DEVELOPING B1 LEARNERS' SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH THE ROLE-PLAY METHOD

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Abstract. Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning foreign languages. It helps learners to communicate, express their opinions and interact with other people. However, many English learners at B1 level find it difficult to speak due to limited vocabulary knowledge, lack of confidence and lack of opportunities to practice the language in real life situations. This paper is intended to investigate the role of the Role-Play Method in the development of speaking skills of secondary school learners of B1 level. It is about the theoretical basis of role-play, its educational benefits and practical ways of its application in English lessons. The article posits that role-play can provide opportunities for meaningful communication. The Role-Play Method and the Development of Speaking Skill of Secondary School Students at B1 Level The theoretical background of role-play, its educational advantages and practical ways of applying it in English lessons are described. The article suggests that role-play can provide opportunities for meaningful communication, encourage active participation and help learners to use English with more confidence. It also provides a practical classroom framework that teachers can adapt to their learners' needs.

Keywords: Role-Play Method, speaking skills, B1 learners, EFL, communication, English language teaching.

Introduction. English has become a crucial tool for international communication, education and professional development. Thus, one of the main objectives of foreign language teaching is to develop students' speaking skills.

Learners need to be able to use the language in different communicative situations and not just memorize grammar rules and vocabulary. But speaking can be difficult for English learners. Some students are reluctant to make mistakes and some others have difficulty to find the right words or express their ideas. In a normal classroom, students might spend more time filling out grammar exercises than having real conversations. Thus, they may know English rules but have difficulty communicating naturally. One possible solution to these problems is the role-play method. It enables learners to play out different real life situations and to communicate with their classmates in English. Role-play is a great way for students to practice asking questions, giving opinions, making suggestions and responding to others. The objective of this paper is to explore the contribution of the Role-Play Method to the development of speaking skills of secondary school students at B1 level.

Research question: How can the Role-Play Method help B1-level learners develop their English-speaking skills?

Main part. This article focuses primarily on three key elements of foreign language teaching:

Who to teach? B1-level secondary school learners.

What to teach? English speaking skills, containing fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and communicative competence.

How to teach? Through the Role-Play Method.

B1 students should be able to speak in regular settings and comprehend the essential ideas of well-known subjects. To become more self-assured and autonomous language users, they nevertheless require frequent speaking practice. Through role-playing, they can practice communicating in contexts that are important and familiar to them.

Theoretical background of the Role-Play Method. As part of a communicative teaching method called role-playing, students assume various roles and act out

scenarios based on actual or hypothetical situations. For instance, students could pretend to be patients and receptionists, visitors and travel agents, or clients and shop staff. This approach's primary goal is to motivate pupils to communicate in the target language instead of just repeating phrases they have learned. In role-playing exercises, students ask questions, share information, voice ideas, and react to their partners. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the Role-Play Method are closely related. CLT highlights how crucial language use is to achieving meaningful communication. With this method, the instructor sets up scenarios where students must interact in order to finish a job or find a solution. The concepts of cooperative learning also encourage role-playing because students collaborate, exchange ideas, and assist one another in completing communicative tasks. According to Anjani and Yuliati (2025), role-playing can be utilized as a student-centered framework for fostering learner autonomy, confidence, and oral communication. Furthermore, role-play provides a connection between classroom learning and real-life language use. Instead of practising isolated sentences, students use English in a meaningful context.

Why is the Role-Play Method important for developing speaking skills? B1-level English learners are suggested enough benefits in most case by the Role-Play Method. It first improves speaking fluency. Learners are afforded the chance to engage in uninterrupted dialog and address various inquiries. Consistent practice can aid them in articulating their thoughts more fluidly. Secondly, it enhances the confidence of learners. Certain students experience unease when articulating in English before the entire class. Collaborating in pairs or small groups can foster a more nurturing educational atmosphere. Third, it enhances vocabulary usage. Students work with words and phrases related to everyday situations such as shopping, traveling, ordering food, asking for information. Fourth, it develops communicative competencies. Learners will not only practice producing sentences but also listening, responding, asking for clarification and maintaining

conversations. Lastly, it promotes involvement. Every student is given a position and a communication goal. Speaking courses may become more captivating and fascinating as a result. Studies also show that using role-play in English language classes can be helpful. Aliakbari and Jamalvandi (2010) looked at role-play as a way to teach through tasks and found that it helped improve students' speaking skills. Mayordomo-Ortiz and Javadinejad (2025) looked into using simulation and role-play with secondary school students and found that these methods helped improve their speaking skills and made them more motivated. These studies show that using structured role-play can be a helpful way to teach speaking skills.

Ishak and Aziz (2022), in their systematic review of 20 studies, also found that role-play can support learners' speaking fluency, interaction, and confidence in English communication.

Practical Application of the Role-Play Method. Teachers can use role-play activities at different stages of a speaking lesson. The following framework is designed for B1-level secondary school learners.

Stage 1: Preparation. The teacher starts by talking about the topic and describes the situation. Students study or go over some helpful words and phrases before beginning the activity.

For example, if the topic is travelling, the teacher introduces expressions such as:

I would like to book a ticket.

How much does it cost?

What time does the bus leave?

Could you recommend a hotel?

I think we should choose this option.

Stage 2: Role Assignment. Students are split into pairs or small groups. Every student gets a role and a brief explanation of the scenario. The teacher allows them a few minutes to get their thoughts ready.

Stage 3: Role-Play Performance. The students perform a role play using English. During this the teacher will observe how they communicate and make notes. They will not interrupt the students every time they make a mistake. At the end of the role plays the teacher will give feedback on the students vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and fluency. The students can also share what they found easy or difficult.

Example Classroom Activity: Planning a School Trip.

Topic: Travelling and making decisions

Level: B1

Method: Role-Play

Group organization: Four groups with four students in each group.

Situation: Students are members of a school travel club. They need to plan a one-day school travel club, they need to plan a one-day school trip together. Each student has a different responsibility.

Roles:

Student A – Group Leader: Organizes the discussion and asks everyone for their opinions.

Student B – Budget Manager: Suggests affordable options and discusses costs.

Student C – Transport Manager: Gives opinions about transport and travel time.

Student D – Activity Planner: Suggests interesting places and activities.

Each group discusses the available options and agrees on a final plan. At the end, one student presents the group's decision to the class.

Useful expressions:

What do you think about this idea?

I think we should choose...

In my opinion...

I agree with you.

I see your point, but...

What about going by bus?

We decided to choose this option because...

This activity encourages learners to express their opinions, listen to others, make suggestions, and reach an agreement. It also gives every student a clear communicative responsibility.

Assessment of Students' Speaking Performance. A simple assessment rubric can be used by teachers to assess students' speaking performance. The main criteria are fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, interaction.

In role-play activities, teachers should focus on the students' ability to communicate, not on memorizing sentences. Feedback that is constructive can help learners to spot their errors and get better at speaking.

Possible Challenges and Solutions. There are some advantages to role-play but it may also pose some challenges for teachers. Students may be shy or afraid of making mistakes, and some may have limited vocabularies.

To overcome these difficulties teachers should create a supportive atmosphere in the classroom, provide useful expressions and give clear roles to each student. Pair and group work may also promote equitable participation.

Discussion. The Role-Play Method makes English lessons more communicative and learner-centred. It is especially useful for B1 learners because they can practice giving opinions, exchanging information and discussing familiar topics.

However, successful role-play activities require clear instructions, suitable topics and appropriate guidance from the teacher. The emphasis should be on communication rather than learning by heart dialogs.

Conclusion. In conclusion, the Role-Play Method can be a valuable technique for developing the speaking skills of B1-level secondary school learners. It provides opportunities to practise English in realistic situations, improve vocabulary, develop

fluency, and increase confidence. Through pair and group activities, students become more active participants in the learning process. Through preparation, role assignment, performance, and evaluation, the article has demonstrated how role-play can be incorporated into speaking courses. With proper planning and classroom support, teachers can overcome obstacles like low vocabulary, speaking fear, and uneven participation.

As a result, the Role-Play Method can be regarded as a valuable and practical strategy for enhancing students' communication skills and getting them ready to utilize English in everyday contexts.

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