

STRATEGIES TO DEVELOP EFL STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH TASK-BASED INSTRUCTIONS. SIGNIFICANCE OF ROLE PLAYS ON EFL STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract: This study was carried out to find out the effectiveness of role play technique in improving speaking skill in English. The population of the study was the grade X students of a public school from Lamjung district. The experimental group was taught through role play while the control class was taught through the traditional grammar based techniques. The total population of this study was 40 students who were enrolled in the academic year 2018/2019. The study was experimental approach. The tools applied in this research were observation sheet and speaking test. After 20 lessons of the teaching, the post-test of speaking was conducted in which the students in both groups were asked to answer. The results showed that there is a significant improvement in speaking skill of experimental group. It can be concluded that role play have significant effect on students' speaking skill.

Keywords: control ,experiment, role play, speaking ,technique

Introduction

One of the main goals of teaching English as a foreign language in Nepal is to make the students able to communicate in the target language. For the effective communication, students should be able to speak English fluently. To develop students' proficiency in speaking, different techniques of teaching have been recommended. In the speaking class, the students must be able to speak English. If the students have an inability to speak in English, they will face difficulty in expressing their ideas in classroom activities. Therefore, students must have ability to communicate and share their ideas, opinions and explanations in their classroom. Role play provides an opportunity to the students to express appropriate language functions correctly in the given roles and situation.

Due to more focus on paper pencil examination, i.e., reading and writing, the students of Secondary Education Examination (SEE) level are given less emphasis on communicative skills. The teachers follow the grammar based traditional techniques to develop communicative skills. It is found that the students who are able to write an essay on a given topic fail to communicate a simple idea fluently. So that, it is very significant to teach students some skills that they can use in the everyday interaction and role play can be an effective technique for this.

Richard (1985) defines role play as a drama-like classroom activities in which students take the roles of different participants in a situation, and, act out what might typically happen in that situation. For example, to practice how to express complains and apologies in a foreign language, students might have to role-play a situation in which a customer in a shop returns a faulty article to a salesperson. Doff (1992) states that in a role play, students imagine a role (e.g. a police officer, a shop assistant), a situation (e.g., buying food, planning a party) or both. Role play should be improvised; students decide exactly what to say as they go along. Situation, roles and useful expressions are the three parts in a role play.

Tompkins (2001) defines role play as it is one of the classroom teaching techniques that encourage students to participate actively in the process of learning English. Therefore, foreign language students practise the target language in context similar to real-life situations where stress and shyness are removed. Keneth (2008) states that role play can be defined as the type of students' behave in a certain context. In the field of managing, discrepancies in the identifying role that can be seen as role conflict which does not match for a person or by others role playing as a method of teaching which is the conscious practicing and discussion of the role in a group. While in the class, the difficulty can be briefly acted out so that the student can identify with the roles. Role play activities could be shown as the way student behaves in specific context and situation. The researcher defines the role playing technique as a methodology for teaching which is conscious representation and discussion of the role in a group. In the class a problem context is shortly acted out so that the students can cope with the character. Chaney (1998) states that speaking ability is the process of sharing and building meaning while using verbal and non-verbal symbols, in different situations. Speaking is significant in both languages learning and teaching. For long time, students recall the activities and memorized the conversations but nowadays, they should study how to express themselves. They should follow social and cultural rules in any context.

The present study is only a part of an investigation project, which was conducted to study the effectiveness of role play in improving speaking skill of SEE level Nepalese students. In a speaking class, besides other oral activities like picture description, storytelling and quizzing, role play can be used to develop students' conversational skills. A role play technique not only makes the students fluent in speaking but also makes them creative and confident. As communication is not confined in one situation and a role play gives them the scope to play a series of different situational interactions in a real life situation.

Review of Literature

Role play is an effective technique to develop students' speaking skill as it provides ample Opportunities to the students to take roles of different persons. Several studies have been carried out to Find the different aspects of role play techniques in EFL classrooms. The review of some of them has been mentioned in this section. Cornett (1999) shows that students improve fluency in language and oral interaction skills, beside the use of language of the body during face-to-face communication, when they are participated in role play techniques. Those techniques are especially fundamental for students learning a foreign language who may not often speak English at home because those students are eager to use the language and then improve their fluency and speaking with the chance to participate in role play. Role-play is simply required to play the other roles in the same way they think about how other roles may behave. As a result, role play can be clearly understood of many aspects like reactions, values, feelings, and attitudes of the person in the same.

Ments (1999) mentions a lot of areas where role play could be used. For testing linguistic ability, he said it could be done by devising scenes of everyday life, in particular those situations which make use of the vocabulary to be learnt, the students can be encouraged to use language in a free and interesting way.

He also noticed that one is using language and other ways of communicating and for that reason learning became 'an integral part of the task.' About role-play Ments claimed that it

expresses hidden feelings, student can discuss private issues and problems, enables students to empathize with others and understand their motivation.

Hedge (2000) states that a number of advantages have been claimed for role-play as a fluency activity if it is performed in pairs or groups rather than one group acting in front of the class. The students choose the role they want to play. Savignon (2003) conducts an important study on the improvement of interaction skills designed on a model of communicative competence including many basic characteristics. She defines communicative competence as the ability to function in a truly communicative setting- that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adjust itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors.

Holt and Kysilka (2006) state that role play technique can be fun and lead to develop learning, these techniques can be used a student communication, they help EFL students to comprehend the importance of cooperation and to have an interest in learning. Liu and Ding (2009) used role-play technique to see how the students performed in groups when they were given a familiar situation to role play in. They also observed their language potency and how the errors can be corrected as well as how to give feedback to the learners for further improvement. Jannah (2011) states that role play is very important in teaching speaking because it gives students in opportunity to practice communicating in different social context and in different social roles.

Yuliana, Kristiawan and Suhartie (2014) state that the students who were taught through role play got better result than the students who were taught through information gap. It is caused by the strategy that is used. Role play gives the opportunity to the students to explore their ability to be more active in teaching and learning process. The students have opportunities for stimulating their speaking skills which they can perform easily in the front of the class. In other words, role play helps the students to improve their speaking skill.

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