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The effectiveness of role-play in teaching Aviation English for flight attendants

This paper presents some examples of teaching technique as role-play implementation in practical classes during Aviation English teaching for flight attendants. The tasks performed by students in order to develop their foreign language communicative skills yield the result.

This study is based on own experience of Aviation English training for flight attendants and the article aims to show the peculiarities of Aviation English context for flight attendants and demonstrate some sample tasks which help to develop English Speaking skills effectively.

Aviation English is a language all aviation personnel use to understand each other in case of international passenger or cargo transportation. As a tool of communication Aviation English is clear and accurate in its meaning thus knowledge of it provides safety of flights. Although all aviation personnel study Aviation English, the context of it a bit different so are the practical classes for language skills development. The context of the discipline and teaching techniques of Aviation English practical classes depend on peculiarities of the aviators' job conditions and the purposes of their work. In some way Aviation English, we can consider as English for Specific Purposes because ESP lexica has accurate meaning just for context of definite specialists. Aviation English may be considered as a special language for occupational purposes [2].

Today, we focus on a discipline Aviation English for flight attendants, specific of teaching methods, training techniques and context of the classes for these specialists. Due to the flight attendants' job requirements, they need to provide passengers' safety and comfort. That is why before aircraft take-off flight attendants demonstrate safety instructions for passengers on board in a native language of the country airline is from and also in English. Also, flight attendants need to communicate in English with passengers while providing service of meals, drinks, selling duty-free items, helping them with luggage, asking them to fasten the seatbelts, demonstrating the way an emergency door may be open and so on to ensure passengers' satisfaction. Flight attendants meet essential English communication needs in performing such service [1]. We may think that for those purposes knowledge of General English would be enough. However, flight attendants require to communicate with their colleagues like pilots, catering staff, maintenance staff, engineers, rescue brigade, medical personal, fire fighters and others. The topic of the personnel communication is always job related and to interact successfully flight attendants need to possess knowledge of definite terminology to explain what is necessary to do to provide safety and comfort. Thus, practical classes of Aviation English for flight attendants are organized due to all

these facts. Moreover, flight attendants need strong English skills, minimum 500 in TOEFL Or 5,5 on IELTS [1] to satisfy all the problems.

There are some textbooks already published by British publishers which are methodologically organized in a proper way. The context of the tasks helps us to develop all necessary communicative language skills flight attendants need to have. Our teaching work experience demonstrates that vocabulary of the textbook is not enough to meet the students' needs in job related situations so we use extra material to add the information, terms which help the students to increase their vocabulary. As vocabulary is important for comprehension of a situation flight attendants will have specific words and terms are learnt which are called as a technical vocabulary. Each branch has a *st?* (list) of technical terms **restricted** **coinciding** with the specialist's job demands [2]. Some tasks of the textbook are interesting and motivative, they are good for language speaking skills development. The most effective tasks are those which require role-play. It attracts students much as they understand that the role, they perform in class is closely connected to their jobs. So, they are playing with great pleasure. High students' motivation gives positive results in studying, till the end of the semester the students' Aviation English communication skills developed in a way they could make dialogues themselves based on the task suggested immediately without any home or class preparation at once as they got it. It demonstrates the effectiveness of such practical classes when such time was spent completing the tasks of role-play.

In this article we would like to present some practical examples of the tasks and explain how we organize students to perform a role-play.

First, let us clarify the technique role-play peculiarities. It is a technique that requires students imagine a real job-related situation and interact with each other, based on the topic suggested, solving a problem they develop and improve their foreign language communicative skills. This is a student-centered leaning which is very interesting for students as they understand a task, they need to practice is the same they will do in future while being in charge. By playing the role, students feel satisfaction they are doing a job. Future flight attendants are responsible for safety first then for passengers' comfort and Aviation English is a tool for that. Thanks for a real job situation, students imagine how important it is to know the language well, that language helps them to do all the mission onboard so they are well-motivated to train and practice much. Well-motivated students reach the success easier and as a matter of fact students demonstrate their interest to training during our practical classes, they are active, eager to learn and interact. The future flight attendants' communicative skills development is very important; it prevents misunderstanding which can cause a problem onboard which could lead to an emergency.

Contributing to the enhancement of safety of aviation flight attendants study the following topics: Demonstrating safety procedures and checking before take-off; Flying with children; Dealing with problems; Fire on Board; Dealing with onboard accident; Medical incident; First medical aid; Emergency evacuation; Managing disruptive passengers and others.

From the very beginning when students understand their role as a flight attendant, they are aware about their responsibilities. First, before each flight, cabin crew get some information about the flight like type of the aircraft, number of the passengers

and other during briefing. That is why to familiarize the students with this procedure, we suggest them to listen to, as an example, pilots' speech where he gives some details about the flight and difficulties, they expect to have during the flight concerning the weather and others. After that, we ask students to imagine they are on board with some other colleagues and they need to get ready for meeting the passengers. The students work in groups of three or four students their task is to share their job responsibilities for the flight and in 5-7 minutes they need to demonstrate their dialogue for the rest of the students. Next step is passenger meeting which demands practice either, so students listen to examples of welcoming suggested and then they are given the time to work in pairs, take turns to role-play welcoming different types of passengers on board and organizing their seat. Seating passengers in their seats require flight attendant attention, they need to check if the seat belt fastened correctly and address to the passenger kindly. Also, there could be a problem like passenger wishes to move to another seat. So flight attendant needs to explain if there is possibility or not. To practice this situation, we suggest our students to work in pairs pretending that one of them is a passenger who wants to change his seat and another student performs the role of flight attendant. They need to make a dialogue themselves first then demonstrate to class. After the flight attendants help the passengers with their luggage, seats, belts, they check the emergency exits, close the doors and demonstrate safety procedures. In this case students work in pairs too, one student reads the instructions another one uses his hands and in a language of gestures shows the position of the nearest emergency exit, life jackets, the way an oxygen mask may be put on and so on. Then they change the role and train again. During final check passengers may be asked for some actions like fasten their seatbelts, to take their handbags away to the overhead locker, put the table in up position etc. To practice this definite moment, students work in pairs making request to passengers during final check. They need to remember and say: "Excuse me..., Please..., Sorry, ...". Student in a role of a passenger should agree or disagree with the flight attendant, the flight attendant need to ensure passenger about safe actions. After take-off, reaching the flight level, passengers are allowed to unfasten their seat belts and are served with meals and drinks.

Conclusion

To make a conclusion we may say that teaching Aviation English using a role-play as a teaching technique provides the effectiveness of flight attendants' foreign language communication skills development because before the end of each class the students are able to interact successfully based on the topic suggested, they can deal with problem and find the way how to solve it and language is a tool for their communication. So, teaching technique role-play help to improve speaking skills which are in great demand for the flight attendants' future career.

References

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