

Quiz Questions

John Hudson - Improvisation Games in the English as a Foreign Language Classroom

1. Basic concepts (00:00:24)

1.1 Define the term 'improvisation'.

To perform spontaneously and without any preparation; improvisation is often used in everyday life, without being aware of it. Sometimes we make a joke without planning to do so.

1.2 Improvisation is something you a) learn by heart or **b) just do**.

1.3 List three examples of improvisation in everyday life.

Making a joke, doing something funny with your body, singing.

2. Improvisation Example: Active Word at a Time Story (00:01:44)

2.1 Explain the game.

Two pupils play together. One person begins by saying just one word. Now, each pupil, in turn, comes up with a new word. The story being told is supposed to be acted out by the pupils involved, for example, the verb "jump" means that you physically jump. As a team, you create a whole story.

2.2 Name at least three advantages of implementing this game in the EFL classroom.

1. Pupils can work in pairs and everyone gets active.
2. Often, in small groups they act less shyly and talk more confidently.
3. Everybody gets to talk.
4. Sentence building can be practiced effectively e.g. the subject is followed by the verb etc.
5. Encourage faster and more spontaneous spoken English.
6. One can adapt the game to the pupils needs and interests e.g. to any genre or offer a list of verbs to use in the game.
7. Pupils develop an understanding of the verbs.
etc.

2.3 What disadvantages can you think of, if any?

1. The teacher cannot listen to everyone's story, therefore, mistakes will not be corrected.
2. Pupils might start gagging in order to be funny which is not serving the story at all.
3. Some pupils may not be able to deal with the performance pressure. Thus, only the talented pupils may be involved in the performance in the beginning.
etc.

3. Improvisation Example: Puppets (00:05:31)

3.1 Explain the game.

Four pupils play together. Two of them act as puppets, they can talk but cannot move. They tell a story, for example, by saying "I am walking into a café." Two other pupils are the puppet masters. So it is up to them to move them around, depending on the story being told.

3.2 Name at least three advantages of implementing this game in the EFL classroom.

1. Many pupils get involved.
2. Talking in smaller groups is easier for some students.
3. The story might turn out to be funny, therefore it is a learning situation without pressure.
4. Linking words or structures with an action helps to memorize them more easily.
5. This game serves as a good listening exercise, especially for the puppet masters.

3.3 What disadvantages can you think of by implementing this game in the EFL classroom?

1. The teacher cannot focus on everybody.
2. Pupils might be afraid to touch each other, so that the scene may end up in just talking heads.
3. Pupils could struggle in understanding each other, thus, the scene might run very slowly e.g. when the puppet masters do not understand the puppets' commands.

4. Could you imagine implementing these explorative forms of communicative interaction in your future EFL classroom? Give reasons.

Individual answers