

USING DRAMA TECHNIQUES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING: TEACHERS' PERCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

With the growing emphasis on the holistic development of the learners, the teachers are required to use different approaches and techniques in the classroom during teaching-learning process. One of such approach is drama in education, which can be used during teaching-learning process. This paper focuses on the different drama techniques used by English language teachers while language learning. In order to know the perception of teachers towards using drama techniques in the classroom a self-perception scale was prepared by the investigators. Also the significance of drama techniques in enhancing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills (LSRW) were observed. It was found that drama techniques increases students' interest and enhances productive skills more than the receptive skills.

KEYWORDS: *Drama in Education, Drama Techniques, Language Learning, Perception*

INTRODUCTION

During contemporary times, the objective of education is the holistic development of the learners. For the same various policies and programs designed by the educationists are based on activity centered curriculum, which emphasizes the use of thinking skills, social skills, emotional skills and moral values. To aid the effective learning teachers use several tools and techniques during teaching-learning process. Active participation of learners during teaching-learning process not only makes the learning effective but also helps in improving the comprehension of the subject concerned, generates interests and motivates learners to understand the subject better. Drama in education provides the opportunity to students to not only get involved in the language learning process but also helps them enhance their language skills.

KEY TERMS

Drama in Education

Drama in education refers to creating an environment where students learn the subjects by playing roles and using other drama techniques while involved in a topic-related investigation.

Drama Techniques

Drama offered in education may be used as a means of learning and Teaching (Wessels 1987). There are several techniques which can be used in classroom such as:

- **Role Play:** it is an act of imitating or pretending to be someone. Learners behave or act in a certain manner of a character. For example: playing famous people

- **Improvisation:** it is unrehearsed, unscripted spontaneous performance. Learners perform and act without rehearsal and script. For example: extempore
- **Mime:** it is a technique of suggesting action, character or emotion without words, using only gestures, expression and movement. For example dumb charades
- **Drama Games:** built-in games or structural play can be used in drama. For example: word game, story weaving etc.
- **Simulation:** instructional scenarios where the learner is placed in a world defined by the teacher. Students experience the reality of the scenario and gather meaning from it. For example: mock parliament.

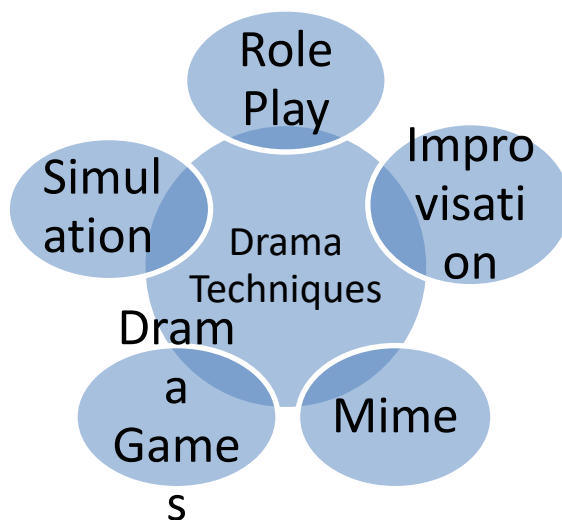


Figure 1: Types of Drama Techniques.

Language Learning

Learning of another language than the acquired one is language learning. It is an active process which is used to communicate feelings, thoughts, and experience, participating in community, pursuing work and leisure activities. It involves the development of LSRW skills.

- **Listening:** it is the ability to identify and understand what speaker is saying through understanding and grasping the meaning. It is one of the receptive skills.
- **Speaking:** it is the ability to effectively communicate verbally. It is one of the productive skills.
- **Reading:** it is an ability which enables a person to read the written form as meaningful language.
- **Writing:** it is ability to writing the symbols, representing sound or words of language with different mechanism, word form, spelling and punctuations.

Research Questions

- What is the drama techniques used in English language learning?
- What is the perception of English language teachers towards the use of drama techniques in language learning?
- What is the significance of drama techniques in enhancing LSRW skills in English language learning?

Research Objectives

The present study has following research objectives:

- To identify the drama techniques used by English language teachers
- To study the perception of English language teachers towards the use of drama techniques in language learning
- To assess the significance of drama techniques in enhancing LSRW skills.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive research design has been taken up wherein the investigators have attempted to identify the drama techniques used by English language teachers and their perception of using them at secondary level. The use of drama techniques in enhancing LSRW skills at school level has also been explored.

Sample

30 English language teachers of senior secondary schools of Delhi comprise the sample. Purposive sampling has been done for the selection of the sample.

Tools

Following tools were used for the data collection:

- Checklist (prepared by the investigators) has been used for identifying the drama techniques conducted in English language learning at school level.
- Self-Perception Scale (prepared by the investigators) has been used to assess the perception of teachers towards the use of drama techniques in English language learning.
- Unstructured Interview (prepared by the investigators) has been used to assess the use of drama techniques for enhancing LSRW skills.

Delimitation

The following delimitation, with respect to the present study, was taken into account

- The study was conducted at senior secondary school level.
- The study was conducted at English language learning only.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Objective one: To identify the drama techniques used by English language teachers

For the purpose of identifying drama techniques used by English language teachers, a checklist was prepared by the investigators. Following observations were made:

- Role Play (individual and group), improvisation, games were the techniques used by the language teachers
- Role Play and Games were the most common drama activities used by the language teachers.

- Drama Techniques were mostly used at the elementary level. Very few techniques were used at secondary and senior secondary level.
- Famous people, roll a roll, barter express, story-telling through role plays, passing the pass word game etc. were some of the activities observed which were used by language teachers.

Objective two: To study the perception of English language teachers towards the use of drama techniques in language learning

In order to study the perception of English language teachers towards the use of drama techniques, a Self-Perception scale was prepared by the investigators. Following results were observed:

- 67 % teachers opined that drama activities increases student's interest in language learning.
- All the teachers opined that drama activities helped students to develop their imagination, creativity, and build up their confidence.
- 40 % teachers are of opinion that drama activities are time consuming
- 24 % teachers accepted that they are not able to involve all the students to perform such activities.

Objective three: To assess the significance of drama techniques in enhancing LSRW skills.

For the purpose of assessing the significance of drama techniques in enhancing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, unstructured interview was conducted by the investigators. Following results were obtained:

- 55 % of the teachers claimed that Group performance as the most effective technique.
- 52 % teachers believed that such activities tend to develop productive skills (Speaking and Writing) more than the receptive skills (Listening and Reading).
- 84 % of the teachers claimed that increased confidence while speaking is the most common visible behavioral change.

Implications

- Teachers should consider drama as a valuable method of teaching, which contributes greatly to English lessons with young children at school level, as well as increase learners' motivation.
- Teachers should encourage the ideas, thoughts and feelings of children.
- Children should be encouraged to make efforts to overcome their weaknesses and work towards their strengths.
- School administrators should motivate teachers to organize drama activities with respect to their subject.
- Enough resources must be provided to teachers to organize drama activities.

CONCLUSIONS

Using drama techniques during teaching-learning process leads to holistic development of the learners. Drama techniques encourage and enhance listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Such techniques have the potential to involve and engage learners during learning process.

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