

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS BY PERFORMANCE OF A SHORT DRAMA

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Abstract

This article is aimed at presenting an alternative to anticipate the problems faced by students in speaking activities. One of the techniques that can be used to increase students' ability in speaking is by performing a short drama in English class. Drama provides more chance for the students to speak and in English fluently and accurately as the students do not feel stress in learning. Moreover, the students are motivated to speak and express their feeling. Therefore, by performing a short drama, it can create a warm and happy atmosphere in the classroom.

Keywords: *Performance, drama, speaking and expression*

A. INTRODUCTION

In this writing, the writer is interested in discussing how to present short drama to motivate students in learning oral skills. Drama provides a background for the integration of the four skills and for the development of language-learning strategies.

Developing oral skill is a real challenge for many English Foreign language school teachers since the students do not live in an English speaking environment and they attend schools where English is taught as a curricular subject. In addition, it is difficult to find realistic to communicate in the foreign language.

There is a question that so far has been the following: how can we, EFL teachers who work with students who are difficult to communicate in the foreign language and motivate them to speak English?. To face this problem the writer finds that the best way simply by "playing and having fun" in classroom. It means that if a subject is not interesting, the students are not motivated to learn it. Syah said that it is better for the students to learn when they have interest in the subject, "interest can influence the quality of student's achievement in the certain subject (1995: 225). Therefore, we need to provide an activity that can attract students' interest. One of them is by

performing a short drama as an option that can be practice to increase students' speaking ability.

B. DISCUSSION

Drama in Respond to Speaking

According to the extensive empirical research that body language activities, over the last three decades has confirmed that drama activities enchant all areas of language acquisition in classroom (Peter, 2001: 2). And drama also offers other advantages as a medium for developing language awareness. It is practical, often fun, it allows young people to use their bodies as well as language in order to express themselves; everybody objects and clothing, people and times.

Drama is interactive so part of the discovery of language in drama will be a result of speaking from a particular point of view and hearing others speak from a different point of view according to their perspective on the situation. This opportunity to look at how language is produced out of the interactions of people who have different relationship to the situation they find themselves in is not an abstract one. Neeland said that in drama, situation are improved, or acted out, as if they were actually happening, the students are involved as participants, feeling,

discovering, thinking, through 'acting and reacting', in response to the situation as it unfolds around them (1996: 204).

In the English National curriculum suggests a number of strategies for creating drama. The purpose of these strategies is to help the students make and believe in the dramatic situation, feel comfortable about getting, involved, develop characterization and think about implications of the language and actions in the drama.

Some of the strategies that are described below:

1. Freeze-frame: students in small groups devise a tableau which demonstrates what they want to say.
2. Improvisation where a class may separate into small groups each exploring a facet of an overall theme capable of being brought together at some later point.
3. Hot-seating in which either the teacher or a member of the group adopts a role and is questioned by the rest of the class.
4. Forum-teacher: a scene is acted out, but the audience has the right to intervene and change the scene through questioning and suggesting alternatives.
5. Expert roles: students adopt certain expert roles and responsibilities as detectives, journalists, scientists, archivists.
6. Set design: the classroom is physically rearranged to represent a place in the drama; the class might add object and props such as personal possessions, photographs, etc.
(Neeland, 1996: 208)

In drama, students can be motivated to express in practicing speaking skill. Therefore, the writer tries to present a short drama in teaching speaking skill which proves to be very important in developing fluency and learning pronunciation. Besides, it can also provide them the atmosphere of real communication situation to speak English. For example the short drama will be presented in speaking activity as follows:

Title: "A Flower in Hiding Garden"
By Ida G.

Characters: Susi as mother
Reny as daughter
Leny as stepdaughter
Roni as a wealthy man

Scene: (the background of setting in stage)
Leny is cleaning the living room and she Looks so sad. It means she has many problems in her life.

Susi: (Is shouting in the other room)
Leny.....! Leny.....!!!

Leny: (Is afraid to answer) I...am here mom

Susi: (Comes into the living room and is angry) You work so slowly!!! You know that it is not only this work but it is also others including Reny's needs you hear me!

Leny: Yes, mom

Reny: (Comes into living room and tidy her dress and make up) Leny! takes my shoes and tools of my make up

Susi: (Talks to Reny) My Rose, today Roni who a wealthy family will come, so you have to looks beautiful

Reny: Ok, I love him

Susi and Leny leave the living room and the bell ring.

Reny: (Opens the door and she is smile to a man) Are you Roni, come in and sit down, please.

Roni: Thank you, you are Susi's daughter?

Reny: Yes, I am Reny (Then she calls Leny) Leny! Brings a cup of tea.

Leny: Comes in and brings a cup of tea

Roni: (Full attention to Leny and admires to her). He says to Reny that he wants to meet Reny's mother

Reny: (Calls her mother) mom, here please. Roni wants to talks to you

Susi: (Comes into the living room and hopes something lucky). Hello Roni. What do you want to talk?

Roni: Do you have two daughters if you don't mind, I want to propose Leny.

Susi and Leny are surprised.....!!!

Working It Out

Based on the short drama above, "A Flower in Hiding Garden", for instance, the students are group into families: daughters, mother, and a man who is handsome and rich. There are good and bad character, old and young people. The students are asked to discuss the problem which happened in the family. Besides it discusses the atmosphere, setting and their activities.

A teacher plans this activity from beginning to end. This activity involves the interplay of verbal strategies (functions, mimicry, register, intonation, pronunciation, inferences) and the knowledge and understanding of different cultural practices and habits (body language, emotion, and attitude). On the other hand, as students are 'masked' believed a new identity, they generally overcome shyness and feel free to express themselves. They play and have fun and do not view this activity as class room work at all.

The main purpose of this activity is having students generate their own discourse; the use of this technique has an important motivational value for them, especially if we take into account that they do not have many chances in the local environment to communicate in the target language.

As a consequence, the students get involved immediately and feel eager to participate, not only because of the extrinsic motivation that results from interacting in realistic contexts, but also because they are intrinsically motivated to express themselves use their imagination and be creative.

Acting It Out

Before the students are asked to perform the play, the teacher should give some instructions. The instructions for students as follows:

1. The students know exactly what they have to do and understand the instructions
2. They understand the ground rules: the discussion and the performance in stage or front of class should be

in the target language. But in other case, the final product has to be good in English. This means students would be consulting dictionaries, grammar books, textbooks, or other useful material.

3. The dialogs students write have to clear, coherence, logically sequenced, and well- balanced so that every member of the group has a chance to participate in its creation and performance. Besides students have to agree on the stage, customs, make up, decoration of stage, etc.

And the task of teacher is:

- a. Make certain that the students know exactly what they are supposed to do.
- b. Help the groups in need of assistance to find solutions by suggesting ways, possibilities, and viewpoints that would help them carry out their task.
- c. Be prepared to model utterances in target language, as required, and to give explanation. At this stage the attention has to correct the students' production, written and oral before they perform the play in front of class.
- d. Observe the group dynamics to cater to different kinds of problems or characteristics of the students (shy, talkative, cooperative) to foster cooperation and mutual tolerance and to find out about the students' learning strategies (Nunan, 1997:53).

Performance

The performance of the short play in front of class room can make students enjoy and they do not realize that they are learning because in this activity they can express emotion freely. In this stage, each student or group is invited to perform that they have to prepare a script and it is just guides for them. If someone changes or forgets part of the dialog, the other has to help them so as to keep the conversation

going. If it is important that students become aware of different communication strategies such as paraphrasing, making gestures, and asking for feedback.

To perform the play: “A Flower in Hiding Garden” for example, in the classroom, the students practice dialog and understand the characters. And it also prepares or design the stage as it mentions previous that the class might add object and props. for instants, this play needs living room. Before the performance starts, the students are asked to introduce all of performers and one of them explains the theme of the sketch to the audiences.

It is important to record on a video cassette all the production so as to analyze individual and group progress and understand how the activity transpired. In some cases, students who were never filmed before reluctant to be film. It may also help to show the class what other students have produced. There are always groups of students willing to show everybody what they did.

Debriefing

In this phase, the teacher plays the role of discussion leader. At this stage, peer correction, self-assessment, and self-evaluation are fostered. Attention is drawn to how well the performers attained their goal. Beatriz said that the activity focus is on fluency rather than accuracy, with the following points of emphasis;

- a. How well did the student make themselves understood, including what they said (appropriate vocabulary, etc), and how did they say it (intonation, pronunciation, etc).
- b. What strategies kept the conversation going (mainly through peer support, asking questions, making gestures, improvising, etc).

Much research has been done in this area, and the general conclusion is that “practice makes perfect”, we speak or write, the better we become at these activities. It is within the matrix of fluent speech that

accuracy can actually develop (River, 1987).

These guidelines should foster students’ comments and questions about, among other things, grammar and vocabulary. At this stage, we can say the best way of contextualizing grammar and the teaching of vocabulary is by starting with the students’ own performances. In many cases, the students themselves can give the answer to those questions and provide clear and correct explanation or example. In other cases, the teacher may want to clarify, give reinforcement, and provide further practice.

The Classroom Atmosphere

It is necessary to create a suitable atmosphere that could allow students to express themselves freely and make them feel eager to communicate in the foreign language. According to Beatriz, a teacher centered classroom would never provide the opportunities for the students to interacted (1997:53). The function of the teacher in this activity is participated as audience and it is important here she or he supports the students in the performance.

The classroom must be a non threatening environment where students are eager to communicate and where the focus is on the process of learning not on error correction so that the student freely express their thought, ideas, feeling, and emotion. Errors should be viewed as natural part of the learning process never as a drawback.

Students should pay attention about what they have done and other students’ progress and should share projects, goals, and interests if we expect interaction to occur and if we look forward to introduction creativity, imagination fun to our classrooms.

C. CONCLUSION

In my experience, teaching of speaking can use a short play to improve the students’ ability in this skill. The end of the result of students score showed the improving of student ability in speaking. They can speak fluently and accurately

because one of the factors is the atmosphere of classroom support them to join the class activity.

The performance of the short play keep students highly motivated, giving them a chance to be involved in creative language use. Besides they can develop strategies that will be importance in their learning processes and to develop skills of self monitoring and self evaluation. And students also learn to cooperate with classmates

The other things that students get in this activity that is to integrate and learn how to be tolerant and to adapt to new working groups and situations. It results in a holistic view of the learning process where the cognitive and humanistic aspects contribute in the students and the teacher personal growth.

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