewed

Presentation Stage:

Like other communicative tasks, role play also focuses on speaking activities. The learners should present their views related to their topic. Throughout the presentation, they should show eagerness and enthusiasm. They should listen to others in the group to express their views. Some learners usually take notes while they prepare for role play and some try to remember the lines in their mind. They also play their role as the audience by clarifying and giving their opinion at the end of the presentation. In doing so, their interest is heightened and the likelihood of remembering the language skills being introduced is strengthened.

Students Feedback in the Role Play:

Feedback is very important in role play which helps the learners to overcome their problems in their future activities. The amount of time for the role play is negotiated. For the purpose of obtaining feedback from the learners, the teacher recorded what the learners have expressed at two different times. First their feedback is recorded when the teacher starts explaining the role play and the procedure to the class. The learners' feedback is recorded for the second time after the presentation. Besides recording, casual interviews are conducted with the learners in order to allow them to reflect on their presentation. Learners' feedback is divided into three categories: the preparation stage, the presentation stage and the learners' overall impression regarding the activity.

- Permit the other contributors to watch the role play and give their comments afterwards. Observers are hugely beneficial to the participants' learning. In real life we rarely get the opportunity to speak bravely. We not only have our own response to the role play; we can

also benefit from our fellow role players' observations, and tutor's point of view, and the feedback from the observers.

- For the audience, the teacher should explain clearly what the learners have to do and how to criticize. The language of feedback is also very important. Feedback should broadly follow SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Realistic, Time-bound).

Instructions to the English teacher:

Allwright mentions that "It is essential to concentrate on classroom interaction that goes on between and among teachers and students in order to gain insights and increase our understanding of classroom learning and teaching." (Allwright R and Bailey K, 1991) The role of the teacher plays a prominent role in role play. The teacher is not wholly responsible for the learners' language acquisition as students must also play their part to be motivated in following the lesson. Of course it is not enough purely to provide students with opportunities to speak in English, as teachers we need to encourage students to speak and we must provide some situations when they are in deep devil and sea. We have to supply a variety of different situations, and hence help them to learn to speak with buoyancy. Sometime it will depend on the learners and their language abilities but it is not in all cases. Many teachers and students in an ESL class dread the words "role-play". Even though there is little consensus on the terms used in role-playing literature. Just a few of the terms which are used, often interchangeably, are "simulation," "game," "role-play," "simulation-game," "role-play simulation," and "role-playing game" (Crookall, 1990).

The teacher's role in giving clear instructions is equally important. The learners are asked to get into groups of five and choose a leader for each group. All the reports are given to the leaders who assign individual roles to each group member. They are asked to improvise the message in the reports which were not too structured and to find a structure that fits into a real life situation. The teacher should edit spelling and texts, the ideas that spring from many students will be original, unusual, and different. The creativity of many will allow for a variety of topics and ideas

that only one person could not possibly produce no matter how talented and idea-filled the teacher is.

Role Play Topics:

1. Invite Mr. A to your birth day party.
2. Politely refuse A's invitation.
3. Persuade your sister to do an engineering course which will suitable to her.
4. Condolence one of your friends grand mothers death
5. Call and tell your boss Mr. B you can't come to work because of illness.
6. Ask one of your friends to teach you to play foot play.
7. Call to order two cups of coffee.
8. You are very aggressive on your cousin
9. Advise your friend not to take drug which is not good for health.
10. You got a miss call from a stranger.

Post Presentation Stage:

Role play feedback should describe specific things that the observer saw and heard, relevant to the exercise and to the person(s) doing the role playing. Role play feedback should not contain subjective judgments or comments based on personal knowledge or assumptions. Feedback should be meaningful and specific—something that the role player can act on. In post presentation it is important that the students opinion about their activities. The class can be encouraged for students to speak about the different interpretations that they see, and they can explain which acts they like and if they enjoy learning via the dialogues. This feedback will encourage teachers to use dialogues again, or help adapt the idea to make it more successful at another time. Many aspects of language practice can be incorporated into the lesson via dialog role-plays and success will most likely result. Teachers can enjoy this easily prepared, creative addition to communication, drama and language lessons.

Comments are considerable in role play. Such comments and criticisms can help the teachers to prepare better future activities in other classes. Learners have given the comment that there would

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create chaos in the class and the class would be too noisy. They don't understand the issue as they expected. Sometime the students, who know language well, speak and the rest of the students become silent and shy. Students are unable to act freely because of their age.

The main problem faced by the learners is the inability to express ideas due to lack of proficiency in the language. The burly points noted are that such activities helped the language learning and above all provided them a realistic opportunity to work with others in the learners increase communicative skills, encourage participation, and change the attitudes towards classroom. These adult learners given more time for preparation and practice can without doubt improve their performance. The students need some more time for their preparation and they enjoy a lot in the role play. They will get confidence by performing before others.

Conclusion:

The role play shows the learners how to improve the English language. Though the learners hesitate to speak in English in the beginning, by role play they even try to communicate in English. We want our learners to gain fluency and accuracy in the oral presentation. Being accurate does not mean using structures and vocabulary correctly, but saying the right things in the right place, at the right time. We find these things in role play which removes all the doubts of the students in communicative approach.

Notes:

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