в) организация целенаправленной деятельности учащихся с учебным материалом в развернутой форме (самостоятельное составление моделей, конкретных речевых образцов, нахождение соответствующей операции, алгоритма для решения той или иной языковой задачи и т.п.) с опорой на внутреннюю речь.

г) проведение тренировочных упражнений, приводящих к свертыванию отдельных звеньев алгоритма, и автоматизации языкового явления в коммуникативных упражнениях.

Такая организация процесса формирования лексического запаса в обучении иностранному языку принципиально отличается от существующих методик, в основе которых лежит принцип постепенного (стихийного или недостаточно осознанного) приближения к образцу. Поэтапное формирование лингвистических понятий (или как в данном случае лексического запаса) на базе функциональных признаков и отработка соответствующих умственных и речевых действий обеспечивает их быстрое усвоение в заданной мере общения и сразу в полном объеме признаков. Указанная система обеспечивает целенаправленное управление ходом усвоения.

Кроме того, достигается органическая связь между практическим владением языком и освоением лингвистической действительности, что содействует воспитанию так называемого « чувства языка» и положительного отношения к работе над языком, это в свою очередь облегчает его усвоение.

*Н.В. Кузнецова*

*Мельбурн, Австралия*

## A Role Play Activity with Distance Learners

## in an English Language Classroom

In recent years, language teaching has focused on the learning process rather than the teaching of the language. The emphasis is not only on linguistic competence of the language learners but also on the development of their communicative ability. In order to develop the learners' communicative ability, the teacher needs to create a scenario to teach the target language in a vibrant, active and interesting manner. Thus, extended activities in the form of role play, simulations and problem solving are vital in developing the communicative ability of the learners. These activities require the learners to go beyond a text. They require the learners to have a sound understanding of a text and be able to apply their knowledge outside the classroom and their own experiences into the activities. Extended activities can be carried out at dif-

ferent levels depending on the learners' language proficiency. The role of the teacher in such activities will often depend on the learners and their language abilities. However, the teacher is not wholly responsible for the learners' language acquisition as students must also play their part to be motivated in following the lesson. One of the requirements of the English Language proficiency courses offered to distance learners of National University of Malaysia is to make the course as close as possible to the courses offered to students on-campus in terms of course content and evaluations. English for Social Sciences is based on a study guide which wraps around the text Global Views by M.E. Sokolik make the course comprehensible for distance learners. The course is aimed at equipping them with integrated skills in English to enable them to cope with language requirements in the academic and work environment.

Role play was chosen as one of the tasks in this course to create a situation for the learners to actively interact in the language, thereby making the language learning more meaningful. At the same time, the learners are introduced to the different learning styles -- listening, remembering, discussing, writing and presenting. Individual work such as task-based activities may hamper or minimize communication among the learners. Full time students in normal classes who have plenty of contact hours for teacher-student consultation may not face such problems. Role play in this distance learning class allows the objectives of the course to be met in the limited time, through an integrated approach which allows the practice of language skills, content and interaction skills and strategies. As this was a tertiary level class, the writer used newspaper reports on the Japanese Encephalitis outbreak collected over a period of time. This issue was specifically chosen as it made headlines in all Malaysian newspapers and the electronic media during that period. It included the views of the farmers, medical experts, consumers' rights and the feelings expressed by the affected residents. The writer had chosen this issue to provide an opportunity to the learners to practice a real-life situation. It was also appropriate for role play because it involved many personalities thus allowing the learners to assume those roles. The topic chosen was good as it highlighted social issues. The teacher's role in giving clear instructions was equally important. The learners were asked to get into groups of five and choose a leader for each group. All the reports were given to the leaders who assigned individual roles to each group member. They were asked to improvise the message in the reports which were not too structured and to find a structure that fits into a real life situation. Apart from that, the learners were asked to jot down in a diary, journal or log book, their feelings, comments, thoughts and perceptions about a particular learning experience related to the role play. Such entries could provide opportunities to the learners for self-reflection and self-observation. At the end of the activity the teacher conducted a session to get feedback from the learners on their participation. This is

important for any activity based learning as it helps to reinforce the aim and purpose of the activity. Besides that, learners develop awareness and confidence in their own ability and learning strategies. (Refer to Appendix A for additional information on the role play.)

The activity was explained and short role descriptions were provided. The amount of time for the role play was negotiated. For the purpose of obtaining feedback from the learners, the teacher recorded what the learners had expressed at two different times. First their feedback was recorded when the teacher started explaining the role play and the procedure to the class. The learners' feedback was recorded for the second time after the presentation. Besides recording, casual interviews were conducted with the learners in order to allow them to reflect on their presentation. Learners' feedback was divided into three categories: the preparation stage, the presentation stage and the learners' overall impression regarding the activity.

Preparation Stage

The majority of the learners stated that the activity created the atmosphere that encouraged the reading of the reports carefully although the issue did not interest them earlier when they saw it in the newspaper. They were compelled to find out the meaning of certain difficult words in the article in order to prepare for the role play. In the early stages of the role play the learners were uncomfortable and uncertain. This led to initial lapses of silence. Soon they began helping one another to decide who should speak. Towards the end, their shyness left them and they began prompting each other with ideas. If not for this activity they would not have found out much about this particular issue. Some learners said that the activity gave them a chance to do group work and allowed much free interaction especially to clarify the meanings of difficult words. They enjoyed working together and took pride in their roles and wanted to give their best. The learners said they developed confidence in making the necessary adjustments to the report as they saw fit. This activity also set the stage for them to interact more with the teacher as they kept asking a lot of questions to ensure they were on the right track.

Presentation Stage

The learners attempted to perform a real life talk show. Throughout the presentation, they showed enthusiasm and a sense of fairness -- listening to others in the group to express their views. Some learners were seen taking down notes, perhaps to be better prepared in handling their turn. They also played their role as the audience by clarifying and giving their opinion at the end of the presentation. In doing so, their interest was heightened and the likelihood of remembering the language skills being introduced was strengthened. They spoke more and more unselfconsciously as they progressed, not fearing that they made mistakes with grammar.

Post Presentation Stage

A post-mortem was held with the learners and they were given the opportunity to give their views and opinion of the activity. Such comments and criticisms can help the teachers to prepare better future activities in other classes.

Some Reflections

The main problem faced by the distance learners was the inability to express ideas due to lack of proficiency in the language. However, the strong points noted were that such activities helped the learners increase communicative skills, encourage participation, change the attitudes towards language learning and above all provided them a realistic opportunity to work with others in the classroom. These adult learners given more time for preparation and practice can without doubt improve their performance.

It is crucial for us as teachers to think and plan what should be done to stimulate and facilitate the use of spoken English for academic purposes effectively when making oral presentation, participating in discussions and in a variety of other classroom situations. We need to think of what kind of approaches can be created for distance learners to participate actively in class and how to successfully achieve the needs especially of the weaker learners who have limited face --to- face interaction. Language teaching can be an interesting challenge when teachers make the effort to explore a variety of approaches. Role play is just one of the many methods available for exploitation. With some attention given to the needs of the learners, both the teacher and the learners can play active roles in the classroom, making language classes livelier, challenging and above all rewarding.

Literature

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*Н.А. Кузнецова*

*студентка 3-го курса Института лингвистики*
*РГППУ, Екатеринбург*

**Формирование грамматических навыков**

**на начальном этапе обучения в школе**

Формирование практических навыков происходит непосредственно в процессе обучения. В ходе обучения учащийся приобретает знания и умения