THE ROLE OF GAMES IN TEACHING

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Abstract. This study aims to find out the role of games in promoting students' willingness to communicate and their teachers' attitude toward it. In addition, games played a significant role in improving the EFL leaners' willingness to communicate. In the light of these findings, the researchers suggested using games as energizers and practical activities at the end of class not only to improve enthusiasm for learning, but also to improve the learners'.

Key words: Games, Visual techniques, Verbal explanation, The advantages of using games, vocabulary presentation.

There are numerous techniques concerned with vocabulary presentation. However, there are a few things that have to be remembered irrespective of the way new lexical items are presented. If teachers want students to remember new vocabulary, it needs to be learnt in context, practiced, and then revised to prevent students from forgetting. We can tell the same about grammar. Teachers must make sure students have understood the new words, which will be remembered better if introduced in a "memorable way".

Bearing all this in mind, teachers have to remember to employ a variety of techniques for new vocabulary presentation and revision.

Gairns and Redman (1986) suggest the following types of vocabulary presentation techniques:

1. Visual techniques. These pertain to visual memory, which is considered especially helpful with vocabulary retention. Learners remember better the material that has been presented by means of visual aids. Visual techniques lend themselves well to presenting concrete items of vocabulary-nouns; many are also helpful in conveying meanings of verbs and adjectives. They help students associate presented material in a meaningful way and incorporate it into their system of language values.

2. Verbal explanation. This pertains to the use of illustrative situations, synonymy, opposites, scales (Gairns and Redman), definition (Nation) and categories (Allen and Valette).

3. Use of dictionaries. Using a dictionary is another technique of finding out meanings of unfamiliar words and expressions. Students can make use of a variety of dictionaries: bilingual, monolingual, pictorial, thesauri, and the like. As French Allen perceives them, dictionaries are "passports to independence," and using them is one of the student-centered learning activities [1].

Using games. The advantages of using games. Many experienced textbook and methodology manuals writers have argued that games are not just time-filling activities but have a great educational value. W. R. Lee holds that most language games make learners use the language instead of thinking about learning the correct forms. He also says that games should be treated as central not peripheral to the foreign language teaching programme. A similar opinion is expressed by Richard-Amato, who believes games to be fun but warns against overlooking their pedagogical value, particularly in foreign language teaching. There are many advantages of using games. "Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely" (Richard-Amato).

They are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings (Hansen). They also enable learners to acquire new experiences within a foreign language which are not always possible during a typical lesson. Furthermore, to quote Richard-Amato, they, "add diversion to the regular classroom activities," break the ice, "[but also] they are used to introduce new ideas". In the easy, relaxed atmosphere which is created by using games, students remember things faster and better (Wierus and Wierus). Further support comes from Zdybiewska, who believes games to be a good way of practicing language, for they provide a model of what learners will use the language for in real life in the future.

Games encourage, entertain, teach, and promote fluency. If not for any of these reasons, they should be used just because they help students see beauty in a foreign language and not just problems[2].

Choosing appropriate games. There are many factors to consider while discussing games, one of which is appropriacy. Teachers should be very careful about choosing games if they want to make them profitable for the learning process. If games are to bring desired results, they must correspond to either the student's level, or age, or to the material that is to be introduced or practiced. Not all games are appropriate for all students irrespective of their age. Different age groups require various topics, materials, and modes of games.

For example, children benefit most from games which require moving around, imitating a model, competing between groups and the like. Furthermore, structural games that practice or reinforce a certain grammatical aspect of language have to relate to students abilities and prior knowledge. Games become difficult when the task or the topic is unsuitable or outside the students experience. Another factor influencing the choice of a game is its length and the time necessary for its completion. Many games have a time limit, but according to Siek-Piskozub, the teacher can either allocate more or less time depending on the student's level, the number of people in a group, or the knowledge of the rules of a game etc.

THE LIST OF USED LITERATURE

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