

A ROLE PLAY AS A MODERN MEANS OF TEACHING ENGLISH: FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF FORMING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN FUTURE FILOLOGY STUDENTS

РОЛЬОВА ГРА ЯК СУЧАСНИЙ ЗАСІБ НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ: З ДОСВІДУ ФОРМУВАННЯ АНГЛОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У СТУДЕНТІВ-МАЙБУТНІХ ФІЛОЛОГІВ

In the article the relevance of scientific research on various aspects of use of a role play in the formation of the English language communicative competence is substantiated. The concept of a role play, its types and stages of implementation in practice are defined. The need for careful preparation for the role play was emphasized. Attention is focused on the important conditions for its successful demonstration by students in the classroom and the roles, they perform implementing a role-playing game. Special attention is paid to the teacher's monitoring mission and his tact in conducting analysis in order to further involve students in casual communication.

The relevance of using a role-playing game as a method that has significant advantages in the development of the English language communicative skills in dialogic speech; a method that teaches students to respond quickly and appropriately in communicative situations and brings the use of basic lexical and grammatical units to automatism have been proved. The efficiency of a role-playing game as one of the innovative methods, which improves students' communication skills more effectively than traditional ones has been substantiated.

Variants of practical implementation of a role-playing game at each stage of studying a certain topic (presentation, practice, production) are offered on the basis of effective textbooks in foreign languages for students of higher education institutions. It is noted that at the stages of presentation and practice, the teacher performs the role of a leader and assistant, ready at any moment provide the necessary assistance to students. The success of role-playing games at the initial stages of studying educational material depends on the clearness, comprehensibility and effectiveness of the teacher's instruction. At the production stage of the learned material, the teacher as a rule evaluates the educational achievements of students. Methodological recommendations for the implementation of role-playing games in the process of teaching English to students of philological specialties are provided.

Key words: a role play, presentation, practice and production stage.

У статті обґрунтовано актуальність наукових досліджень різних аспектів використання рольових ігор у формуванні англomовної комунікативної компетентності. Визначено поняття рольової гри, її види та етапи реалізації на практиці. Наголошено на необхідності ретельної підготовки до проведення рольової гри. Акцентовано увагу на важливих умовах її успішної демонстрації студентами в навчальній аудиторії; ролях, які вони виконують, імплементуючи рольову гру. Особливу увагу приділено моніторинговій місії викладача та його тактовності у проведенні аналізу з метою подальшого залучення студентів до невимушеного спілкування.

Доведено актуальність використання рольової гри як методу, що має значні переваги у розвитку навичок англomовної комунікативної компетентності у діалогічному мовленні; методу, який навчає студентів швидко та адекватно реагувати в комунікативних ситуаціях і доводить до автоматизму використання основних лексичних та граматичних одиниць. Обґрунтовано ефективне використання рольової гри як одного із новітніх методів, за допомогою якого комунікативні навички студентів удосконалюються ефективніше ніж за допомогою традиційних методів.

Пропонуються варіанти практичного застосування рольової гри на кожному етапі вивчення певної теми (презентація, відпрацювання, представлення) на основі дієвих підручників з іноземних мов для студентів закладів вищої освіти. Зазначено, що на етапах презентації та відпрацювання викладач виконує роль керівника і помічника, готового у будь-який момент надати необхідну допомогу студентам. Успішність рольових ігор на початкових етапах вивчення навчального матеріалу залежить від чіткості, зрозумілості, ефективності інструктажу викладача. На етапі представлення опанованого матеріалу викладач як правило проводить оцінку навчальних досягнень студентів. Надано методичні рекомендації щодо реалізації рольових ігор у процесі навчання англійської мови студентів філологічних спеціальностей.

Ключові слова: рольова гра, презентація, відпрацювання та етап представлення.

UDC 378.147 +372.874
DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/2663-6085/2023/65.1.15>

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Introduction. Development of foreign languages and cultures teaching system in national institutions of higher education requires regular updating of its components, in particular, modern means of teaching. Among them a role playing game stands out as a means of forming the English language communicative competence. Currently, such a tool is updated specifically for future philology students. Undoubtedly, the role of the English language in today's globalized world is increasing, as it is the language

of international communication, education, science and technology. Therefore, it is not surprising that the attention of methodist scientists to the problems of teaching a foreign language to future philology students at institutions of higher education has increased significantly. In our opinion, the task of a foreign language teacher is to use innovative ways of teaching in order to increase efficiency of the educational process, in particular, to develop perfect organizational forms and teaching methods in

creating a communicative environment for improving students' lexical and grammatical skills. The use of role-playing games during a foreign language lesson is an excellent example of implementing a real life communicative situation.

Previously unresolved parts of the overall problem. Although researchers have repeatedly emphasized the importance of role-playing in the activation of the educational process, the relevance of our research is determined by the insufficient study of the peculiarities of conducting English language classes using game-based learning methods for future philology students.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Development of theoretical and methodological foundations of a role play as a modern means of teaching English is the problem that is in the focus of many national and foreign scientists: Bihych O., Tarnopolskyi O., Semian N., Svitashova Yu., Hartsunova L., Shkurat O., Byrne D., Littlewood W., Jones L., Revell J. and others. In the works of Jones L. and Byrne D. close attention is given to the importance of role-playing in the activation of students' communicative activities. However, the problem of the formation of the English language communicative competence in future philology students by means of a role play has not been thoroughly investigated [1; 2; 8; 10; 11; 15].

The purpose of the article is to investigate and prove the importance of using role-playing games in foreign language classes for the formation of English communicative competence in philology students.

Methods. In our scientific research, we used the analytical method, based on which we studied foreign and national sources using analysis, systematization and evaluation of facts, phenomena and processes; we used the comparative-deductive method to determine the features of a role-playing game in practice; the method of theoretical generalization helped us formulate general conclusions.

Results and discussion. According to most scientists, a role-playing process is usually based on solving a certain problem, ensuring the optimal activation of students' communicative activity in class. The need to find a solution to the specified problem determines the natural course of communication, because any communication is generated by the need for it [14]. At the same time, setting a problem and the need to solve it serves to develop students' critical thinking. The need for careful consideration of the situation, the search for the right solution develops logical thinking, the ability to express oneself with arguments, to convince interlocutors, taking into account their arguments, as well as to conduct a discussion in a foreign language. Depending on the goal, role-playing games in foreign language classes can be conducted not only in groups or in subgroups of 3–5 participants, but also in pairs. Role-playing in

pairs is the simplest type of this methodological technique. Some authors recommend to use questionnaires, which the participants must fill out by asking each other questions, training dialogic speaking skills in conditions of limited time. As for role-playing in subgroups, it can be conducted in different ways. Most authors believe that all subgroups should play simultaneously, and the teacher moves from one subgroup to another and monitors the students' work. But there is also such an option, when subgroups play in turn: one plays, and all the others observe and evaluate the work in order to take an active part in the discussion of the performance [13].

Situational cards also deserve attention. Each participant receives a card containing information about a specific situation and a problem to be solved. A situational card contains a clear instruction, describing the action of participants. The teacher must take into account the level of language proficiency of the students. Here is an example of such a situational card:

Mother: you want to teach your child do ironing. Give instructions what to do and answer the child's questions if there are any.

Child: you have never done any ironing before you saw your mother do it. Listen to your mother's instructions and ask questions to clarify what is not clear to you.

Use the following instructions: plug in the cord in a socket, spread the sheet and the blanket cover, push the iron smoothly, set the temperature and steam controls according to the type of fabrics, do not touch the stick-proof sole with a finger, fold and take away the bedspread, set up the ironing board, spread the garment to avoid creases, refill the water container if steaming is necessary [9].

A role play helps to increase interest in learning the subject and motivates students. The introduction of a role-playing game into the educational process contributes to the expansion of students' monologic and dialogic speaking skills, upgrades their ability to independently express their thoughts, creates conditions for spontaneous communication, makes them respond to the behavior of other players in a hypothetical situation. Here are the main rules of the role-playing game: 1) students put themselves in a situation that may arise in real life; 2) students should adapt to a certain role in a similar situation. In some cases, they can play themselves, in others – they can take on an imaginary role; 3) the participants of the role-playing game must behave as if everything is happening in real life, their behavior must correspond to the role they are playing; 4) the participants of the game should concentrate their attention on the communicative use of language [3].

There are five categories of roles, the students act out; among them there are the ones, determining: 1) the gender and the age of a game participant; 2) the nationality or the social group a participant

belongs to; 3) the profession; 4) the range of actions in a life situation, a student may find himself in the future; 5) the functions of a game participant. The last two categories of roles are considered to be the most important ones in learning a foreign language, where “functional” roles are minimal blocks of a role play that are included in many other situations, as a result of which they must be worked out most carefully at the preparatory stage [14].

When preparing for a role-playing game, it is necessary to take into account the psychological factor, because usually adults and teenagers do not show a great desire to participate in the game, because they are afraid of showing themselves to be funny or inappropriate in front of the group. In order the students feel confident and at ease, it is very important to properly prepare them for the role play. The teacher’s ability to establish contact with students is of great importance. Creating a favorable atmosphere in the classroom is an important factor. There are three stages in a role-playing game: preparatory, main (actually the game itself) and final. Some authors suggest dividing the preparatory and final stages into classroom and home. At the same time, the preparatory stage in the classroom involves the instruction of a teacher, who introduces the role-playing situation and questions for discussion; gets the students acquainted with the linguistic content of the game; conducts preliminary training of lexical units and grammatical structures. Preparation at home consists of reading texts, reference books, additional material, watching podcasts on this issue, etc. [3; 7].

After a role play a necessary element is the final stage, which involves discussion of the role play and assessment of communicative activity of each student.

In our opinion, role-playing can be an effective means of developing the English language communicative competence in speaking. A role playing game can be really efficient in three stages of learning new material: presentation, practice, and production. At the presentation stage new lexical material and new grammatical structures are introduced in the context of the presented situation. This stage is distinguished by an active participation of a teacher, his constant support, explanations, etc. An example of a role-playing game as an effective means of developing English communicative competence in speaking can be the one on the topic “Teenage problems” from the textbook “A Way to Success” by N. Tuchyna.

Imagine such situation: you are a mother of a 16-year-old teenage son. He has changed a lot. Share your worries with your friend and ask for pieces of advice. Another student acts a role of a successful mother of teenagers, she is quite capable at coping with different problem situations. The first student, playing the role of a worried Mum,

presents her problems, using the following expressions: to become very secretive beyond a normal need for privacy; to change suddenly one’s school performance for worse; to be always depressed; to break up with one’s friends; to be often extremely hostile and sometimes violent; to stay out all night; to play truant or to refuse to go to university; to be hanging around all the time; to be annoying; not to let you know what’s going on.

A second student, who is a more successful mother, gives advice using the following expressions: she/ he’s been having problems with...; he/she used to/ would/ would never..., to start with...; the real problem is...; the trouble is.....; she/he can’t put an end to the whole situation...; it’s like banging his/ her head against a brick wall...; doesn’t he/ she...; it would be more reasonable to.... [9].

In our opinion, role-playing is seen as an effective method that is widely used by teachers for the formation of English communicative competence in speaking at the practice stage. Role plays are also used to activate and automate the lexical units and structures learned in previous classes. Let’s consider the example of the role-play for the topic “A Family”.

You are a young couple, who has been married for six months, act out a dialogue between a husband and a wife, who are discussing their financial issues, trying to manage their budget and improve the situation they are in.

Use the following expressions: make both ends meet; to be hard up; to live from hand to mouth; to be heavily in debt; to have a comfortable income; to tailor one’s lifestyle to one’s income; to treat parents as moneybags; to act as a sole bread winner; to splash out money; to contribute financially one’s marriage; to be a financial drain on the family [9].

Role-playing can be used by a teacher at the production stage to check students’ knowledge of lexical and grammatical material and to conduct a final assessment on the topic. This stage differs from the previous two in involving the least amount of supervision and assistance of a teacher. During such a role-playing game, students reproduce the learned lexical and grammatical material in the given situations. An example of such a game can be one from the textbook “Business Result” by Hughes J. & Haunton J. for topic “Sharing your working place”.

Work with a partner. Imagine that you are a manager of the Hub and a person with a small business, who is interested in using the space. You are going to have a conversation.

Student I. You are a manager. Prepare a list of reasons for sharing a workplace at the Hub (e. g. socializing, better than home-working etc.). Think of questions you would like to ask the other person about their business (e. g. How much space will you need?).

Student II. You are a person with business. Think what type of business you have and other details (e. g.

what you sell / provide / number of employees / the equipment you need, etc.). Prepare a list of questions about the Hub (e. g. How does it work? Why do people like working here?). When you are both ready, start the conversation. Change partners and swap roles [12].

Disadvantages of such a role-playing game include the time spent, as it may take more time than it is expected. The human factor should also be taken into account. If any of the students did not prepare their role or did not come to the class, this puts the event at risk. The role of the teacher in the process of preparing and conducting the game is constantly changing. The teacher manages the active and conscious activity of students to learn the educational material. At the initial stage of work, the teacher actively monitors the students' activities, but gradually he becomes only an observer. It is necessary to dwell on the peculiarities of control by the teacher during the role-playing game. The teacher monitors the participants, records their mistakes, but does not interrupt the game to correct them. After completing the game, you must first analyze its progress. Be sure to mark the successful moments, and then focus on the most typical mistakes of the participants and then organize work on their correction.

The teacher must be tactful, especially when evaluating the first role play. A negative assessment of the activities of its participants inevitably leads to a decrease in activity. Therefore, it is advisable to start discussing the results of the game with the good points, and then move on to the shortcomings. Despite the fact that the use of role-playing games is a good motivating factor and has many advantages over regular vocabulary and grammar exercises, many teachers do not use this type of activity in classes, because the role of the teacher is mainly observational and most teachers are afraid of losing control over the learning process. But the solution to this problem is extremely simple – the game must be well organized and planned. Secondly, the teacher needs to give students precise instructions regarding the course of the game and make sure that each participant knows his partner, the group in which he works and the role he performs. Thirdly, one should not forget about the compliance of the role-play with the goals and purpose of a particular lesson [10].

Conclusions. Having analyzed the theoretical material on the use of role-playing, one can confidently agree with national and foreign scientists, who believe that role-playing increases the quality of learning, ensures optimal activation of students' communicative activity and increases interest in the subject, including motivation to learn a foreign language. Role-playing games allow students to practice such communicative elements as the ability to start a conversation, support or end it, agree with the interlocutor's judgments or refuse them. Depending on the goals, a role play can be conducted at any stage of learning, to consolidate

or evaluate the material, to determine the level of language proficiency, etc.

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