



UNIVERSIDAD  
NACIONAL  
AUTÓNOMA DE  
NICARAGUA,  
MANAGUA

UNAN - MANAGUA

**FACULTAD REGIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARIA DE ESTELI**

**FAREM-Estelí**

**SEMINARIO DE GRADUACION**

para optar al título de Licenciatura en Inglés con énfasis en la educación.

**The effect of using role play activities in speaking skill of the students of the**

**Ruben Dario School.**

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Estelí, Nicaragua

Julio de 2019

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study attempts to discover the effect of using role-play activities to develop students' speaking skills. Role-play is a technique derived from the pedagogical psychodrama developed by Moreno (1959). The use of role-play in activities is important as a learning technique and teachers should encourage various dynamic strategies so that students learn through role-play activities.

In this research, we used instruments such as interview, survey, and observation to collect information about the effect of using role-play activities increase students' motivation and develop speaking skills.

# **1 Introduction**

This research focuses on studying the effects of using role-playing activities to develop students' speaking skill as they learn English. Role-play is a technique derived from the pedagogical psychodrama developed by Moreno (1959) which consists of the interpretation of a role where participants assimilate, discuss, and analyze the points of view represented in the play with the rest of the participants.

In this sense, the use of role-play activities in the English class could be useful to motivate student's participation during the English class also could help students to develop speaking skills through active participation.

## **1.1 Background**

### 1.1. Literature Review.

Not long ago, English language teaching focused on the teaching of grammar but, nowadays, it focuses on communication. Therefore, there is an emphasis on developing students' communicative skills through communicative activities in the class. Role-play activities is a technique that can motivate student's participation.

With our research, we want to describe the importance of using role-play activities in speaking skill. There are several studies related to our research, for example:

In Algeria 2016, also in Brazil at the University of Tuiuti do Parana, 2000, in Ecuador, these studies are related to our research.

We found in Nicaragua research at the university UNAN-FAREM –Matagalpa, 2017.

All these studies are focused on the development of speaking skills as well as our work. Our research is qualitative, and we used to survey, interview, observation, and application of these instruments at Ruben Dario school.

## **1.2 Justification**

English is almost a universal language. For that reason, communicative skills have popularity among teachers of English. One of these skills is speaking as it is essential as the basis for communication. For this reason, it is necessary to implement speaking activities in the classroom such as role-play; Role-play, according to Ladouse (1987, p.7) is "one of a whole gamut of communicative techniques which develops fluency in language students, which promotes interaction in the classroom and increase motivation. Not only is peer learning encouraged by it, but also the sharing between teacher and students of the responsibility for the learning process."

Based on this quote, we have chosen the theme the effects of using role-play activities in speaking skills in students at the Ruben Dario School. Our research aims are to describe the impact of using role-play exercises in speaking skill.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Teachers of English could take advantage of the theory learning by doing expounded by American philosopher Dewey (2007, p.203) He theorized that learning should be relevant and practical, not just passive and theoretical, however, in Nicaragua the English language teaching has been focused on grammar and this caused the lack of interest and motivation to learning student. For this reason, we consider that the use of role-play activities in the English class could be useful to motivate student's participation also the use of role-play could help students to develop speaking skills.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

What are the effects produced by the use of role-play activities?

Why are speaking skills important?



## 2 Theoretical Frame

To support our study theoretically, we use the following terms: learning, motivation, speaking, role-play.

we need to understand learning if we are to talk about it. Learning can be defined as "the transformative process of taking in information that when internalized and mixed with what we have experienced changes what we know and build on what we do. It is based on the input process, and reflection.

A second important terms in our study is motivation. It can be understood as "the actual state of wanting to do something to excel in a certain situation "Eckam (2010, p.4). In other words, it can be said that motivation is crucial for an individual who wants to master a second language.

As well we consider another term, speaking. "Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols and a variety of context "Chaney, 1998, p. 13)

And finally, we define another key concept, that is to say, role-play. Role-play in education is a technique derived from the pedagogical psychodrama according to Moreno (1959, p.215) which consist of interpreting a role, assimilating and analyzing the points of view. in the same way, comparing them with the rest of the participants.

### 2.1. Communicative approach.

The communicative approach is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of the study. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001, p 159) communicative language teaching is centered on the development of students'

"communicative competence." This approach highlights the development of speaking skills in students; besides, students are encouraged to express their ideas spontaneously, when They participate in communicative activities with real-life situations where They can express their ideas and solutions to any situation.

Englander (2002 p 9) state " real-life communication in the classroom is intrinsically interesting and useful to the students". Through the use of real-life students learn useful vocabulary, and they learn to use it. Also students learn to use imagination.

## 2.2. role-play.

Role-play is a technique derived from the pedagogical psychodrama developed by Moreno (1959). The Collins Dictionary defines role-play as: " the act of imitating the character and behaviour of someone who is different from yourself, for example, as a training exercise. Group members have to communicate with each other through role-play." In other words, we can say that role plays are dramatization activities in which students learn to interpret and analyze different situations. The fact that students have to represent a character and they utilize English to communicate with each other as they represent the play makes it suitable to be used as a second language technique. That is why role-play, according to Brown (2004 p 174) is" a popular pedagogical activity in communicative language teaching class. [...] role-play is a science that analyzes reality through dramatization; in a few words, role-play is a technique that is part of the communicative language teaching.

### 2.2.1. Importance of role-play activities.

Role-play is essential because it contributes to the development of communication skills since it offers opportunities to practice a foreign language socially with their peers. role-play also offers

appropriate learning environments in which students participate in a fearless atmosphere to practice English realistically. Furthermore, role-play helps students to develop speaking and listening skills, as well as it allows students to reflect and develop their knowledge and enhancing creativity and imagination. Through the use of role-play activities, students build dependence, problem-solving skills, and allow using the new language. According to Ladousse (1987, p 7), role-play "is one of the whole gamut's of communicative techniques which develops fluency in language students, which promotes interaction in the classroom and increases motivation, based on this quotation, we can say that role-play can help student's motivation and interaction during the English class.

Role-play is a fun and playful activity. Keith Maurice (1988, p, 20) says, "laugh while learning another language; techniques that are functional and funny." role-play is not boring activities. Role-play is an activity in which students have fun, but it is also an activity in which students also learn.

### 2.2.2. Effects of using role-play.

The use of role-play develops and stimulates conversational competence, and the interaction involves, almost exclusively, the learners alone other words, students interact without the participation of their teacher. When students participate in a role-play, they can improve their conversational competence because role-play allows interaction and involves students in the learning process.

Finochiaro and Brumfit (1983) assert that the use of role-play increases students' fluency since it offers the opportunity to use the language freely and creatively. Moreover, role-play is not only a

fun activity for students but provides the chance to learn vocabulary and practice it in a creativity way when acting.

Role-play has powerful effects since it brings the outside world into the classroom. Through role-play, students can get to know the cultures of other countries.

Role-play involves bodily activities in which increases the learner's motivation. Learners become active participants, and also they use the language meaningfully according to the situation they are to perform in these activities.

Role-play brings some fresh air to the classroom, and the learning and teaching environments become more relaxing. The classroom atmosphere becomes less formal and breaks the routine of the usual activities, through roleplay students will have more opportunities to share personal or imaginary experiences with others, act different roles, and be more creative.

Role-play gives an overall picture of real-life situations. Students may now learn correct forms of communication, but they may not know when to use appropriately

### 2.3. Speaking.

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning. It involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce).

Speaking is one of the four essential competencies that students should master. Furthermore, speaking is a productive skill, when we speak, we produce in the language.

#### 2.3.1. Importance of speaking.

One of the most effective ways to communicate is through speech; thus, speaking skill is an essential mode of communication. Likewise, speaking skills are vital for career success. As well, speaking skills can enhance one's personal life. Speaking is a significant component of the learning process; in fact, it is essential. Speaking is an interactive process in which student's express ideas and opinion about something.

Yunzhong (1985, as cited in Hughes, 2002) states: "many language teachers consider that speaking is the most effective means of gaining a fluent reading knowledge and correct speech" (p.133). According to this quotation, we can say that through speaking, students can improve fluency at the time that they speak, students can improve speech. Whenever you talk to an English speaker, you learn to speak well. Also speaking helps to enhance your knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation speaking increases student's motivation, and it helps students learn from their mistakes through practice.

#### 2.4. role play and speaking.

Harmer, (1990, p. 12) argues that when teaching speaking or any producing skill, we can apply three essential stages, those are:

Introduction new language.

Practice the new language

Implementing communicative activities to master the language students have learned.

Role-play is a communicative activity. Through role-play, teachers introduce new vocabulary, and students put it into practice. Role-play allows students to interact, and in this way, it promotes participation actively. Consequently, role-play provides an interactive and friendly learning

environment, in which students may feel more comfortable in speaking, developing self-confidence.

Ladouse says (1987, p.15) that "mistakes indicate certain stages in the acquisition of the language and will disappear gradually as the students become more competent and confident." When students start speaking English, they might make mistakes, but through mistakes, they learn to use language. In this sense, role-play activities are useful to develop speaking in which students learn while they play. Example of role-play:

#### Telephone Conversation

Speaking on the phone is different than a face-to-face conversation because one relies solely on language to communicate. Get the students who are practicing to sit back for this to work correctly. 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

A great role-play for younger learners as it will allow them to learn 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 straightforward or as complex as one wishes, depending on the situation. Key phrases are often relevant here, such as "/would like..." "How much are..." "Good morning..." and so forth

#### Booking a Hotel

This activity will allow students to practice a specific type of language. Usually, the language students will use is a formal language as it is a business conversation. This can also be done in the format of a telephone conversation, or it could be someone approaching a text.

There is a wide range of opportunity here for students to learn new forms of conversations. Choose a topic that everyone appears to be interested in. Get the students to pair up and give them a list of questions to follow (for example, see our '130 Topics for Discussion (more than 2000 questions for Any level)'). This will allow them to come up with their phrases and use language in a much more practical way.

### **3 Methodology**

Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting quantitative data in a single study or in a series of studies that investigate the same underlying phenomenon."

#### **3.1 Research design**

This research is descriptive because it aims to describe the effect of using role-play activities to develop speaking skills during the English class with students in ninth grade at Ruben Dario School. The method is qualitative; the instruments applied were a survey, interview, and observation. The surveys were administered to fourteen students and had eight close questions, and the teacher answered the interview, eight open questions.

#### **3.2 Population Selection**

#### **3.3 Population**

The population is defined as the broader group of people to whom you intend to generalize the results of your study. The population of this study comprises forty students (in Matagalpa, Sebaco). These students were distributed in two shifts, in the morning shift, and the afternoon shift

#### **3.4 Sample**

There are many kinds of samples. Patton (2002) lists sixteen types of sampling, however, given that our study is small and a qualitative approach, we will consider only one favorite kind of sampling: convenience sampling (ease of access)



Convenience sampling can be defined as a group of individuals believed to be representative of the population from which it is selected, but chosen because it is close at hand rather than being randomly selected. The selection of the sample is at the convenience of the researcher. Our sampling encompasses fourteen students.

### **3.5 Instruments**

#### **3.5.1 Observation**

We observed the effective use of role-play activities and how they benefited the speaking skills of students during forty-five minutes, but speaking is a complex process and challenging to measure in such conditions. We observed that the use of role-play activities could motivate 'student's active participation, thus improving their speaking skills. Also, we noticed during the implementation of role-play that students improve their pronunciation, but the only disadvantage that we perceived concerning the use of role plays in the classroom was the noise. In the first observation, students participated in role-play activities with a presentation dialogue. the teacher performed a demonstration of how to do it, and then students performed the role play. In this observation, we detected that students were motivated to participate in role play activities, but students felt nervous because they don't know the pronunciation of some words.

In the second observation, students were learning new vocabulary. Students prepared an oral presentation job advertisement. They focused on the use of grammatical rules.

In the third observation, the teacher taught the topic "the resume," and then students played a role-play about a job interview. in this observation we saw motivation and interest in students for participating in class, the student became interested to learn and practice pronunciation to improve your speaking.

### **3.5.2 Interview**

The interview was applied to the English teacher, and she answered the following:

Sometimes she uses role play activities in the English class but is challenging to use this strategy with a large group. She thinks the use of role play is necessary because students get involved. The teacher considers that students increase vocabulary knowledge through role play activities and she feels that use of role-play activities can help students to develop speaking skills, although it is difficult for them. They learn however she said the pronunciation is confusing to students.

### 3.5.3 Survey

Survey had eight close questions:

#### Question # 1

Do you like dramatization activities?

Nine students from fourteen answered that they like dramatization activities. And three out of fourteen students said that they like dramatization activities sometimes, but two students answered that they do not like dramatization activities, this means that most students like dramatization activities and teacher should do dramatization activities to motivate students participation.

#### Question #2

Do you like to participate in oral communication activities?

Eight of fourteen students said that they like to participate in oral communication activities and two of fourteen students answered that they like to participate in verbal communication sometimes, but four students said that They do not like to participate in oral communication activities. Most students responded that they prefer to participate in oral communication activities; this suggests that students could to developing speaking skills through oral communication activities in the future.

#### Question #3

Is pronunciation difficult for you?

Seven out of fourteen students said that pronunciation is difficult for them, and four out of fourteen students answered that pronunciation was difficult for them. Most students said that pronunciation

is difficult for them, and it is a big problem at the time to participate in oral communication activities because students feel insecurity when They speak.

#### Question #4

Do you learn vocabulary in communicative activities such as : roleplay ,dialogs etc?

Twelve out of fourteen students answered that they learn vocabulary while practicing communicative activities, and only one student said did sometimes. Also, one out of fourteen students told us that he does not learn vocabulary in communicative activities. Most students said that They learn vocabulary in communicative activities, this means that students learn vocabulary through practice in communicative activities, if They learn vocabulary, also They can use it at the time to speak.

#### Question # 5

Is easy for you to act in role play activities?

Six out of fourteen students said that it was easy for them to act in role-play activities sometimes, and four students answered that to act in a role-play was easy. Also, four students said that it was difficult for them to act in role play activities. Students think that to act is difficult for them because when they act in a role play, they feel nervous but is essential to encourage students at the time that They are acting.

#### Question #6

Is it difficult for you to use grammar rules when you speak in English?

Nine of fourteen students said that use of grammar rules when they speak English is difficult for them sometimes, and four students answered that use grammar rules if they talk English is difficult for them always, but only one student said that the use of grammar rules at the time to speak is not difficult for him. This means that students have difficulties to use grammar rules at the time to speak, and role-play is a technique that allows practicing grammar at the time to speak.

#### Question #7

Do you engage yourself in role-play activities?

Ten out of fourteen students said that they were dynamic in role-play activities, while two students answered that sometimes they were more active while they practiced role play activities. However, two out of fourteen students said that they were not dynamic in role play activities, this means that through the practice of role play activities students became more engaged, and they used the imagination, and were creative.

#### Question #8

Is it easy for you to use the new vocabulary at the time to act in role-play activities?

Seven out of fourteen students said that it was easy for them to use new vocabulary when performing in a role-play. While four students answered that sometimes it was easy for them to use the new vocabulary, but three out of fourteen said that it was not easy for them. According to the responses of this question, we could say that for students, it was easier to use the new vocabulary while practicing role-play activities because they learn and practice the new vocabulary.

In this survey, most of the students gave us relevant information such as:

Students like dramatization activities in their English class. Students enjoy their participation in oral communication activities. Students said the pronunciation at the time to act is very difficult for them. Also, students said that they learn vocabulary through role play activities, but it is not easy for them to act in role-play activities. They said that the use of grammar sometimes is difficult at the time to speak, and 50% said that the use of new vocabulary in role play activities is easy for them. Besides, they said that they are dynamic at the time to act in role play activities.

#### **3.5.4 Poll**

Buenas tardes. Nosotros somos estudiantes de la carrera de inglés en la universidad UNAN-FAREM-ESTELÍ.

Nuestra encuesta tiene como objetivo describir los efectos del uso de actividades de juego de roles, en la habilidad del habla de los estudiantes del noveno grado A del colegio autónomo Rubén Darío.

1-A usted le gustan las actividades de dramatización?

Si

No

Algunas veces

2-A usted le gusta participar en actividades de comunicación oral?

Si

No

Algunas veces

3-Es difícil para usted la pronunciación de palabras en inglés?

Si

No

Algunas veces.

Aprende usted vocabulario en actividades orales como: ¿juegos de roles, diálogos etc.?

Si

No

Algunas veces

¿Es fácil para usted actuar en actividades de juegos de roles?

Si

No

Algunas veces

¿Es difícil para usted hacer uso de las reglas gramaticales al momento de hablar inglés?

Si

No

Siempre

¿Es usted dinámico en actividades de juegos de roles?

Si

No

Algunas veces

¿Es fácil para usted usar el Nuevo vocabulario al momento de actuar en actividades de juegos de roles?

Si

No

Algunas veces.



#### **4 Proposal of teaching learning strategy**

##### **Role-play applied to ninth-grade students at the Ruben Dario of sebaco school**

Job Interview

Dialogue

Representation of roles characters, jobs, in order to exemplify live experiences that lead to adopt skills/ abilities and/ or attitude changes. It consists of having the participants simulate characters defined in advance, and in this way, they put themselves in the position of role and can observe from different perspectives the behaviors of each actor according to the they play.

Presence/ Non presence

It must be borne in mind that the description proposed in this VIU has been designed basically for the application in face -to-face environment. Throughout the course, it will be necessary to reflect on how the technique would be applied in a non -face -to-face environment, propose ideas and reach a conclusion.

Role of the trainer

During the game you have to assume the role of facilitator without intervening, as it can condition and distort the actions of the participants. The only interventions may be related to the provision of additional information in case there are doubts about the role of any of the participants that act.

Moderate and streamline the comment: help deepen the reasons, feelings and attitudes, as well as show their influence on behavior, collaborate in the development of alternatives, favor the transfer as a tool for resolving conflicts in everyday situations.

Objectives that can be achieved

Contrast and relativize one's point of view with that of the other positions involved synthesize and deepen conflicts, identifying pressures and possible influences in one's own perspective and action.

Allow the participant to observe and analyze their behaviors on certain occasions and learn to react positively in situations considered conflicting.

Provide participants with opportunities to develop their understanding by putting themselves in someone else's shoes.

Clarify and modify attitudes.

Develop personal and interpersonal skills related to the professions

Develop cooperative learning.

## **5 Conclusion**

Communicative language teaching is an approach focused on the development of speaking skills of students. In this sense, role play is a technique that contributes to the development of communication skills. Therefore, the use of role play activities is useful in English language learning. Through role play, students can feel motivated to participate actively during their English class. Role-play promotes interaction among students and allows them to practice new vocabulary and pronunciation. Through role play, students can learn vocabulary, put into practice the new vocabulary, practice pronunciation, improve their speaking skills, and master the use of grammar rules at the time of speaking.

According to the instruments applied we have; as a result, the following: role-play is a productive activity that helps students who will learn in a fun way, and at the same time this allows students to put into practice what they have learned orally through dramatizations.

## **6 Recommendation**

Teachers need to encourage students at the time of performing a role play because generally, students feel nervous at the time to act.

It is necessary to dedicate more time to practice pronunciation before playing role-play because in this way students feel more confident when doing their oral presentation.

Role-play activities need time, effort, and preparation, for this reason, we recommend to give your students more time to practice the new vocabulary, and the play.

Teachers should use role-play activities in the classroom frequently for improving pronunciation in the English language.

Teachers should use audiovisual materials to demonstrate a more explicit example of those who are going to do, before making role play to get better results.

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## 8 Annexes



## LESSON PLAN

Subject English

Content: Job Skills (Conversation)

Achievement indicator student express

Job Skills confidently

Learning activities

Review about the before class

Copy a conversation

Pronunciation practice

Group work

Create your own conversation

Oral Presentation

Hest : Good afternoon, welcome to our career day . Please introduce yourself, and tell us about your job.

Kevin: I'm Kevin McDonald, and I'm a journalist. I write for a newspaper

Kathy: My name is Kathy Flynn and this is Jack Garcia we're photographers .We work for a magazine.

Jack : We take photos in a studio

Amy: My name is Amy chent I'm a taxi driver . I drive a taxi in the city

Mary: I´ m Mary Smith .I'm a salesperson I sell clothing in a department store

Harry: Harry Jones . I´ m actor , I act in plays, I have a part time job too, I´ m a waiter in a restaurant .

Answer Yes or No

\_\_\_\_\_ Kevin writes for a Magazine

\_\_\_\_\_ Kathy works with Jack Garcia

\_\_\_\_\_ Amy driver´s a bus

\_\_\_\_\_ San signs in a nightclub

\_\_\_\_\_ Mary Sells magazines

\_\_\_\_\_ Peter cooks in a restaurant



**It was about dialog with the title, what do you do?**

Kevin: I am Kevin McDonald, and I am a Journalist. I write for a newspaper (it was an example)

Student

Este es el roleplay que los estudiantes hicieron partiendo del ejemplo del roleplay que se dio

Robert: I Robert and I am doctor. I work in hospital

Robert: I am Robert and I'm a doctor . I work in a hospital

Heyling: I Heyling and secretary. I work in a bank

Heyling: I am Heyling and I am a Secretary. I work in a bank

**Interview.**

Do you use oral communication activities in your English class?

What is your opinion about the use of role-play activities in the classroom?

Is pronunciation a problem for students? Why?

Do you consider that students increase vocabulary knowledge through role-play activities?

Do you think that the use of role-play is essential in the English class? Why?

Do you think that using role-play activities can help students to develop speaking skill?

Have you seen grammatical problems while implementing communicative activities in the classroom?

Do you think that the use of role-play activities can motivate students to participate actively?

**PHOTOS IN CLASSROOM**



