Interactive Methods of Teaching English

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Abstract. For learners, learning a new language can be a challenging process at times. However, there are a number of approaches to teaching foreign languages that enable educators to facilitate this process. This article discusses several interactive approaches to teaching language and the advantages they offer students.

Key words: *role play, brainstorming, case-study method, presentations, discussions.*

Introduction

Interactive language learning approaches are the most successful. The aim of the article Students must pick up and comprehend the content fast because of the current world's rapid development, especially when it comes to learning a foreign language. These days, being proficient in at least one foreign language is becoming essential to a specialist's ability to perform their job. As a result, it's critical to consider the effectiveness and caliber of the foreign language learning processis to define the main role of interactive methods of teaching English.

To achieve the given aim, the following tasks were specified: to describe the main interactive methods and to give some examples of using these techniques.

The term "interactive" means that people work together and have an influence on each other. This situation implies a dialogue or a conversation. Therefore, these methods are aimed at the interaction between students and the teacher as well as among students only. It requires an active role of students in the learning process [1, p. 159].

The purpose of the interactive learning is to create some special conditions leading to the involvement of all the students into the learning process in which the participants can understand and realize everything that happens, influence each other and make their own contribution having established the friendly and mutually supportive relationship [2, p. 7].

The most popular methods are role plays, brainstorming, case-study method, presentations and discussions. They develop communicative skills, logical thinking and different types of intellectual activity such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, and generalization [3, p. 30]. These student-centred methods are highly appropriate, particularly for involving students more actively in acquiring knowledge, skills and strategies [4, p. 9].

It is commonly known that role plays make the learning process at the university more educational and proficient, improve interdisciplinary relationships, connect the theory with real needs of the professional field, and develop skills that are necessary for the future specialists. The key element is the role playing that gives opportunity to form skills that are difficult to acquire under ordinary learning conditions [5, p. 451].

There are two ways a role play can go: scripted and non-scripted. With a scripted role play, the teacher might use an example in a text book. This is a good idea for a warm up exercise, by getting everyone to split up into pairs and allowing them to speak to their partner, taking on different roles. Non-scripted ones are such role plays when students are given some roles and must use whatever knowledge they have in order to speak with partners. There are a couple of ideas for a general English class. This can be adapted to suit a situation.

- Telephone Conversation

Speaking on the phone is different to a face-to-face conversation because one relies solely on the language to communicate. Get the students who are practicing to sit back to back in order to work properly. There is a whole range of ideas which one can use to act this out. Examples include: phoning to make a complaint, speaking to a friend or inquiring about a job position.

- Going to the Shop

It is effective for younger learners as it will teach them the basics of interacting with people. Children generally rely on their parents to buy things for them, therefore this will boost their overall general confidence in buying. It can be as simple or as complex as one wishes, depending on the situation. Key phrases are often important here, such as "I would like…" "How much are…" "Good morning…" and so forth.

Another interesting interactive method that allows to form significant qualities and to develop thinking is brainstorming. Brainstorming represents joint search of the ideas necessary for the solution of any problem. The main advantages of this method (under the condition of its correct application) are that students seem to be "liberated" – the language barrier disappears, there is no fear to say something wrong, the restraint goes away, etc. The method of brainstorming develops creative and associative thinking, initiative, the ability to produce a maximum of ideas in a tight time, the ability to express personal opinion [6].

There are some ideas of brainstorming activities:

- Multi-purpose Items

First, the teacher gives the class any object. Next, give the students a couple of minutes to think of all of the different uses for that item. In about five or six minutes, the teacher asks students to share what they have come up with.

For example, you can use forks to eat food, comb your hair, open cans, mix ingredients, and clean pans. Not so bad for a simple fork. Using the "Multi-purpose Items" encourages creativity and it's fun to hear what the students come up with.

- Talking Timebomb

First, the teacher comes up with a topic or idea. Next, the teacher starts the music, and students have to think of as many words as they can for that topic.

Someone starts with a ball. When he /she comes up with a word, he /she passes the ball to another student. This process continues but students can't repeat something that has already been said.

When the music stops, whoever is holding the ball loses. And the punishment can be anything. For example, they must speak for one minute about a topic the teacher gives them.

An equally interesting interactive method that the teacher can use is the case-study method. It is a learning technique in which the student is faced a particular problem, the case. The case study facilitates the exploration of a real issue within a defined context, using a variety of data sources.

Performing case study gives students the following benefits, it:

1) allows students to learn by doing. Case study permits students to step into the shoes of decision-makers in real organizations, and deal with the issues managers face, with no risk to themselves or the organization involved;

2) improves the students ability to ask the right questions in a given problem situation;

3) exposes students to a wide range of industries, organizations, functions and responsibility levels. This provides students the flexibility and confidence to deal with a variety of tasks and responsibilities in their careers. It also helps students to make more informed decisions about their career choices;

4) strengthens the student's grasp of management theory, by providing real-life examples of the underlying theoretical concepts. By providing rich, interesting information about real business situations they breathe life into conceptual discussions;

5) reflects the reality of managerial decision-making in the real world. Here students must make decisions based on insufficient information. Cases reflect the ambiguity and complexity that accompany most management issues;

6) helps to understand and deal with different viewpoints and perspectives of the other members in their team. Unquestionably, this serves to improve students communication and interpersonal skills;

7) provides an integrated view of management. Managerial decision-making involves integration of theories and concepts learnt in different functional areas such as marketing and finance. The case method exposes students to this reality of management [7, p. 85].

We can draw the conclusion that interactive teaching strategies help to maximize the process of learning when studying English. Their goal is to improve the effectiveness of teaching English language communication while implementing methods for motivation. The greatest resemblance to the actual conditions of professional activity, students' broad autonomy, decision-making in the context of creative competition, and the development of skills for spontaneous speech are just a few benefits of utilizing interactive learning methods in the classroom. Other benefits include encouraging students' organizational skills development and bridging the gap between language study and real-world application.

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