

Taiwanese Nursing University Students' Perceptions of Integrating Anatomy Vocabulary Learning into Role-play

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Abstract

In a nursing university where two required courses are considered difficult school subjects by incoming students, we seek to integrate their anatomy vocabulary learning into role-play in an English listening and speaking course. This study aims to identify key elements for establishing role-play as an effective Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) activity in facilitating their anatomy vocabulary learning and English speaking proficiency. It reports on a questionnaire based study exploring first-year nursing university students' experience in role-play with a particular focus on the acquisition of anatomy vocabulary. The subjects for this study were a class of 46 freshmen who were taking Freshman English Lab and Human Anatomy each as a required course in a nursing university in Taiwan. Perception questionnaires were administered to them prior to and after role-playing. Meanwhile, structured interviews were implemented to six subjects in further eliciting their perception of the target activity. The findings indicated that after role-playing, the subjects demonstrated a change in their perceptions in terms of a higher level of preference and a lower degree of difficulty towards the activity. While they confirmed the effects of role-play on anatomy vocabulary learning, they did not perceive it as having a facilitating effect on enhancing their English speaking proficiency. The reason they had reserved attitudes towards role-play can be reflected by the interviewees' responses which revealed the factors that may hinder their full participation in role-play, ranging from the learner factor, the peer factor, and the implementation factor to the administration factor. Finally, implications and suggestions were made and directions for future research were provided.

Keywords: Role-play, Anatomy vocabulary, communicative language teaching, English speaking proficiency.

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