

Enhancing Effective Speaking Skills through Role Play and Tongue Twisters

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Abstract

This study focuses on enhancing effective speaking skills among undergraduate students by using effective tools of language learning through activities like role play and tongue twisters. The deficiency in communicative ability among the students is caused due to the students' lack of interest, inadequate practice in learning language and inappropriate environment for teaching EFL learning. Role play and tongue twisters can be quite simple and are good techniques to organize. Role play is highly flexible; it develops the initiative and imagination. It differentiates the individuality. Role play would train students to deal with the unpredictable nature of language. The English language teacher should focus on the factors that can contribute to a role-play and use tongue twisters to ensure greater success in learning English. They need to make sure that the language achievement demanded is well within the learners' capacity, their own enthusiasm, and careful and clear presentation and instructions.

Key Words: Importance of EFL, Role of Speaking, Role Play, Tongue Twisters

Introduction

It is important to acquire speaking skills than all other skills. "We learnt our first language through speech". (As cited in the techniques of Language Teaching by F.L.Billows) In the same way, if we teach the second language it would be more effective and also creates interest among the learners. A child should not depend only on text books for learning language, instead by constant practice or by using the language intensively they can acquire speaking skills. The teacher can act as a facilitator to teach language in the classroom. Through

activities the teacher can kindle the interest of the students towards second language. “Dr. Wilder Penfield, of the Neurological Institute, Montreal, has shown the theoretical and practical justification for this, the child must be taught entirely through activity, the language being used as if it were the mother tongue of the child, regardless of whether it is understood or not” (as cited in The techniques of Language Teaching by F.L.Billows)

The teacher can stimulate the learner’s interest by providing the situations like real communication. This would reduce the intense stress of facilitator to conduct activities in the classroom. As a result, the learners can reduce their anxiety and make them comfortable to learn the language in a spontaneous manner.

The EFL through speech assist the learners to develop their confidence and also helps them to groom their personality. The learners has the responsibility to withhold their position as a good speaker, so that he has to maintain the quality of speech with proper pronunciation, appropriate stress, perfect pause and exact intonation.

Task Based Language Learning

“Task requires participating to function primarily as ‘language users’ in the sense that they must employ the same kinds of communicative process as those involved in real world activities”. (As cited in Task-based language learning and Teaching by Ellis,R) Thus the task plays an important role in the process of speaking skills. The teacher can enable the learners by directing them through various exercises with the proper practice.

Crookes and Gass (1993a and 1993b), Bygate, Skehan and Swain (2001) suggest that tasks are directed at oral skills, particularly speaking. (Task-based language learning and Teaching)

Widdowson (1998) notes, there is a fundamental difference between ‘task’ and exercise according to whether linguistic skills are varied as developing through communicative activity or as a prerequisite for engaging in it. However, when learners engage in tasks they do not always focus on meaning and act as language users (Task-based language learning and Teaching)

Crookes (1986) suggests that there seems little sense in extending the team to include language free activities (Task-based language learning and Teaching)

Nunan (1989) suggests that a communicative task is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form. the task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right. (Task-based language learning and Teaching)

Role Play

Role play is a communication based technique which increases the learner's exposure and the oral fluency of the participants. Role play promotes the learners identity in a unique manner. It enables the learners to learn different social context, different styles in different languages, various expressions and body language. Thus the result would be more effective in the use of communicative process.

Darroch and Steiner (1970) considered role plays would be more successful if role players only played themselves, hence avoiding difficulty of taking on another 'character'.(Role play: Theory and Practice)

Mixon (1971), Hamilton (1976) and Geller (1978) argued that role plays approximate reality more closely, and involve participants more directly and profoundly. . (Role play: Theory and Practice)

Geller (1978) clearly attributed replication failures to the technical inadequacy of such role play experiments, particularly with respect to subject involvement. (Role play: Theory and Practice)

Bem (1968) argued that role plays were not an adequate substitution for experiment but offered a valid replication methodology, provided that the experiment met the demands of functional equivalence with respect to the experiment replicated. That is, the behaviors of the stimulation need not necessarily be identical to those of the target experiment or situation, but

must provide an analogue that produces the same results or output. (Role play: Theory and Practice)

Role play as a term describes a range of activities characterized by involving participants in ‘as-if’ or ‘simulated’ actions and circumstances. It may range from very minimalist settings of short duration to highly complex extended situations such as the grindstone experiment, where a whole island was taken over and participant’s role played the aftermath of a nuclear disaster for several weeks (Olsen and Christiansen, 1966). (Role play: Theory and Practice)

In brief, role play or simulation technique are a way of deliberately constructing an approximation of aspects of a ‘real life’ episode or experience, but under ‘controlled’ conditions where much of the episode is initiated and/or defined by the experimenter or therapist. (Role play: Theory and Practice)

Children explore their words with play; they posit ‘as-if’ conditions; they exercise and practice powers and aspects of their identities, in both bizarre and banal make-believe settings. They ‘research’ each other’s reactions, powers, knowledge and identities when joining in make-believe play with other children. Researchers, therapists and educators are in a similar position but most frequently use little freedom with respect to the selection of tools and media of exploration. Some time ago Illich, in *Tools for Conviviality* (1973), pleaded for researches to become anarchic in their use of language and research tools, to open up the sterile epistemological grounding that characterized most research methodology. This plea has been little heard and even less acted upon. Role play could facilitate a less hampered approach, indeed could provide fun and real interest in a research or therapy collaboration with subjects and clients-experiences unimaginable within conventional paradigms. (Role play: Theory and Practice)

Tongue Twisters

“Tongue Twisters are the perfect warm-up vehicle for the individuals to practice” (As cited in Hand book of African Educational Theories and Practices) It creates more curiosity in the midst of the learners. The exercise helps the learners to realize their actual oral fluency. The

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drill allows the learners to adapt complicated words to be pronounced easily and also permit the learners to differentiate the similar sounds of different words. Whereas the continuous practice makes the learners tiresome in repeating the same word or phrases, as a result of this the learner would be able to produce accurate sounds of the words unconsciously.

The teacher can make use of simple spoken tongue twisters to improve learner's pronunciation. The learners can improve the speech skills by practicing faster the twisters without slipping up the language. This would help them to strengthen the pronunciations with superior vocal habits. "People who have a word on the 'tip of their tongue' very often have intuitions about the word's beginning or end, and these intuitions are right more often than guesses about the middle of the word (Brown and Mc Neill 1966, Brown 1978)" (As cited in the Slips of the Tongue and Language Production)

The teacher can achieve the English speaking environment by avoiding the learners who speak their native language in the classroom. The learners can gradually improve their conversational speed from the level of normal to high. "Butterworth and Whittler (1980) report that impermissible constant clusters can quite easily be elicited in a tongue twister task "(The Slips of the Tongue and Language Production)

Stemberger's argument for an abstract phonological representation contrast sharply with Mowrey and Mackays' (1990) view, who deny the necessity of assuming abstract sub lexical units. They recorded speech motor activity during the production of tongue twisters, such as "Bob flew by Bligh Bay". They determined whether the patterns of muscles activity were normal. Many utterances were either normal or abnormal in both respects. However, there were also utterances that sounded perfectly normal but showed unusual patterns of muscle activity, which Mowrey and Mackay viewed as blends of the patterns of motor activity typical for different target segments. (Aspects of Language Production)

Mowrey and Mackay's conducted that their data represented a serious threat to the standard Model, which claims that during speech production discrete linguistic units are selected and combined before motor execution. They argued that on such a view, the motor patterns should always correspond to those typically found for particular linguistic units and should not be blends of such patterns. They note that "the only way to 'save' such models from the evidence

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is to postulate parallel but independent processing for the two structures which will contribute to the intermediate articulation right down to the level of motor specification, and then ‘allow’ for simultaneous and graded execution. Unfortunately, ‘saving’ a model is far cry from providing support for it”. (Aspects of Language Production)

Mowrey and Mackay’s study is important because it shows the abnormalities can rise during motor execution that cannot be perceived even by the most attentive listeners. (Nolan, Holst and Kuehnert 1996; Stevens, 1989) However the data do not present a serious challenge for the standard Model. First, it is unknown how often motor errors similar to those found by Mowrey and Mackay occur in natural speech situations in which speakers do not repeatedly produce tongue twisters but sequences of more dissimilar words, without EMG needles in their tongue and lips. . (Aspects of Language Production)

Second, as Flower (1995) has pointed out, Mowrey and Mackay only recorded speech motor activity at as small parts of the motor programs, as Mowrey and Mackay assume, or larger structures, which would imply that at least some of the alleged motor errors could be regarded as feature or segmental errors. Finally, though the EMG data indeed do not provide new support for the standard Model, they are perfectly compatible with in. the domain of the model is the generation of speech plans, and speech errors analyses have provide ample evidence that there plans can include errors. The speech plans must be executed and nothing in the model precludes that additional error can arise during this process. To exclude the existence of abstract linguistic speech plans, it must be shown that all of the evidence usually explained by reference to the properties of these plans can be explained solely by reference to motor variables. . (Aspects of Language Production)

Strategies

The study focuses on the benefits of using Role play and tongue twisters, how it gives the learners the opportunity to practice by improving a range of real life spoken language in the class room, it is extremely effective technique if the students are confident and cooperative. To improve communication in the classroom, to add interest, relieve boredom and increase the

motivation of the students and to create an effective learning situation in the English language learning the benefits are listed as follows:

1. Role play develops participatory skills
2. It helps the learners to develop their decision making power
3. It allows the participants to overcome their fear and make them comfort zones
4. Feedback system facilitate the students to retrieve their mistakes immediately and also lend a hand to them to improve their knowledge in language learning
5. Tongue twisters helps the students to learn the simple phrases and phonetic structure of the language
6. Repetitive drills allow the students to differentiate the similar sound structure of the variety words
7. It would also create enthusiasm among learners
8. It allows the students to maintain clarity in their language.
9. The exercise allows the students to develop their vocal agility flexible
10. The use of tongue twisters as a fast, fun and effective vocal warm up challenges vocalists to improve pronunciation and technique in speaking skills.
11. By practicing tongue twisters, they can develop well-modulated voice, with right tone and pitch so that the level of volume required can be adjusted.
12. Articulate the words with clarity, precision and the correct rhythm.
13. The students can adapt the immediate settings-time, place and audience.
14. The individual personality of speakers can be developed
15. The students can express their thoughts in a spontaneous fashion, also will develop the flow in their dialogue.

Conclusion

The level of language needed for a discussion should be lower than that used in intensive language-learning activities in the same class. It should be easily recalled and produced by the participants, so that they can speak fluently with the minimum of hesitation. The task helps the learners to express their ideas. The use of role play and tongue twisters increases the learner's interest and allow the students to involve in a communicative task. It also promotes social

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interaction skills. Finally, with communicative tasks the learner's speech has a definite aim, which may have to be achieved with in a time limit. This makes it easier to recall the attention of the whole class at the given time, in order to report and compare their achievements.

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