

THE TEACHER'S BEHAVIOR WHILE CONDUCTING A ROLE PLAY

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Key words and phrases: conference; conversation; evaluation of progress; teachers' behavior; principle of involvement; role play.

Abstract: Some strategies of teachers' conduct during a role play are studied. In detail it is spoken about advantages of holding conferences to discuss work done or still in progress. It is stressed that conferences are a good way of evaluating students' progress and teachers should observe the principle of involvement while holding them. In conclusion some examples of role plays are given.

The teacher's behavior is governed by several principles. Major one is the principle of involvement; he or she must develop a warm, personal, interested and sensitive relationship with the students. The optimal support for this strategy is a teacher who has a warm personality and is skilled in interpersonal relations as well as group discussion techniques. He or she must be able to create a climate of openness and nondefensiveness, yet at the same time guide the group toward performance and behavioral evaluation, commitment, and follow-up. Meetings or conferences can be used more widely as part of evaluation, and generally take the form of a conversation or discussion between teachers and students about school work. Conferences can include individual students, several students, or even the whole class; they can be conversations about completed work or about work in progress. They often focus on activities the teacher has set up expressly to observe and discuss. Although conferences have been widely used for understanding students; reading and writing, they can also be used in conjunction with oral language skills.

However, leadership may be given to a chairperson, who can conduct a role play meeting practicing his or her skills to be flexible, strict and keep it to the point at issue. Moral authority and performance rest with the students who express their value judgments and make decisions.

Conferences are advantageous for understanding the processes, strategies, and approaches students use in the performance of schoolwork and language-related tasks. During such meetings or conferences, teachers direct questions to their students to gain insights about:

- their application of skills and knowledge taught in class;
- specific difficulties they have when doing school work and how they resolve them;
- the processes and strategies they use in the performance of certain language-based tasks;

- their understanding of or beliefs about certain aspects of language, such as reading and writing;

- their interests and goals with respect to language;
- their understanding of and responses to instructional activities;

When used interactively, conferences have additional benefits. They provide opportunities for students:

- to assume responsibility for their own learning;
- to be self-reflective;
- to collaboratively set individual learning goals;
- to assume ownership of learning;
- to recognize and enjoy their accomplishments;
- to communicate orally in one-to-one conversations with their teachers about school work in ways that are important to them.

It is their focus on process that makes conferences distinct from other methods of assessment and, therefore, distinctly useful in instructional planning.

It is preferable to conduct conferences on a regular basis throughout the year in order to monitor progress and difficulties that might be impeding progress and to plan lessons or instruction that is responsive to students' ongoing needs. Conferencing is particularly valuable for providing timely feedback that can enhance fine-tuning of instruction. When used at the end of a major unit, conferencing can help assess learning with respect to major instructional objectives. Since it can be time-consuming to conduct individual conferences, it is possible to set aside time each class during which individual conferences are conducted while other students in the class work on their own or in small groups. Routine conferencing of this sort is most frequently organized around common activities or pieces of work that all students are asked to engage in.

As has been noted, conferences can be used to discuss work that has been completed. At other times, teachers can ask students to perform a task while they look on—for example, read a passage from a book, write a short piece or describe a story they have read or seen on TV. Teachers can then observe student performance directly and discern use of specific strategies. Students may at first be awkward, uncomfortable, and confused about what is expected during conferences, and they may provide little meaningful feedback at first. However, students usually become comfortable over time and indeed enthusiastic and eventually provide teachers with more valuable insight about their learning.

General guidelines for conducting conferences with individual students about a piece of completed work or class assessment can be set forth. To facilitate discussion, the following kinds of questions can be asked of students:

- What do you like about this work?
- What do you think you did well?
- How does it show improvement from previous work? Can you show me the improvement?
- Did you have any difficulties with this piece of work? Can you show me where you had difficulty? What did you do to overcome it?
- What strategies did you use to figure out the meaning of words you could not read? What did you do when you didn't know a word that you wanted to write?
- Are there things about this work you do not like? Are there things you would like to improve?
- When you are reading and come across a word or something you do not know or understand, what do you do?

These questions can give students a sense of ownership and involvement in assessment and learning, because they are focused on student concerns and views. Re-

sponses to these sorts of questions provide teachers with insights about students' learning strategies that can promote understanding of student achievement and progress. They can serve as the basis for individualizing instruction or for modifying instructional plans to be better attuned to all students' needs.

Conferences can also focus directly on instructional issues. The following questions can be useful in this regard:

- What do I do that helps you be a better reader or writer or speaker?
- What do you want me to help you with next?
- What do you want to learn next?
- What do you need to learn to become a good speaker or translator?

Responses to such questions can provide teachers with valuable insights about what students' views of what reading, writing translating or other language skills entail so that they can tailor their interventions to match those of their students or to move students beyond what might be limiting or inappropriate perceptions.

Individual teachers face very specific challenges, and they must respond to these challenges in specific ways. Our teachers have different kinds of learners, objectives, and means of attaining those objectives. Our approach is not based on a particular theory of language or language learning or on a particular instructional method or approach. It is intended to be adaptable to suit the specific characteristics and goals of a variety of classroom settings. In other words it is advisable to take into account the specific classroom contexts within which teaching and learning take place. Such an approach requires serious and careful consideration of the specific purposes plans and practices in each classroom.

It is possible to suggest the following strategy for conducting evaluation that should help teachers in four ways:

1. To determine what information would be useful for making particular kinds of decisions.
2. To devise ways of collecting relevant information.
3. To make sense of the evaluation information.
4. To make appropriate decisions.

This strategy does not recommend or prescribe one particular way of doing evaluation. It is unlikely to have only one evaluation method that is applicable to all situations. It is the role and responsibility of individual teachers to choose a method that is responsive to their specific purposes and needs. We have suggested some possible ways of doing this. Individual teachers will need to choose from these possibilities or devise alternatives better suited to their requirements.

During teaching activities a few role-plays have been created, tested and refined in the classroom. All role plays help develop speaking and listening skills and may be used for all learning levels. In this article we would like to offer two role simulations under the heading "The Courtroom Role Play" and Political Campaigns".

The first role play is for intermediate and above level students, it may last 60-90 minutes depending on different circumstances.

Its language functions are making and justifying decisions. The students are given the following materials.

Case 1 You are the magistrates on the bench of a magistrates' court.

A man of 45 comes before you, accused of breaking into a hardware store and stealing woodworking tools worth \$100. He pleads guilty.

You must reach a verdict and pass sentence.

Points to consider:

1. He was a carpenter for 25 years with one company and was recently fired.
2. He has been unemployed for a few months.

3. He says his only hope of finding work is to have his own set of tools.

4. It is his first offense.

Discuss this and come to a decision. What sentence would you pass?

Case 2 You are the magistrates on the bench of a magistrates' court.

A woman comes before you accused of shoplifting from the shopping center Sears'. The police say she took two boxes of cookies and a bottle of milk (total value \$6.50)

She pleads not guilty.

You must reach a verdict and pass sentence.

Points to consider.

1. It is her first offense.

2. Her husband has been unemployed for a year.

3. She has five children.

4. She has lived in America for two years but she can't speak English.

5. She says (through an interpreter) that she did not know that she had to pay, as the system is different in her country.

Discuss this and come to a decision. What sentence would you pass? And why?

Case 3 You are the magistrates on the bench of a magistrates' court.

A boy of 14 comes before you accused of setting his school on fire. This caused \$5000 worth of damage. He pleads guilty.

You must reach a verdict and pass sentence.

Points to consider.

1. He lives with his mother and four younger brothers and sisters.

2. His father died two years ago.

3. his mother works in a store during the day and in a bar in the evening to get enough money.

4. His school grades are terrible and he is constantly in trouble for fighting and breaking rules.

5. It is not his first offense. A year ago he was accused of stealing \$25 from the drugstore where he had a Saturday job. He was let go with a warning.

Discuss this and come to a decision. What sentence would you pass and why?

Possible sentences for Cases 1, 2, 3.

Fine (\$1000 maximum)

Imprisonment (6 months maximum)

Community service

Placement in a foster home (persons under age 16)

Probation

Acquittal

Copies of the cases are handed out round the class. The class is divided into groups of three or four. Each group is given one case of those described and the teacher allows them 15 minutes to reach a verdict and pass sentences, giving each group a copy of the possible sentences. Where time and interest allow, the teacher may have each group try

each case. When the groups have reached their decisions, the verdicts may be written on the board in chart form so that they may be compared easily. The teacher makes sure that reasons are given for the decisions and finishes off by inviting an open discussion of the various group verdicts.

The second role play is called "Political Campaigns". It is for intermediate level students and lasts 45 – 60 minutes. Its language functions are discussing and presenting promises and intentions.

The outline of role playing is as follows.

1. Discuss with the class the form of a typical election manifesto or platform statement and the language used in such statements. Build up a short list of examples on the board like this:

My party is going to	- to increase public spending
We intend to	- reintroduce the draft
Our plan is to	- reduce taxation
We promise to	- legalize drugs

2. Divide the class into threes or fours, and tell each group to decide on a political party they would like to belong to. The students are encouraged to innovate and be as imaginative as they like. A few suggestions might be a drivers', cyclists' or pedestrians' party; one for men's, women's or children's liberation; or one dedicated to American and European unification.

3. Ask each group to prepare an election platform and to elect one member to present the party program to the rest of the class. Circulate, helping as necessary and correcting the language.

4. Have the party representatives make their speeches, one by one. Encourage questions and even heckling while they are speaking. Further questioning can take place once the speech is over, when any members of the party may be called to reply.

5. Finish with a mock election including a vote by secret ballot. Depending on the group, this could in turn provoke discussion of any recent political incidents or of a related topic such as comparative electoral systems or procedures or even of the philosophy and principles underlying democracy.

To sum it up, the creative impulse of the teacher in bringing the activities to life is natural and should be encouraged. Every teacher should feel free to condense or expand, to adjust the language up or down, to change a pair activity to one and so on.

Поведение преподавателя во время проведения ролевой игры

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Ключевые слова и фразы: конференция; обсуждение; оценка результатов; поведение учителя; принцип вовлеченности; ролевая игра.

Аннотация: Рассматриваются некоторые стратегии поведения учителя во время проведения ролевой игры. Более подробно рассматриваются преимущества проведения конференций для оценки уже сделанной работы или обсуждения текущих проблем. Подчеркивается, что конференция – это хороший способ обсуждения и оценки результатов, важно только при ее проведении придерживаться принципа вовлеченности. В заключении статьи даны некоторые примеры ролевых игр.

Lehrerverhalten während des Rollenspiels

Zusammenfassung: Es werden einige Strategien des Lehrersauftretens während des Rollenspiels betrachtet. Detailliert werden die Vorteile der Konferenzdurchführung für die Einschätzung der erfüllten Arbeit oder für die Besprechung der laufenden Probleme angesehen. Es wird unterstrichen, daß die Konferenz eine gute Art der Besprechung und der Einschätzung von Resultaten ist. Zum Schluß sind einige Beispiele der Rollenspiele angeführt.

Comportement du professeur lors du jeu de rôle

Résumé: Sont envisagées quelques stratégies du comportement du professeur lors du jeu de rôle. Sont examinés plus en détails les avantages de l'organisation des conférences pour l'évaluation du travail accompli ou bien les discussions des problèmes courants. Est souligné que la conférence est un bon moyen de discuter et d'évaluer les résultats; il est important de prendre en compte le principe d'animation. A la fin de l'article sont mentionnés quelques exemples des jeux de rôle.
