

Die Rolle des Bildungsdramas bei der Gestaltung der soziolinguistischen Kompetenz von EFL-Lernenden

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Zusammenfassung: Der Artikel diskutiert das Bildungsdrama als effektive Methode zur Bildung soziolinguistischer Kompetenz von Lernenden. Umfrageergebnisse und Standpunkte von Wissenschaftlern werden vorgestellt, um die Bedeutung des vorgeschlagenen Ansatzes für den Sprachunterricht aufzuzeigen.

Schlüsselwörter: Bildungsdrama, Herangehensweise, soziolinguistische Kompetenz, Rollenspiel, Umfrage, Schauspiel.

The role of educational drama in shaping EFL learners' sociolinguistic competence

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Abstract: The article discusses educational drama as an effective method in forming learners' sociolinguistic competence. Survey results and viewpoints of scholars are provided to show the significance of the proposed approach in language teaching.

Keywords: educational drama, approach, sociolinguistic competence, role-playing, survey, drama.

The English language is considered to be one of the six international languages. Moreover it is spoken almost in every corner of the world either as native or as second/foreign language. So majority of people around the world learn this language for different purposes. Learning a new language is not an easy task as it may seem. It isn't always about learning grammar structures or new vocabulary. The most essential point of learning a foreign language is in learning its culture and the way people live in that culture. But not all the EFL teachers consider sociolinguistic factors of teaching a foreign language. Most teachers are satisfied with teaching linguistic features of a learning language and neglect teaching cultural peculiarities which are essential in communicative approach.

Communicative language teaching and learning approach is built on four main competences. They are linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and strategic competences. When all four elements of communicative competence are shaped in students' understanding than the aim of communicative approach is reached. The article mainly discusses the sociolinguistic elements of language teaching and educational drama technology is seen as an effective method in shaping cultural understanding of a learning foreign language.

Many definitions have been given to the term sociolinguistic competence by scholars around the world. To Lyster sociolinguistic competence is the ability to use linguistic forms appropriately for a specific situation, or the competence required to

perform specific speech acts in socially appropriate ways, “the capacity to recognise and produce socially appropriate speech in context”.¹ Richard and Schmidt stressed the importance of factors such as age, status, and gender of the participants, as well as the formality/informality of the setting when defining sociolinguistic competence. Knowledge of the relationship between language and its non-linguistic context, knowing how to use and respond appropriately to different types of speech acts, such as requests, apologies, thanks and invitations, knowing which address forms should be used with different persons one speaks to, and in different situations are also considered in shaping sociolinguistic competence.² Kramsch stated that one major source of difficulty for non-native speakers to communicate with native-speakers, is the fact that they do not share the same community’s memory and knowledge.³

The views of the researches show a real necessity for forming sociolinguistic skills of language learners in teaching a foreign language. One should be able to understand and respond to a foreigner in the way how they communicate in their community. This is possible only with highly developed sociolinguistic skills of the learners. Sociolinguistic skills include the ability to differentiate target language dialects, varieties, cultural references, speech figures, register and naturalness.

We define the sociolinguistic competence in the following way: sociolinguistic competence is the ability to use standard and substandard, verbal and non-verbal features of the target language both in written and spoken context being aware of the culture, geographical structure and accepted norms of the society in which the language is spoken.

Different methods have been offered by scholars of the field in shaping learners’ sociolinguistic competence in the language classroom. Mahbouba Messerhi suggested using *culture based activities*.⁴ Russian scholar T. Gustomyatova implemented *E-mail* project.⁵ M.Ovchinnikova found *Case Study* method to be effective.⁶ O. Bobrikova mentioned about using authentic materials in her article.⁷ We propose implementation of *Educational drama* method in forming learners’ sociolinguistic understanding.

First, we should define the difference between Drama and Educational drama. Drama is a play performed in the theatre while educational drama is performed in the classroom and it has certain educational aims rather than the play itself. Using this method students can develop their imaginary and creative thinking skills. While playing roles they will be able to practice active vocabulary which later leads to the naturalness of their speech. Moreover while role playing they develop communication skills and self-confidence. The most importantly learners start thinking, behaving and communicating in the target language easily as they are put into certain roles, such as, an employer, a travel agent, a sales person or a client in the restaurant.

We conducted a survey to analyse the views of EFL teachers of Uzbekistan toward communicative language teaching and the role of educational drama in

shaping sociolinguistic competence of foreign language learners. 150 secondary school teachers all over Uzbekistan participated in the survey (See Table1).

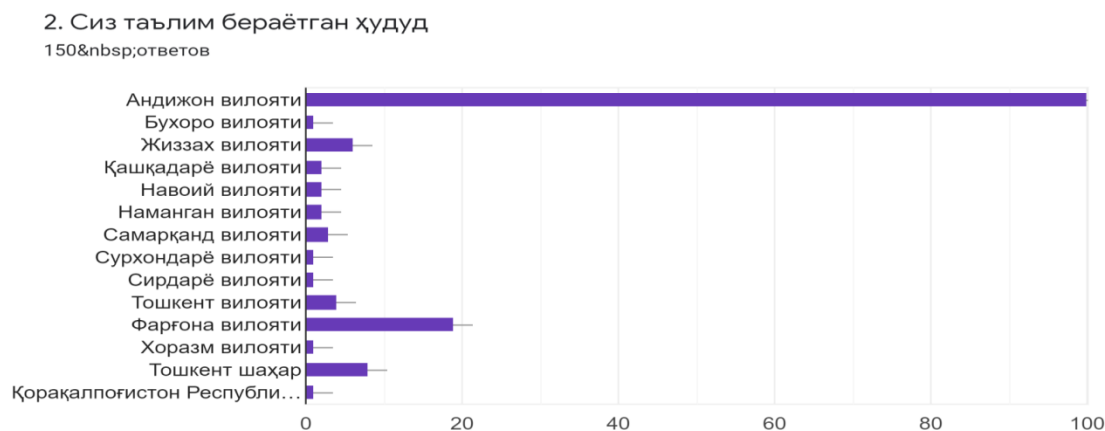


Table 1.

To the question *what methods do you use in teaching English as a foreign language*, 76% of those questioned replied that they use both traditional and communicative methods in teaching English. 14,7% teachers use only communicative method and 7,3% still use traditional English language teaching method. 3% of the participants rely on their own methods. (See Table 2)

4. Сиз инглиз тили дарсларида қайси метод бўйича дарс ўтасиз?

150 ответов

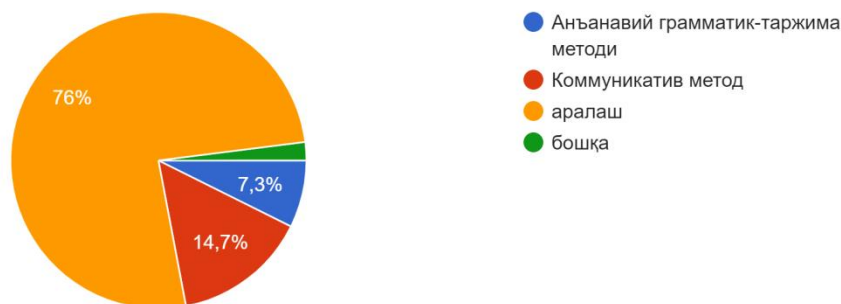


Table 2.

In the question *what are the basic elements of communicative competence* majority (90%) replied correctly. The elements of communicative competence are

linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and strategic competences (See Table 3).

6. Коммуникатив компетенциянинг таркибий қисмлари қайсилар?

150 отвeтов

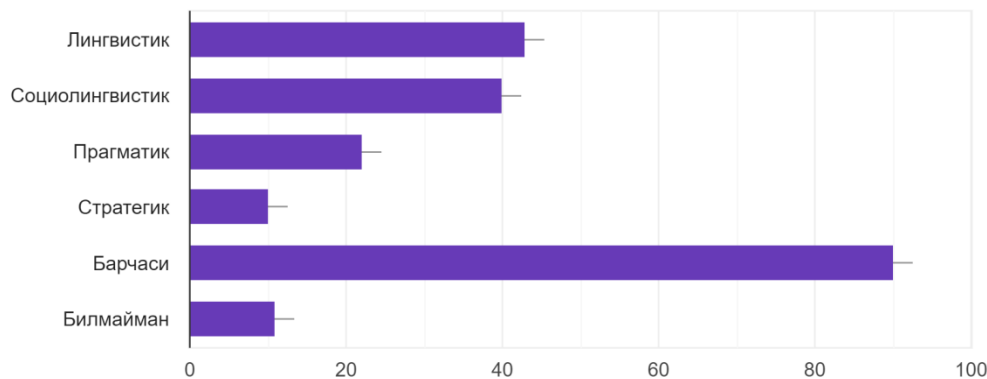


Table 3.

In most foreign language classrooms EFL teachers form students' cultural understanding through demonstrating short films, singing songs in the target language or by reading authentic materials. We were interested to know which of these activities teachers in Uzbekistan use in the classroom. The survey results show that 52 % of the teachers use English movies or cartoons in the lessons. 51, 9 % teachers sing songs with learners. 51 out of 100 teach using culture related topics. 16, 2 % teachers involve learners in role playing activities using dramas. 2, 6 % don't use any activities mentioned. 8, 4 % teachers use other forms of activities in shaping learners cultural understanding. (See Table 4)

9. Инглиз тили дарсларида социолингвистик компетенцияни ривожлантирувчи қайси машғулот туридан кўпроқ фойдаланасиз?

154 отвeта

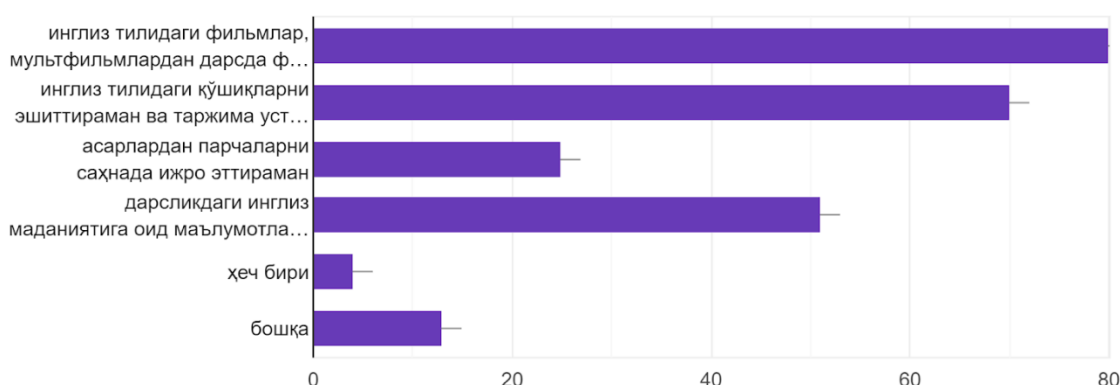


Table 4.

The teachers were also asked if they were familiar with the educational drama approach in a foreign language teaching methodology. The results were astonishing. Almost one third of the total replied that they heard about educational drama

approach. 36, 4% admitted not knowing about educational drama. 27, 9% heard about the approach but still don't know how it is implemented in the classroom (See Table 5).

12. Таълимий драма ҳақида эшитганмисиз?
154 ответа



Table 5.

The results show that this approach is almost new to many EFL teachers in Uzbekistan. The implementation of drama in the foreign language classes will bring refreshment both for teachers and learners. They will be more involved in action activities rather than boring tasks. Moreover it gives them more chance to practice their language skills.

If we look back to the roots of drama it first evolved in England with the works of Harriett Finlay-Johnson and Henry Caldwell Cook. They first introduced educational drama to the public. Later at the beginning of 1950s drama became famous with the influence of Dorothy Heathcote⁸⁹. Her interest in the art of drama led her to bring drama into the field of education. Heathcote's famous roles have led to much research in this area. She encouraged teachers to use drama in lessons. From the beginning, research in the field has been about the effectiveness of drama in education. Then drama and education were synchronized. Eventually drama entered the language system. In the "Mantle of the Expert" by Heathcote drama in education is a central element. According to her theory learner is at the center of the learning. Learning grows around the learner such as a mantle, and teachers should create this condition; starting from the needs and interests of the learner, new approaches to learning are to be found. "Dramatic role taking permits the exploration of multiple viewpoints by giving students the opportunity to "walk in the shoes" of people other than themselves"¹⁰

Widely used forms of drama are pantomime, role-playing, simulation, improvisation and script. All these drama forms lead learners to action activities which will stimulate lazy students to be more active in the lesson. Besides this, they learn the language in collaboration working with other peers; it gives them more fun and enthusiasm. The most important aspect of drama activities is that they will enable learners to practice their speaking skills in artificially created English atmosphere.

Before implementing drama activity to the lesson a teacher should be well-prepared for this beforehand. He/she should set the lesson goals and make sure that the chosen material is appropriate to the level and age of the pupils. Drama activity evaluation criteria should be explained to the pupils, so that they know what they are

expected to do. After a careful planning the drama lesson can be held. Here below, teaching new vocabulary through script is given.

Dialogue: AT A CLOTHES SHOP

SA – shop-assistant, C — customer

SA: Good afternoon. Can I help you?

C: Good afternoon. Yes, please. I'm looking for an elegant dress for a party.

SA: What colour would you like?

C: I don't know. What colours have you got?

SA: We have got all colours. What do you think of blue? I think it matches your eyes and your blonde hair!

C: OK. Have you got it medium size?

SA: Yes, here you are.

C: Can I try it on?

SA: Of course. The changing room is there. Does it fit?

C: Well, it is a little small. Have you got a bigger one?

SA: Only in red. Would you like to try it on?

C: Yes, thank you. ... It fits perfectly.

SA: Yes, and it suits you well.

C: How much is it?

SA: It's 55 Euros.

C: I take it. Can I pay by card or in cash only?

SA: You can pay in cash and by card, too.

C: Here is my card.

SA: Thanks you, Please sign here. Good bye. Thanks for shopping here.

C: Thank you, good bye.

In pre-learning stage pupils will be introduced with the lexis of the lesson. Then they work on the meaning and pronunciation of them with the teacher.

In while-learning stage pupils see how these phrases are used in context while reading and listening to the dialogue. They practice reading the dialogue in pairs.

In post-learning stage learners should be able to use the learnt words in their own speech. For this they should create their own dialogue using new words and act it out on the stage. While they demonstrate their performance sitting students can become observers and at the end they will be given a chance to express their feedback toward the role-play.

Other forms of drama can be organized in the same way depending on the lesson aim. Learning a foreign language through drama activities not only entertain or give high motivation to the learners but at the same time it will enable them to feel close to that culture and society.

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