

APPLICATION OF ROLE-PLAYING GAMES INTO HIGH SCHOOL TO FOSTER SPEAKING SKILLS

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Role-play is considered one of the most effective interactive techniques in teaching English. According to Jack Richards role-plays are activities in which students are assigned roles and improvise a scene or exchange, based on given information or clues [5].

Handfield stated that learners take on fictional characters and are provided with certain details about them. In such activities, the use of language is more important than acting itself. The situation remains open and can develop in various directions [3]. So, role-playing games can be defined as structured tasks where students adopt roles and perform situations in the target language, either following a script or improvising within a given context. Although, their success depends on classroom conditions, such as clear instructions, appropriate difficulty, and active student involvement. Without these factors, role-play risks becoming superficial and may not provide meaningful speaking practice.

There are several types of role-plays. Krebt's classification is one of the most popular. It suggests «... fully scripted role-play, semi-scripted role-play, and non-scripted role-play» [4, p. 865]. In fully scripted role-plays, students read or memorise ready-made dialogues, which is especially helpful for beginners with limited vocabulary who need strong support. Semi-scripted role-plays offer a model dialogue with gaps, allowing students to adapt the language to their own ideas. Non-scripted role-plays provide only key words, roles, or a brief situation description, requiring students to create their own dialogues. This type is more suitable for intermediate and advanced learners who are capable of spontaneous speech. The choice of type depends on students' proficiency level and lesson aims.

«By employing the semi-scripted role-play, the students could freely express their feelings and make them able to explore their creativity in more ways to enable them to face the real life» [6, p. 327]. In classroom practice, this type is very useful as it supports weaker students by reducing anxiety through structure, while stronger students remain engaged because they can expand on ideas. For this reason, it can be considered the most appropriate type of role-play for high school students.

Role-playing games offer numerous advantages, including increased motivation, improved fluency, and the development of creativity. For teenagers aged fifteen to sixteen, taking on a different role helps reduce the fear of making mistakes. Researchers point out that role-play «promotes language learning, helps to increase cognitive interest in the subject, while making the learning process less difficult, develops memory and thinking, focuses attention on a particular subject, and motivates students to learn English» [1, p. 360]. When implemented effectively, role-play encourages equal participation, builds confidence, and fosters cooperation among students.

At the same time, this method has certain disadvantages. Common challenge can include the dominance of more extroverted students, not enough preparation, and pressure from the curriculum. Teachers must carefully adapt role-play activities to students' age, personality traits, and lesson objectives. Jonathan de Haan states in his research on game-based learning that learning occurred mostly around games not during games [2] if goals, materials, and teacher guidance are not properly aligned.

In the Ukrainian context, role-play is still not widely used, particularly in high school. Many teachers continue to focus mainly on grammar exercises, translation, and workbook activities. As a result, teenagers may have theoretical knowledge and passive vocabulary but lack sufficient speaking practice.

To promote wider use of role-playing in English lessons, such activities should become a regular part of classroom practice. They can be short and easily fit into a standard 45-minute lesson. For instance, after learning new expressions, students can act out a dialogue between groupmates. This allows students to use English in realistic situations. The effectiveness of such activities increases when the teacher monitors the process and provides feedback. Moreover, speaking outcomes can be measured through specific criteria, such as fluency, accuracy, interaction and task achievement.

During teaching practice with a 10th grade at Rivne Lyceum «Centre of Hope» named after Nadiya Marynovych, several problems with speaking

were observed. Before introducing role-play, students completed a questionnaire. Many of them were willing to speak and had enough vocabulary, but they struggled to use correct grammatical structures in spontaneous communication. Others felt anxious about speaking in front of the class and required prompts or scripts.

After incorporating role-playing games into lessons, some improvement was noticed. Students became more active and showed greater interest in English. The activities helped create a more comfortable environment for communication, where students could practice language in realistic situations and gradually improve both accuracy and confidence.

In conclusion, role-play is an effective tool for developing speaking skills in high school. When properly organised, it creates an engaging and communicative learning environment that prepares students for real-life use of English.

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