

Role-Play: An Interactive Activity To Enhance The English Speaking Skills Of Engineering Graduates

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ABSTRACT:

Improving fluency in English is one of the academic challenges of Indian engineering graduates. The students frequently come across various difficulties in practicing English speaking. The most commonly found problem with every engineering graduate in speaking English is the impact of the mother tongue on English. Another reason is the lack of motivation to practice using English in their everyday conversations. Most of the students are shy and afraid of participating in discussions with their peers in English.

Similarly, several factors can trigger difficulties in the speech abilities of engineering students, including the learning environment of the students, learning content, their interest, including the techniques used in teaching English. Engineering students may use various ways to develop their speaking skills in English. The role of English teachers is also equally important in the teaching-learning processes of English speaking skills. The teaching techniques used by the English teacher should create interest in students to practice their speaking. One such kind of technique is role play, which is so interactive, engaging, and fun way of learning English.

KEY WORDS: Engineering graduates, English speaking skills, Role-play activity.

INTRODUCTION:

Speaking is one of the most fundamental skills of human beings, as we do it constantly; we can examine the processes involved in our day-to-day life. Many factors are involved in the speaking ability of a person, such as vocabulary, structure, grammatically arranged sentences. Speaking is the ability that is the integration of many subsystems. Including all these factors in speaking in English is a challenging task for engineering graduates. Yet, it is the unavoidable skill they need to master. "Encouraging talking is sometimes viewed as very simple. Business language schools all over the world hire people who have no preparation to teach a discussion. Albeit talking is normal, communicating in a language other than our own is definitely not simple." (Bailey, 2003: 48) There are many teaching techniques and media available to enhance the English speaking abilities. Role-play technique is very appropriate and exciting for improving students' speaking skills.

As per Bailey Nunan (2003:57): "Role-plays are additionally incredible exercises for speaking in the generally protected environment of the classroom. In a role-play, learners are given specific roles in the specific language. For instance, a particular learner plays the role of a traveler calling the police to report his wallet taken. Another participant plays the role of a cop attempting to help the traveler document a report. Role-plays offer students to work on communicating in the target language before they should do as such in the real-time situations."

Through role-plays, the students pretend to be or act a character in a particular situation. It increases their learning interest and enthusiasm. It is a perfect activity in which learners can imaginatively use their English and encourage student debate. Students find a chance to practice and improve their ability to speak English Literature review:

HOW TO IMPART SPEAKING SKILLS?:

The prime responsibility of English teachers while teaching young engineering students is they have to keep one fact in mind that every classroom is a combination of students with diverse abilities, observations, expectations, knowledge, motivation level, and even different learning styles. Therefore, English teachers need to use other methods to provide as many possibilities as possible to make it possible for the entire class to find something to hold on to, grow and develop.

Speaking

One of the most significant aspects of second language learning is mastering the ability to communicate. During learning, learning success is measured through the ability to interact with others in English conversations. Bygate has cited in Nunan (1991:40) suggests that; "Oral conversations can be portrayed as far as schedules, which are ordinary (and subsequently unsurprising) methods of introducing data schedules contain frequently repeating kinds of data structures, being either be interpretive or evaluative."

SKILL

Everyone born on this earth must have some form of talent. This will most likely be created if there are people in the country. Typically, it is generated by personal experience or training. People will develop their skills if they want to learn a lot. The performance of a skill is great, according to the advanced learners' dictionary of current English (Gatenby, Hornby, and Wakefield).

Skill must be enhanced continuously if one wants to grow be an expert. Skill concerning communication includes;

- * the ability to pronounce phonological features of the English language clearly;
- * Skills in using appropriate rhythm, word stress, and intonation patterns;
- * An adequate degree of English fluency;
- * Interpersonal and transactional skills;
- * Skills in the management of interaction;
- * The ability to take part in short and long speaking sessions;
- * The ability to convey meaningful sentences;
- * Conversational speaking and listening skills;
- * The ability to know about and negotiating the aims of conversations;
- * Using proper conversational fillers and formulate.

ROLE PLAY:

Role-play is an interactive speech activity in which learners either place themselves in the shoes of someone else or stay in their shoes and presume themselves and play a role in an imaginary situation.

As per Porter-Ladousse (1987:3), "Role-play exercises range from profoundly controlled guided discussions toward one side of the scale to ad-libbed show exercises at the other; from basic practiced exchange execution to exceptionally complex mimicked situations."

In role-play, learners are usually given some details about a 'role' as defined by Scrivener (e.g., job title or person). These are printed on 'role cards' occasionally. A role card is nothing but the name of a job, such as a mother, a detective, or they can provide advice on what to do instead of the role itself, such as buying a British train ticket. A role card is nothing but the name of a job, such as a mother, a detective, or they can offer advice on what to do instead of the role itself, such as buying a British train ticket (Scrivener 2005: 155).

As Qing (2011) says, "Role-play is defined as the prediction in real-life circumstances with social actions" (p. 37).

SIMULATION:

Role-play and simulation are independent activities, but they are similar activities that are often done simultaneously and are complementary to each other. In a simulation workout, role-play is where students select artificial roles in a fixed environment to act out a scenario. Students should follow the assigned roles to see the situation, relate their talents and observe the situation from another point of view, and feelings can be stimulated and realized. Simulation is a wonderful problem- solving activity in which students bring their conduct, experience, and ideas to the given task.

ASSUMING IMAGINARY PEOPLE:

Role-play offers freedom to the students to become whoever they want for a short time! Chief Minister, President, King or Queen, millionaire, movie star or sportsman, the option is incessant! Students may also respond to others' views. The teacher can split the class into two teams and conduct a debate. Students can act in favor or against the given situation or topic by expressing their views.

ASSUMING IMAGINARY SITUATIONS:

Students get a chance to get into an imaginative world and experience the scenario through role-play. By role-playing, situational vocabulary for different contexts can be activated and exercised. 'Checking in at the airport at the cash counter in a bank,' 'Complaining about the missing property at the police station,' is all possible.

Role or character is defined as the person portrayed by an artist in a movie or play, whereas role play is a technique for specific ways of acting. Playing or pretending to be another person contending with new circumstances. In training courses, language learning, and psychoanalysis, it is used most often.

When we take on a role by participating in a particular situation, we play a role in our own or someone else's position.

In a stable atmosphere in which students are as ingenious and playful as possible, play means something taken on.

There is a slight consensus, according to Crooked, on the language used in role-play and simulation literature. Any of the words used daily interchangeably are simulation sports, conversations, games, community events, role-play, simulation-game, and role-play simulation.

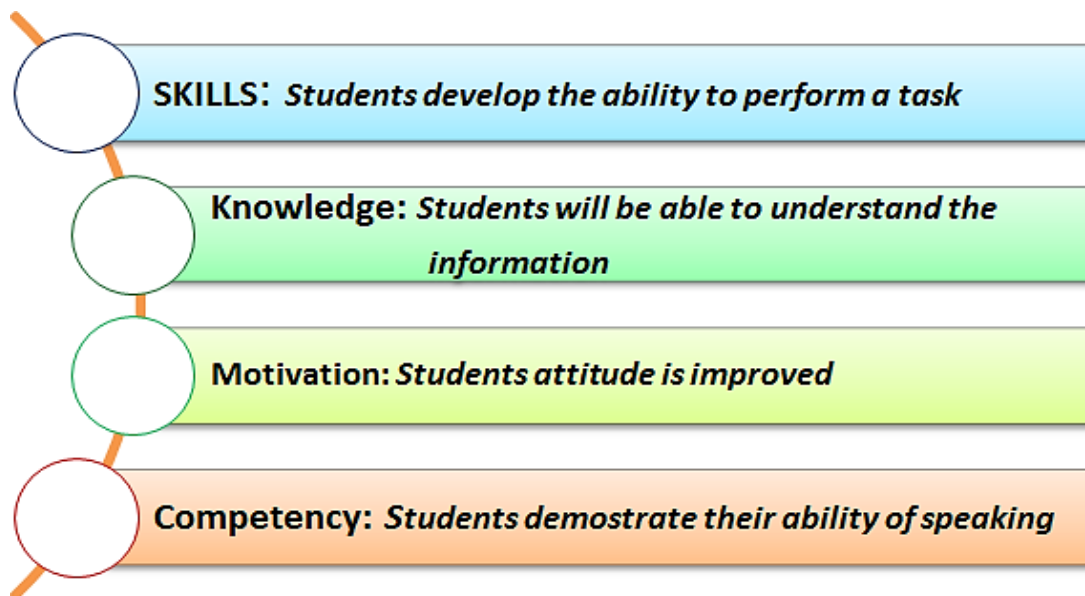
Compared to play activities, simulation is a broader term. Multifaceted, lengthy, and comparatively inflexible events are simulations. Whereas role-play is a relatively simple, very flexible, and short-term technique to organize which, gives excellent scope for the workout of student's distinction, inventiveness, and imagination. Role-play, on the other hand, is also involved in simulation.

According to Donn Byrne, role-play is a part of dramatic action. Next, he defined that there are three terms of drama activities. They are imitations, simulations, and role-playing. He described those characteristics as follows:

- a. Mime: the members perform by communicating their feelings through gestures and facial expressions without using words. It is also called adumb show.
- b. Role-play: In imaginary scenarios, the members communicate with each other and behave according to the position given.
- c. Simulation: As mentioned above, it includes role-play. However, with some environment identified for this assignment, the participants usually address a problem of some kind.

In English language classes, both role-playing and simulation are commonly used to encourage students to develop their communicative skills. Whereas mime as a language game is more fitting. Teaching non-verbal communication, it's very beneficial. For instance, the other students try to guess what it is if some student mimes and acts.

FIGURE. 01: KEY BENEFITS OF ROLE-PLAYING



SKILLS:

- It helps students develop English language and communicationskills
- When the students collaborate with others and work in a team, they develop social skills
- Students develop not only speaking skills but also listeningskills

KNOWLEDGE:

- Students will be able to analyze and understand thescenario.

- It allows students to act out and develop a sense of real-time situations.
- It helps students understand the attitudes and behavior of peer members and exchange their knowledge.
- It develops the students’ awareness of themselves and others.

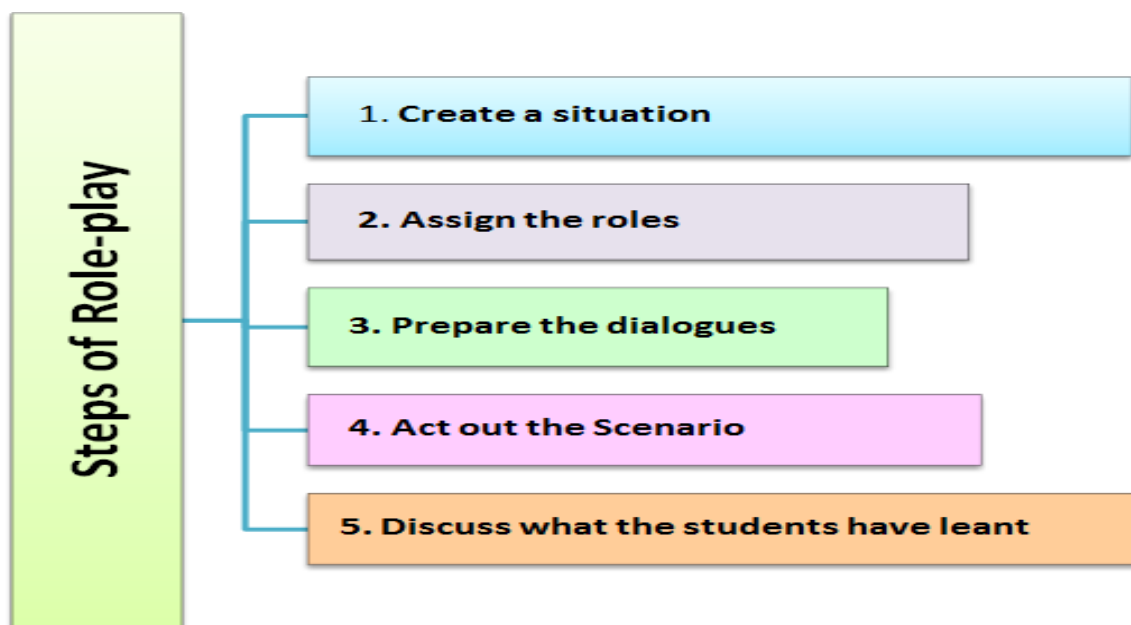
MOTIVATION:

- These interactive sessions motivate the passive students.
- Create interest in learning.
- Students feel comfortable with teamwork and support of others.
- Students notice their capabilities during role-play.

COMPETENCY:

- It gives insights into society like cooperation and competition.
- It helps to adopt problem-solving and handling difficult situations.
- It develops the creativity and imagination of students.

FIGURE. 02: DIFFERENT STEPS OF CONDUCTING ROLE-PLAY



1. Creating a situation:

It is the first step in conducting the role-play. The teacher has to create a situation carefully. Students should not feel difficulty understanding the situation and become panic. It must be simple and straightforward.

2. Assigning the roles:

The second step is to assign the roles to students. The teacher has to assign the roles according to the abilities of the students. Sometimes a few roles need much involvement, and a few may not. Hence the teacher must have an idea of student’s capabilities while assigning the roles to them.

3. Preparation:

The students have to be given time for their preparation, like writing dialogues as per their role given and practicing. They need to analyze the situation and do proper practice before the presentation.

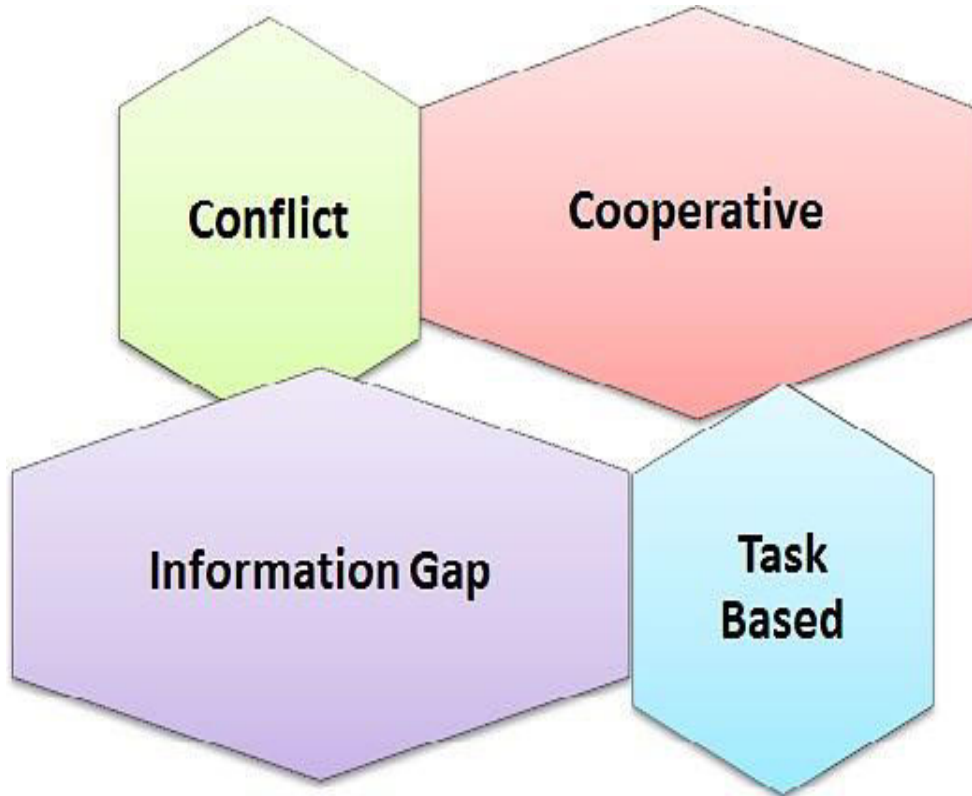
4. Presenting the scenario:

The instructor has to evaluate the individual results, their vocabulary, and phrases used throughout the role-play. Body language plays the main role in role-playing. Students are to be given marks and feedback after the role-play.

5. Discuss the learning experience:

After the role-play, the teacher has to enquire what the students have learned through the role-play, their difficulties, interesting things experienced. This final discussion gives them encouragement for further participation.

FIGURE. 3: TYPES OF ROLE PLAY



1. THE COOPERATIVE ROLE-PLAY:

The role-play takes the opposite tactic to compare to conflict role-play. In this role-play, the students have to work collaboratively for the common good.

ROLE-PLAY-1

Students plan an adieu party for the teacher. They discuss the arrangements to be made, like giving an invitation to the principal and other teachers, deciding the food list, etc.; in this role-play, all the students have to play a cooperative role. These kinds of role-play are very good for shy feeling students, which ease them and build relationships within the student group and to increase the maturity and confidence levels of students.

Example:

Student 1: *"Hello buddies! Let's plan an adieu party for our English teacher.*

All the students: *"Yah, that's a wonderful idea to show our love respect towards him"*

Student 1: *let's list out the arrangements to be done.*

- *Preparing invitation cards*
 - *List of guests for the programme*
 - *List of food items*
 - *Gift for the teacher*
 - *Programme organizer*
 - *Arranging a photographer*
- Anything else friends.*

Student 2: *Nothing else, I would like to responsibility of ordering invitation cards.*

Student 3: *I will order the food as I know manager of famous caters of our town.*

Student 4: *Ya I was about to say that, and then I will buy a gift for the teacher.*

Student 5: *I will talk to photographer*

Student 6: *if it so I will act as a programme coordinator.*

Student 1: *ok we have to make this adieu party a memorable one for our English teacher*

2. THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION ROLE-PLAYS:

In this kind of role-play, students are given a contradictory situation and are asked to deal with them as best as possible. These situations might include asking a neighbor to low down the TV volume, attempting to change an airline ticket at a peak time, etc. In these kinds of role-plays, students' language skills are assessed under pressure. It improves their skills and concentration.

ROLE-PLAY-2

In a classroom, the scene can be arranged. The role of a teacher is played by one person and the role of a student by another. The teacher will assign the student a task (i.e., distributing the papers). The student distributes the papers. The teacher then comes back and tells the student to do another task (finish the given problem) in a tone of voice that annoys the student.

Self-instruction examples:

Student: "Good morning, _____ sir.

Teacher: Hello, _____, please distribute these papers to all the students.

A few minutes later the teacher approaches the student

Teacher: "Why haven't you solved the given problem yet?"

Student: "I thought you wanted me to distribute the papers first".

Teacher: "I don't care what you think I said. I want to solve the given problem".

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUE

- "Be calm."
- "Relax."
- "He forgot what he asked me to do."
- "Talk to him and ask him what exactly he wanted you to do."
- "Don't worry about this; you can do both the tasks given."

Resolution statement:

"Sir, I was confused by your instructions; I thought I was supposed to distribute the papers first; which would you like for me to do first?"

3. INFORMATION-GAP ROLE-PLAY

This role-play helps to fill the gaps in the skills of the students. Students must be involved in situations such as answering customer service questions, asking for schedule data, creating a library card, or interviewing a perpetrator of a crime are all situations of a knowledge gap nature. The real-time position-based role plays are easy to set up, but more elaborate preparations may be needed. They offer a perfect way to practice patterns of question and response and train the students for real experiences.

Example:

ROLE-PLAY-3

Look over your role card and participate in a discussion with your partner. Find a solution to the problem.

Source:

www.Britishcouncil.org/learnerenglishteens.com &
<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org.cn/zh-hans/node/576>

You are a guest. It is a luxury towels are dirty outside is very problems). You want a discount problem.

CARD-2
You are a clerk

- Offer the help to customer
- Inform him/her what is on sale today
- Suggestions: A bottle of perfume for father, a pair of shoes to a friend
- Price details
- Guide him to the bill desk
- Thank him/her for the shopping.

Student B:

You are a hotel receptionist. There is a guest staying at the hotel who complains about everything, even when there isn't a problem. You can move a guest to a different room, but you can't change the price of a room. Talk to the guest and solve the problem.

4. TASK-BASED ROLEPLAY

Students need to complete a set task for these role-plays, such as checking into a hotel, providing directions to an unknown person, ordering a meal at a restaurant, or collecting a person of interest's phone number. They are handy for supporting students to practice real-life survival English skills and building students' confidence to function in real situations.

Example:

ROLE-PLAY-4

Situation: you are in a shopping mall and have 15000/- to spend.

CARD-1
You are a customer

- You are looking for gifts for two people
- Your father and a friend
- Ask for the varieties of gifts
- Ask for suggestions
- Ask for the prices/ discount
- Ask him/her to wrap the gifts
- Thank him/her

Questions the teacher has to ask himself while planning role-play:

- What kinds of grammar points and language structures do I want my students to use during role-play, and will this role play integrate them naturally?
- Do I have an idea of what I want to see occur in the roleplay?
- Do my students have the social and language skills to manage?
- What instructions should I give to the students to make them understand their roles?
- Is the planned situation suitable for the students' status, age, and level in a particular group?
- What am I expecting from my students from the exercise, and how can I highlight this through feedback?

CONCLUSION:

The introduction of role-play into the English classroom offers students a range of learning experiences with additional fun and entertainment to boost their English speaking abilities. Compared to other methods used in teaching speaking English skills, role-play is a great strategy. The encouragement and inspiration of the teacher enable students to grow their English vocabulary and enhance their ability to listen. Role-play may be part of the teaching and learning phase of the English language.

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