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## THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE-PLAYING GAME IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN A NON-LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the topic of using the method of role-playing games / simulations in teaching students a foreign language. Special attention is paid to the question how this method can be used in universities to encourage students to use maximally the foreign language in class. The authors pay attention to the fact that the types of role-playing games can be different depending on the level of difficulty and language skills of the students, and that the correct choice of role-play appropriate to the level of the group knowledge is required. The article demonstrates that role playing games are extremely useful and can help students to root their knowledge and to learn a foreign language for professional purposes.

### KEYWORDS

Communication, methods, discursive, communicative approach.

### INTRODUCTION

In Uzbekistan, the main focus of communicative language teaching (within activities and games) method is to help the learners/students/pupils to learn a language so that they can use it to communicate

meaningfully in any real life situation. Throughout the history of education, teachers and other educators have been on a constant search for new and improved methods of introducing and implementing knowledge

into the minds of their students. One such tool was the implementation of role play. What is role-play? Role-play is any speaking activity when you either put yourself into somebody else's shoes, or when you stay in your own shoes but put yourself into an imaginary situation! Why use role-play? It is widely agreed that learning takes place when activities are engaging and memorable.

Jeremy Harmer advocates the use of role-play for the following reasons: It's fun and motivating.<sup>1</sup> Quieter students get the chance to express themselves in a more forthright way. The world of the classroom is broadened to include the outside world - thus offering a much wider range of language opportunities. To practice and consolidate each aspect of the language of the game, it is customary to divide it into the following categories: lexical, phonetic, grammatical, spelling, creative games<sup>2</sup>.

In recent years, the idea of using role behavior in learning a foreign language has been supported by the "role theory", according to which every person in life performs several social roles: for example, in the family – the role of a parent, at work – the role of a cook, a driver. In our opinion, games really improve students' speaking, vocabulary, listening comprehension. Role games help to create psychological readiness of the learners to speech communication, they make natural necessity of frequent repetition of the learning material, and they train learners to choose the necessary speech patterns. The social role is an element of public relations: the environment acts in relation to a person as primary socialization. Natural social roles in educational conditions are reduced to

two: teacher – student. When using role-playing as a means of learning, they usually talk about "secondary socialization", imitating the first in its most essential features. Social roles within the framework of secondary socialization artificial. The measure of conditionality can be different: transformation into real people, into literary characters, heroes of fairy tales. Students often do not realize the educational tasks of role-playing games. From the position of a teacher, role-playing looks like one of the forms of teaching dialogic communication. The educational situation in role-playing games is built up as in literary plays, which implies a description of the situation, the nature of the actors and the relationship between them. Role-playing contributes to the formation of educational cooperation. Students get acquainted with the technology of the theater. The reincarnation of students helps to increase the psychological range, understanding of people around them. Before conducting a role-playing game, it is necessary to study the language material with the help of training exercises, work on developing skills that will allow students to concentrate on the meaningful side of dialogic speech. At the end of the role-playing game, the teacher should adequately assess the contribution of each student to the preparation and conduct of the game. In addition to language skills, the teacher evaluates the expressiveness of role behavior, student activity. When it comes to using role play in teaching, there are many ways to go about it, and it can be used in most contexts. Role play can be used in the classroom for various reasons, Porter-Ladousse gives five examples that encompass most reasons as to why role play should be used:<sup>3</sup> 1. Training speaking skills in any situation 2. Building up social skills 3.

<sup>1</sup> Role Play - Gillian Porte Ladousse (Oxford 1987), The Practice of English Language Teaching - Jeremy Harmer (Longman 1989)  
<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/roleplay>

<sup>2</sup>Stronin, M. F. Obuchayushie igri na uroke angliyskogo yazika / M. F. Stronin - M.: Prosveshchenie, 1984. - 112 s

<sup>3</sup> Porter Ladousse, Gillian. "Role Play." 1987



Experimenting with language in a safe environment 4. Boosting the confidence of shy students 5. It is simply a technique which students often enjoy participating in. Bell states that role play in EFL can be divided into has different forms, and each has its use when it comes to EFL.<sup>4</sup> These include: 1. Conflict role play 2. Cooperative role play 3. Information gap role play 4. Task-based role play. Role-playing has a number of advantages over other forms of activity in the classroom: it simulates a communication model, organizes comfortable conditions for students (taking the role, the student becomes more relaxed, feels freer and speaks better), creates motivation for communication; the game teaches partnership and joint activities, students have the opportunity to show their creative and communication skills. A role play needs to have clear learning objectives, encourage spontaneity, maintain motivation, activate background knowledge and involve all students<sup>5</sup>. Within an EFL classroom, role play (which could also include simulations, plays, sociodramas, etc.) is usually used as a tool to practice speaking and communication skills. It serves as a means of providing real-life context to specific linguistic elements. Additionally, it is often a welcome way to change the pace of a lesson. Role play, as a means to practice English, is something most teachers implement on a regular basis, since learners find it a lot easier to connect various vocabulary and grammar elements when provided by a real-life situation that calls for the use of said elements. There are a lot of role-playing games to teach students. Examples of role-playing games include the following exercises: 1. Guess who I have. 2. Guess the author. 3. Literary puzzle. 4. Restoration of the story. 5. If I

were... 6. Ranking. 7. Noah's Ark 8. The story along the chain and etc.

**1. Guess who I have.** Students are divided into pairs. They receive cards with images of writers and poets of different eras. You can't show cards to each other. Working in pairs, the players ask each other questions to find out which of the writers is depicted on the partner's card. (When was this person born? Where was he from? What did he/she write about? and etc.).

**2. Guess the author.** The participants of the game are divided into pairs. One player receives the name of the work and tries to tell his friend about this work, without naming the name of the work. The second student tries to guess the work.

**4. Restoration of the story.** Each participant receives a piece of paper with one sentence from a certain story. He is not allowed to show the sentence to anyone or write it down, he must memorize this sentence (two minutes are given for this). Then the teacher collects all the sheets and reads out each sentence. The players listen to them, and then each of them, in accordance with a logical sequence, calls his sentence in turn.

**5. If I were...** The teacher invites the players to imagine themselves in the role of a famous writer or literary character and try to explain from his point of view what he wanted to show in his work.

**6. Ranking.** Students are offered lists of writers and poets known to every student of philology. Everyone should number according to the degree of importance, in accordance with their own views and beliefs of all literary figures. Then, during the discussion, everyone

<sup>4</sup> Bell, Aaron. Four Types of Role Plays for Teaching English. 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Chan, Cecilia. "Assessment Role Play." 2009.

should justify their approach to assessing these figures and discuss their significance with their comrades.

**7.Noah's Ark.** The players are reminded of the myth of Noah's Ark and are invited to make a list of those literary works that need to be preserved for future generations, and discuss this list.

**8.The story along the chain.** The players are invited to compose a story on a given topic together along the chain. A description of the situation or a general plot is given, which must be developed to the level of an expanded text. You can also give the players cards with working materials (recorded reference thoughts, keywords, phrases, etc.) to help them compose specific text fragments. The support can be drawings, photographs, slides, etc.

In conclusion we can say that, role-playing is a very promising form of learning, as it contributes to the creation of a favorable psychological climate in the classroom; increases motivation and activates the activity of students; gives the opportunity to use existing knowledge, experience, communication skills in different situations. The main goal of this communicative roleplaying game is to develop students' communicative skills; the related goal is to intensify their motivation and cognitive activity. It is a great method for teachers and trainers as it is an entertaining activity which makes every student be involved in the process. Role-play can be a lot of fun. If you still feel reluctant to use it in the class we suggest you begin to integrate it slowly. Why not extend an appropriate reading or a listening from a course book and turn it into a role-play? You may be pleasantly surprised by the results!

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