

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN EFL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT

This article is useful for readers and teachers about several good ways in their studying and teaching process. It is about how to be a good supporter, motivator, well-organized teacher in EFL classes. Some roles of the teacher are defined. It includes how the EFL teacher give an effective lesson to learners and use some ways which are related to learning foreign languages. And also, some scientists' opinions are given in this article.

Keywords: teacher, EFL, an effective controller, organizer, tutor, prompter, motivator, observer, assessor, controller, mime, gesture.

A teacher is someone whose job is to teach, especially in a school¹. Good and experienced teachers are important for education and the quality of learning something. Research supports this notion that a good teacher and actions to be taken on his part in the classroom play a vital role in provoking effective and efficient learning on the part of the students.² English language teachers are by no means an exception and their key role in effective language learning cannot be overlooked. Special attention must be paid to this link between teachers and learners in countries like Iran where language learning happens mainly in formal classroom settings.³

Teachers works as controller, organizer, obsever, tutor, assessor an prompter. What does EFL mean? EFL stands for English as a foreign language and learners are studying English in a non-native country. An English teacher helps students to develop a student's oral and written communication skills, reading, speaking, listening and

¹ Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Fifth Edition (LDOCE5) Pearson Education Limited 2009

² Markley, T. (2004). Defining the effective teacher: Current arguments in education. *Essays in Education*, 11(3), pp.1-4.

³ Kariminia, A. & Salehizadeh, S. (2007). Communication strategies: English language departments in Iran. *Iranian Journal of Language Studies*, 1(4), pp. 287-300.

writing letters, essays, reports, stories. Especially, they teach grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, sentence structure and literature of the language. An effective EFL teacher is a good instructor who works with learners to achieve something and develop.

“In his book *The Essence of Good Teaching* (1984), Seymour Ericksen describes a study in which the views of learners and administrators about teachers were analyzed. The conclusion reached was that an outstanding teacher should be an inspiring instructor who is concerned about students, an active scholar who is respected by discipline peers, and an efficient organized professional who is accessible to students and colleagues”¹

In addition, an effective or EFL teacher should work in interesting and motivating ways properly. And also, he or she can provide learners with a good condition, create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom. Especially, the teacher should make a plan for the lesson beforehand and consider the time-management.

When it comes to a role of the teacher in EFL classes, they present a new language to the class, their role is to inform and explain to learners. According to Richards and Rodgers, “The teacher’s role is central and active. The teacher controls the direction and pace of learning, and monitors and corrects the learners’ performance. The teacher must keep the learners attentive by varying drills and tasks and choosing relevant situations to practice structures.”²

Here some roles that teachers often use:

Controller

It is first role of the teacher in EFL classes, he or she should control students’ attendance, keep silence, manage lesson time effectively, direct learners’ attention to the lesson and encourage the learners to study something new. According to Harmer, “There are times when acting as a controller makes sense such as when announcements need to be made, when order has to be restored, when explanations are given, or when the teacher is leading a question and answer session. Indeed in many educational contexts this is the most common teacher role. Many teachers fail to go beyond it since controlling is the role they are used to and are most comfortable with. Yet this is a pity because by sticking to one mode of behavior we deny ourselves and the students many other possibilities and modes of learning which are good not only for learning itself, but also for our students’ enjoyment of that learning.”³

¹ Williams, Marion, Burden, L.Robert. *Psychology for Language Teachers: A Social Constructivist Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.pp,47

² Richards, C.Jack, Rodgers, S.Theodore. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis*. 10th ed.1986. Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 1995.pp,56

³ Harmer, Jeremy. *How to Teach English*. 7th ed.1998. Malaysia: Longman, 2001.pp,58

Organizer

The definition of organizer is somebody who makes the arrangements for something that is planned to happen effectively. Every teacher should be able to organize new things which is for learners. For example, having activities, doing exercises, repeating and practising previous lessons, using four skills such as, reading, writing, speaking and listening is to help the lesson to organize well. Furthermore, according to Harmer,

“It is vitally important for teachers to get this role right when it is required. If the students do not understand what they are supposed to do they may well not get full advantage from an activity. If we do not explain clearly the ways pairs or groups should be organized, for example, chaos can ensue. If we have not spent some time engaging the students’ interest and ensuring their participation, the activity may be wasted.”¹

Observer

Observation is the process of watching somebody or something carefully for a period time. And also, observation is one of the teachers’ roles which the teacher watch or pay attention to learners’ knowledge, interests, behavior and others. Harmer says, “Teachers do not only observe students in order to give feedback. They also watch in order to judge the success of the different materials and activities that they take into lessons so that they can, if necessary, make changes in the future.”²

Assessor

Assessor is somebody who knows much about a subject or activity and advises a judge or an official committee. Moreover, EFL teachers should measure learners’ knowledge, ability and understanding. Teachers should be able to create opportunities to develop learning skills for learners. If the teacher organizes any activity individually or in groups, he or she should mark correctly, and encourage or explain their mistakes. Teachers should obtain more detailed information about every student’s educational background, experiences and level of proficiency in English in order to provide or use appropriate programming.

Tutor

The definition of tutor is somebody who gives private lessons to a student or a small group properly. The teacher should motivate students in order to learn foreign language. According to Harmer, “It is essential for us to act as tutors from time to time, however difficult this may be. In this more personal contact the learners have a real chance to feel supported and helped, and the general class atmosphere is greatly enhanced as a result.”³

¹ Harmer, Jeremy. How to Teach English. 7th ed.1998. Malaysia: Longman, 2001.pp,58

²Harmer, Jeremy. How to Teach English. 7th ed.1998. Malaysia: Longman, 2001.pp,62

³ Harmer, Jeremy. How to Teach English. 7th ed.1998. Malaysia: Longman, 2001.pp,62

Prompter

Prompter is someone who tells actors in a play what words to say when they forget.¹ Teachers should give learners new vocabularies. Then, he or she should encourage learners to think creatively. Learners should be able to speak English with using correct vocabulary rather than using their own language.

Moreover, mime and gesture is important. The EFL teacher uses mime and gesture to explain smething or convey meaning and atmosphere. According to Harmer, “Mime and expression probably work best when they are exaggerated since this makes their meaning explicit. However, gestures do not necessarily have universal meanings, and what might seen acceptable in one situation or place will not be appropriate in another. We need, therefore, to use them with care.”, as he says “we can also use gesture to express or demonstrate meaning. Thus, fingers can be used to show how verbs are contracted, and arms can be used to ‘conduct’ choral repetition, stress can be shown through clapping or clicking fingers, and intonation can be explained through a kind of drawing in the air”²

CONCLUSION

The role of the teacher in EFL classes is very important. Nowadays, learning foreign languages is developing well. There are many opportunities for learning foreign languages. And also, teachers are creating a good atmosphere for learners. An English teacher should helps students to develop a student’s oral and written communication skills, and give new information Especially, they should teach grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, sentence structure and literature of the language properly. An effective EFL teacher should be creative and express. All teachers should be a good motivator. If learners stop studying, do not achieve success, teachers will give a motivation to their children.

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¹ Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English,Fifth Edition(LDOCE5)Pearson Education Limited 2009

²Harmer, Jeremy. How to Teach English. 7th ed.1998. Malaysia: Longman, 2001 .pp,65