

JACK OF ALL TRADES

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The role of a teacher in modern educational system is not positioned unequivocally: on the one hand, we observe consistent moving away from traditional authoritative teaching, from simple reproduction of knowledge. This process is aimed at constant involvement of students in the teaching and learning process in the role of its active participant rather than passive receiver. On the other hand, this process complicates the notion of “teaching” to such extent that it fails to encompass the meanings implied.

British researchers trace the changes in the role of the teacher in learner-centeredness and see a modern teacher as facilitator or helper, as counsellor or learner support officer, as advisor or consultant rather than authoritative transmitter of information. Thus they determine the following responsibilities of a teacher: to create conditions for efficient independent learning (favourable atmosphere in class, possibility of on-line aid, self-access centres), provide workshops on use of language learning facilities like digital labs, audio-video equipment, computer software. The result of such approach is liberalization of the learning process: the length and place of classes depends on the type and purpose, students can choose between individual and group classes. In these conditions traditional assessment becomes problematic. The researchers offer such forms of testing as interviews, questionnaires or self-monitoring tools, logbooks, portfolios being one of the most widely spread. The final objective in this teaching and learning process is other than just learning things: it is the change of paradigm – gaining more control over learning process through accepting responsibility for learning and finally self-cognition through learning.

American researchers, in their turn, not only unite all the above mentioned roles under one term “Guide on the Side” but also add a number of other roles (Jamie McKenzie, for instance, gives the list of 24 roles), some of which are traditionally teacher’s like monitoring, directing, explaining, assessing, questioning; traditionally mentor’s like motivating, disciplining, seed planting; and a number of innovative

roles like challenging, suggesting, fascinating. These three roles arouse special interest as they stand beyond unequivocal British view of a teacher as a counselor. The role of a challenger brings the teacher and the student at a higher level of interaction of subjects of the learning process: it is more than just mechanical passing of responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student (as could be assumed from the work of British researchers). It brings the learning process closer to real life by preparing the student to unexpected situations in the future and teaching them to use their experience in their solution. The role of a suggesting teacher is as interesting: this statement opens such trend in modern education as equality of the teacher and the student as subjects of teaching and learning process. As for fascinating, the third interesting role of a teacher, there is a principal difference from motivation mentioned above. Firstly, motivation is an explicit method of influence while fascinating is an implicit process. Secondly, while motivation is analytical function, fascinating is emotional and, in fact, makes a way to cheat a student, make him participate in the learning process without conscious motivation. This approach makes the basis for new concept in American teaching – ECRIF framework (for more details visit website www.ecrif.com) which is the key concept of TESOL teacher training course taught throughout the world by teacher trainer certified by American university SIT (Brattleboro, VT).

Ukrainian researchers keep pace with foreign colleagues and name five roles of a modern teacher: as a resource specialist he provides students with context materials and devises exercises; as a psychologist he creates motivation and creates the situation of successful learning; as a consultant he helps students overcome difficulties in studies; as a coordinator he works with individuals or groups; and as an organizer he designs the curriculum, forms learning groups, estimates the number of classes per course.

Thus a modern teacher of a higher educational institution seems to be Jack of all trades acting five roles at a time, which imposes great responsibility and necessity for constant self-improvement. Unfortunately this promotion does not influence his salary.