

Developing Student's Speaking Skills Through Drama

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Abstract: *This article examines the role of drama in language learning, with a focus on its growing importance in Uzbekistan as English becomes increasingly essential. It outlines twelve key benefits of incorporating drama in education, such as fostering creativity, improving communication, developing empathy, and enhancing psychological well-being. Additionally, it explores the potential challenges faced by teachers in drama-based classrooms, including issues of student participation, classroom management, and language errors. The article critiques the communicative language teaching approach, highlighting its emphasis on fluency over accuracy. Ultimately, the article argues that drama is an invaluable tool in English language education, helping students express themselves, develop critical skills, and build confidence in real-life situations.*

Key words: *foreign language, drama, strategy, approach, learn, knowledge, assess, character.*

INTRODUCTION

English has become an international language and its range of functions is increasing everywhere including Uzbekistan, because dynamic processes in all spheres and successive reforming need acquiring one or two foreign languages.

Present President of our Republic Sh. M. Mirziyoev is also paying great attention to higher education system of Uzbekistan. On April 20, 2017 he signed a decree PQ 2909 "On the measures of further development of the system of higher education." The aim of this decree is to improve the system of higher education, to review the contents of preparing cadres according to the priority tasks of social – economical development of the country, to establish conditions for preparing higher education specialists suit for international standards. It has many tasks, for example: to develop material – technical base, in order to learn foreign experiences to send abroad teachers for training, to invite foreign specialists to Uzbekistan, to create new generations of textbooks using foreign sources, etc.

At the present great importance is attached to the study and teaching foreign languages. No doubt, it happens not without purpose. Today, the importance of our people's perfect knowledge of foreign languages can scarcely be exaggerated as our country aspires to win a decent place in the world community, because our people see their great future as a life in mutual accord and cooperation with their foreign partners.

Learning foreign languages no longer a pastime: it is necessity, because it results in students achieving divergent thinking, creativity and cognitive development.

We can mention about 12 essential points that are important to be considered:

1. Drama is part of real life and prepares students to deal with life's problems.

Drama simply allows students the opportunity to rehearse roles, further giving form or shape to the individual and personal ideas and feelings they are naturally experiencing. Overall, this allows students to make sense out of their real-life problems.

2. Drama engages students in creative problem-solving and decision making.

Deep experiences through drama guides and supports student's problem-solving skills, while at the same time, works to encourage an increasing awareness in how to solve issues at hand.

3. Drama develops verbal and nonverbal communication.

Through different characters, students share the opportunity to expand their problem-solving skills both verbally and non-verbally, making room for a sense of creativity. As well, students practice and build upon various communication skills through the use of body language, facial expressions and different voices.

4. Drama can enhance students' psychological well-being.

Under different characters, students can express their true feelings or sense of personality without fear of being judged or criticized. They can work on a personal issue or solve personal problems while in character, which can simply help their overall well-being. Essentially, what this does is allow students to get things off their mind, further releasing emotion and tension and allowing students to be who they are.

5. Drama develops empathy and new perspectives.

Taking on various roles in character allows students to use all senses and characteristics in order to understand the character, as well as, the scenario or story at hand. Learning how to express oneself in different ways and through different means, helps build a strong character and personality.

6. Drama builds cooperation and develops other social skills.

Working together as a group promotes, encourages and motivates cooperation. It is essential that each of our students feels accepted and works well with others, in order to create and build a safe environment for all to learn. What drama does is continues to build on this importance. Drama simply brings students together, allowing them to find different characters that best suits them, different roles to express who they are, and different ways to build upon and develop social awareness.

7. Drama increases concentration and comprehension through engagement.

Students always learn best when they are engaged and interested as well as when they are actively involved. As students are strongly focused and concentrating, their overall understanding simply increases. When we include students in our examples in class, it is more likely that they will grasp the idea more, or make a concrete connection.

8. Drama helps students consider moral issues and develop values.

Drama simply helps students further understand the importance of values they are already aware of, as well as, it guides them in developing and forming additional values. As teachers, it is essential that we allow students the space and opportunity to make this discovery and connection in value and moral issues while they are engaged through drama, rather than impose them.

9. Drama is an alternative way to assess by observing.

When teaching new lessons, we always depend on prior knowledge. We start with what students know, which further guides us with the next step to take in our teaching. It is difficult for some of our students to make sense of specific things which is simply where drama fits in. Drama can be used to preview or review a lesson; further allowing teachers to assess what students already know or have found.

10. Drama is entertaining.

Fun is learning, and learning is fun. If we remember this and try to incorporate fun in our teaching, our students will definitely enjoy the learning process. Students enjoy dealing with and discussing real-life issues and problems, they like figuring out, doing interesting things, doing things differently.

11. Drama contributes to aesthetic development.

Through drama, students learn about a number of things such as conflict and characters, which further allows them to deepen their sensory awareness. In addition to, children also learn how to express themselves through various teaching and learning strategies such as dialogue and improvisation.

12. Drama offers a learning avenue that enhances other areas of the curriculum.

Drama can be used as a teaching and learning tool to help students make meaning of a number of skills they need to be a well-rounded individual. It further allows them to experience and explores the world around them through different characters and roles, further building on their relationship with others and things.

As every coin has two sides the theatre/drama also of having disadvantages, challenges for teacher facing while use in practice. There are many problems that can emerge for the teacher inexperienced in using drama activities in the classroom. Teachers who work in a traditional environment and follow a very structured syllabus are often afraid to experiment with more student-centered activities. These fears are usually based around the apprehension that the class will become noisy, unfocused and the teacher will lose control. The reality is in fact the opposite: a learner-centered class where students are working collaboratively in groups, if carefully organized and well set up, is easily managed and apart from monitoring then groups the teacher is free. This contrasts with the teacher-centered class where the teacher has to monitor an motivate 20–30 individuals continuously without a minute's respite. There are however problems that arise in drama-based classrooms. These include:

- Learners use L1 persistently;
- Learners don't participate;
- Learners make lots of errors;
- Dominant/shy students;
- Learners get confused and do not know what to do;
- Noise;
- Chaos.

There have been various criticisms on the principles of the communicative approach to teaching and learning language. The approach gives priority to meanings and rules of use rather than to grammar and rules of structure. In other words, it is felt that there is not enough emphasis on the correction of pronunciation and grammar error. It is because too much focus on meaning at the expense of form. It is believed that with communicative language teaching there is a danger of focusing too much on oral skills and less emphasis is given to reading and writing skills.

The communicative language teaching approach focuses on fluency but not accuracy in grammar and pronunciation. According to Hughes, 1983 communicative language teaching leads to the production of "fluent but inaccurate" learners. What is predicted to happen here is the danger of giving priority to fluency over accuracy in communicative language teaching classes.

CONCLUSION

In Conclusion, drama in the English language classroom is ultimately indispensable because it gives learners the chance to use their own personalities. It draws upon students' natural abilities to imitate and express themselves, and if well-handled should arouse interest and imagination. Drama encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into context, and by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations it should arm them with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom.

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