

## THE PECULARITIES OF USING ROLE PLAYS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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### ABSTRACT.

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in interest in learning foreign languages. That is because of decrees, measures and actions taken by our country to foreign languages after independence. Innovation requires the use of methods, technical means in classes. One such method is the use of role-playing games in the classroom. Role-playing games are the application of various situations in our real life in the process of learning a foreign language. This method helps to create a language environment in the classroom. This article discusses different methods of learning foreign languages using role-playing games.

### KEY WORDS:

method, forthright person, choose a format, debate an issue, conflict situation, group planning....

Role play in any classroom brings a range of benefits. It adds variety to a lesson, which can be fun and motivating for students. It broadens the possibilities for language production by taking students beyond their own lives and experiences. Role play can also help with group dynamics; quieter students can take on the role of a much more forthright person and are encouraged to communicate more readily.

It can especially be helpful to students who are learning English in an ELL setting. So how can you best use role-playing games when teaching English? Here are some practical tips:

#### **Decide What Language Skills you're Working On**

Before you start a role play with your class, you need to be clear on what language skills you want them to develop. Is the role play designed to help them with the future tense, with question forms or with a certain vocabulary group? Are you trying to help them with set phrases used to negotiate or just with their fluency and ability to talk under pressure? Being clear in your aims for the role play will inform the preparation and follow up activities you choose to do.

#### **Prepare your Students**

Assess the level and age of your class in order to prepare them effectively for the role play. A lower level class may need more initial input in identifying the language they'll need for the role play. You could do preliminary activities where they practice the language in written form or through a reading task. It may be helpful to write key language (phrases or sentences they may use) up on the board as a reference.

Higher level classes will need less initial input but they'll still get more out of the activity if you can prepare them by describing the role play situation and getting them to suggest phrases and words that may be useful.

#### **Don't Prepare Your Students**

Another way of helping students to learn language is by throwing them into a role play without any preparation whatsoever. In doing so, they recognize the specific language they lack for this particular situation. If you choose to do role plays in this way, it is important to continue the activity with a structured language finding section, followed by another, hopefully improved, attempt at the role play.

#### **Choose a Format**

There are lots of different ways to structure role plays in the classroom. Much will depend upon the size of your group and the characters of the students within it. Here are a few ideas:

Debate an issue – Split your class into two groups. Give each group an opposing point to debate and give them time to formulate their arguments.

Information Gap – Divide your class into pairs. Both students are given a card containing missing information, so the two cards make a whole. They have to ask questions of their partner to fill in the gaps.

Conflict Situation – Putting your students in a role play conflict situation encourages them to use persuasive and conciliatory language. You could have them pretend to be an arguing neighbor or a complaining customer.

Phone Call – Put your students into pairs and get them to sit back to back. This means they can't rely on body language or gestures to aid understanding. Get them to "make a phone call" to book a hotel room or confirm an appointment.

Group Planning – Divide your class into groups. Give them the task of brainstorming or planning something. It could be a party for a five year old or the design of a new tech product. Once finished, they can present their ideas to the rest of the class.

Thus, a role-playing game is a speech, game and educational activity at the same time.

An analysis of the educational literature shows that the role-play:

- this is training in action that improves the quality of training;
- This is a highly motivating factor, because the game is of interest to students, especially in terms of unpredictability of denouement;
- gives students support: suggests what kind of speech models it is possible to express this or that thought in this particular situation;
- It is accompanied by an emotional upsurge, which positively affects the quality of training, increases its effectiveness

#### CONCLUSION.

To really cement the new or practiced language forms in the minds of your students, be sure to do some kind of follow up or reflective activity. Reflect on phrases used as well as facial expressions and body language as an extension of how they communicated their words. Role play is a great way to get students using and developing their language skills in a "real world" setting. With good planning, students are sure to gain confidence and language ability whilst having a little fun at the same time.

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