

Unlocking the Curtain of Confidence: Drama in Education Breathing Life into Spoken English Skills for Elementary School Pupils

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Abstract: *Drama in education is a pedagogical approach that utilizes theatrical techniques and activities to enhance learning experiences. Numerous studies have highlighted the benefits of incorporating drama into educational settings, particularly in the field of primary school oral English teaching. However, traditional English teaching method in China limit students' development in speaking English. Therefore, this essay is trying to take M elementary school as a case, through an empirical study and show the realistic transformation of the British and American experience in the Chinese practice of drama in education is presented.*

Keywords: Drama in education, Process drama, Confidence, Oral English teaching, Elementary school.

1. INTRODUCTION

Drama in education, which was born in British and American at the beginning of the 20th century, has attracted the attention of practitioners of school education and drama art practitioners. With "dramatic teaching method", "Drama in theater", "educational drama", "developmental drama", "creative drama" and "process drama", drama in education has gradually formed a huge concept group in British and American and has also formed various practical experiences. At the end of the 20th century, British and American drama in education were introduced into China, which has become a hot spot in Chinese school educating and practicing.

After a large number of literature studies, it is found that the common oral problems of Chinese students are: first, there are problems in pronunciation, intonation and grammar. In the questionnaire, some teachers think that students have problems in pronunciation and recognition. Some teachers think that students have a small vocabulary and cannot express themselves correctly; Some teachers say that students' pronunciation is not standard, similar consonants and vowels are almost indistinguishable, and so on. Second, students are not confident. Many teachers have mentioned in the questionnaire that students are afraid to speak English, students are not motivated to speak English, students are afraid to speak, afraid of making mistakes, lack of practical practice and so on. Third, lack of context. Nowadays, oral English is not confined to textbooks, and gradually tends to life, but students lack the corresponding situation and have no similar language environment.

This essay aims to shed light on the specific benefits of incorporating drama into the primary school curriculum for the development of spoken English skills. Through an examination of relevant research, empirical study, this paper seeks to shed light on the potential benefits and effective strategies of integrating drama education into the primary school curriculum. By understanding the transformative power of drama in education, educators and policymakers can harness its potential to empower young learners and foster a love for spoken English, ultimately equipping them with the necessary skills to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

In addition, the implementation of the new curriculum standard in China has brought about significant changes in English teaching system. Therefore, the practice of drama in education in contemporary Chinese schools has positive significance of change.

2. A SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

This research examines the creation of drama in education and speaking experiences in one elementary classroom in China. We describe how Miss. Chen, the classroom teacher, used process drama as a context for learning, and we examine which genres and functions of writing were evident within the process drama frame. Our perspectives on the events were often different because we had distinct roles in the classroom and unique relationships with the students.

As the teacher, Chen was an initiator and participant in the dramas. Pre- and post-tests were administered to students to assess their spoken English skills. Additionally, surveys and observations were conducted to gauge students' confidence levels and engagement in the learning process. Students will practice according to the following steps: 1) Read the text proficiently: pay attention to the pronunciation, intonation, tone and language sense; 2) After the role assignment, read aloud based on the emotion grasp of the role; 3) Group cooperation for a complete presentation, which is a complete situational presentation in a larger space.

As the researcher, I, functioned mostly as an observer, even though the children frequently recruited her as a participant. Therefore, throughout this article, the classroom events are shared through my observations and the data she collected, yet the events also include Chen's reflections, recollections, and perspectives.

3. MAJOR FINDINGS

Drama teaching method has a unique function in language teaching: (1) It can create a situation, create a context, and use context to promote English learning. (2) It can increase confidence and reduce anxiety, and enhance emotional experience with role play. (3) It can build a new type of learning relationship and cultivate the ability of teamwork. (4) It can follow the cognitive rules of children and cultivate the comprehensive pragmatic ability. It can help to enhance pupils' interest in English learning and accelerate the pupils' leap from language knowledge to pragmatic ability, even improve the language communication ability and cooperation ability of primary school students.

4. REFLECTIONS:

Due to the author's limited ability in research methods, theoretical level, research vision and practical level, there are many shortcomings in the research, such as insufficient depth of interview, weak professionalism, incomplete data collection and inadequate analysis of research problems and influencing factors, etc. All these are areas that the author needs to improve and learn in the future study and work. I will study hard, strengthen the study of theory and research methods, and constantly improve myself.

On the basis of this study, there are still many problems to be further discussed and in-depth in the future:

(1) The establishment of the evaluation system of primary school educational drama activities. The evaluation of activities, students and teachers must aim at the development of students, pay attention to the result of artistic creation, and pay more attention to the development of students' emotional experience and ability in the process. How to establish scientific and reasonable evaluation standards and systems? Because the teaching staff of educational drama is directly related to the popularization of educational drama in primary education and the quality of the implementation of educational drama activities.

(2) Research on the development of drama curriculum in primary education. At present, most of the primary school educational drama is only a special activity, and no complete curriculum system has been developed. How to construct an educational drama curriculum suitable for primary school? These are all questions worthy of further study by future researchers

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