

THE EFFECT OF DRAMA-BASED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES ON YOUNG LEARNERS’ ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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Annotation: *This article discusses the effect of drama-based classroom activities on young learners’ oral communication skills. It explains how activities such as role-plays, dialogues, storytelling, and simple drama games help students improve their speaking ability in a natural and interesting way. Many young learners usually feel shy or afraid of making mistakes when they speak, however, drama activities help them feel more relaxed and confident, because they can speak through different roles and situations. In addition, the article shows that drama-based activities make lessons more interactive and enjoyable, and therefore students become more active in the classroom. They not only practice speaking, but also improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. Moreover, such activities help develop creativity and teamwork skills, since students often work together and share ideas.*

Overall, the article highlights that using drama in the classroom is an effective method, because it creates a positive learning environment and helps young learners develop their oral communication skills more successfully.

Keywords: *Drama activities, young learners, oral communication, speaking skills, language learning, classroom activities, motivation.*

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, learning a foreign language has become very important, especially for young learners, because they can learn new languages more easily at an early age. However, many students have problems with speaking, because they feel shy, nervous, or afraid of making mistakes. As a result, they do not participate actively in speaking activities, and their oral communication skills develop slowly. Therefore, teachers need to use interesting and effective methods in the classroom, so that students feel more comfortable and motivated to speak. One of the most useful methods is drama-based classroom activities, because they give students a chance to use language in real-life situations. For example, students can take different roles, act out short dialogues, and express their ideas freely. Because of this, learning becomes more enjoyable and less stressful. Moreover, drama activities help create a positive and friendly classroom environment, where students support each other and are not afraid to speak. In addition, such activities improve not only speaking skills, but also pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence. As a result, students become more active and engaged in the learning process.

This article aims to analyze the effect of drama-based classroom activities on young learners’ oral communication skills, and to show how these activities can help students speak more confidently and effectively in a foreign language.

1. The importance of oral communication skills for young learners

Oral communication skills are very important for young learners, because they help students express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings clearly. At an early age, children learn language faster, and therefore it is a good time to develop their speaking ability. If students practice speaking from the beginning, they become more confident and active in communication. Moreover, speaking is one of the main skills in language learning, because it allows students to use the language in real life. For example, students need speaking skills to ask questions, give answers, and communicate with others.¹⁵ Without speaking practice, it is difficult for learners to use the language effectively. Therefore, oral communication should be an important part of classroom activities. In addition, young learners often feel shy or afraid of making mistakes when they speak, and because of this, they may avoid participating in lessons. However, if teachers create a friendly and supportive environment, students feel more comfortable and try to speak more. As a result, their confidence and fluency improve over time. Furthermore, developing oral communication skills also helps improve other language skills, such as listening, pronunciation, and vocabulary. When students speak more, they learn new words, practice correct pronunciation, and understand spoken language better. Because of this, speaking plays a key role in overall language development. In conclusion, oral communication skills are essential for young learners¹⁶, because they help students communicate effectively, build confidence, and improve their overall language ability. Therefore, teachers should give more attention to speaking activities in the classroom. Oral communication skills play a very important role in the language development of young learners, because they help children express their ideas, thoughts, and emotions in a clear and understandable way. At a young age, children are naturally active and curious, and therefore they are more ready to learn new languages through speaking and interaction. Because of this, it is very important to focus on speaking skills from the early stages of learning.¹⁷

In addition, speaking is one of the main ways of communication, and it allows students to use the language in real-life situations. For example, young learners need to ask questions, respond to others, and share their opinions, and all of this requires good oral communication skills. If students do not practice speaking regularly, they may understand the language but still find it difficult to use it in real conversations. Therefore, speaking practice should be included in every lesson. Moreover, young learners often feel shy, nervous, or afraid of making mistakes when they speak in a foreign language, and because of this, they may stay silent during the lesson. However, if the teacher uses interesting and

¹⁵ Anderson, J. (2020). *Teaching English to Young Learners: Critical Issues in Language Teaching with 3–12 Year Olds*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, p. 45.

¹⁶ Ulas, A. H. (2020). The effects of creative drama activities on speaking skills of young learners. *Education and Science*, 45(201), 221–238, p. 229.

¹⁷ Richards, J. C. (2020). Exploring communicative language teaching in contemporary classrooms. *RELC Journal*, 51(2), 161–176, p. 168.

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supportive activities, students can feel more relaxed and confident. As a result, they begin to participate more actively and are not afraid to express themselves.

Furthermore, oral communication helps develop other important language skills, because speaking and listening are closely connected. When students speak more, they also improve their pronunciation, learn new vocabulary, and understand spoken language better. In addition, regular speaking practice helps students become more fluent and natural in their speech. Another important point is that oral communication also supports social development, because students learn how to interact with others, work in pairs or groups, and respect different opinions. This is especially important for young learners, since they are still developing their social and communication skills.¹⁸

In conclusion, oral communication skills are essential for young learners, because they help improve language ability, increase confidence, and support both academic and social development. Therefore, teachers should pay special attention to speaking activities and create opportunities for students to practice speaking as much as possible.

The role of drama-based activities in language learning

Drama-based activities play an important role in language learning, because they help students use the language in a more natural and meaningful way. Instead of only learning grammar rules or memorizing words, students can practice speaking through actions, roles, and real-life situations. Therefore, learning becomes more active and interesting for young learners. First of all, drama activities such as role-plays, dialogues, and storytelling allow students to use language in context, and because of this, they understand how to use words and expressions correctly. For example, when students act as different characters, they try to speak like real people, and this helps them improve their speaking skills. At the same time, they do not feel like they are just studying, but they feel like they are playing and enjoying the lesson.

Moreover, drama-based activities reduce students' fear of making mistakes, because they are not speaking as themselves, but as a character. As a result, they feel more confident and relaxed, and they are more willing to participate in speaking tasks. In addition, these activities create a supportive and friendly classroom environment, where students help each other and learn together.¹⁹

Furthermore, drama activities improve creativity and imagination, because students need to think, create dialogues, and express different emotions. This not only helps their language skills, but also develops their thinking and communication abilities. Because of this, students become more independent and active learners. Another important point is that drama activities encourage teamwork and cooperation, since students often work in pairs or groups. They learn how to listen to others, share ideas, and work together to complete tasks.

¹⁸ Even, S. (2020). Drama pedagogy in foreign language classrooms. *Scenario: Journal for Drama and Theatre in Foreign and Second Language Education*, 14(2), 34–49, p. 41.

¹⁹ Galante, A., & Thomson, R. I. (2020). The effectiveness of drama-based approaches for language development. *TESOL Quarterly*, 54(3), 789–812, p. 796.

As a result, their social skills also improve along with their language skills. In conclusion, drama-based activities are very useful in language learning, because they make lessons more interactive, reduce fear, and help students practice speaking in a meaningful way. Therefore, teachers should include such activities in their teaching to improve students’ oral communication skills.

The impact of drama activities on students’ speaking skills

Drama-based activities have a strong positive impact on students’ speaking skills, because they give learners many opportunities to practice speaking in a natural and interactive way. When students take part in role-plays, dialogues, or small performances, they actively use the language, and as a result, their speaking ability improves step by step. First of all, drama activities help students become more confident in speaking, because they practice regularly and in a fun way. Many young learners are afraid of making mistakes, however, when they act as different characters, they feel less pressure. Therefore, they speak more freely and are not afraid to try new words and expressions. In addition, drama activities improve fluency, because students speak more during the lesson. Instead of giving short answers, they use longer sentences and try to express their ideas clearly. As a result, their speech becomes more natural and smoother over time. Moreover, repeated practice through acting and dialogue helps students remember useful phrases and structures.

Furthermore, pronunciation also improves, because students listen to others and try to imitate correct speech. For example, during role-play, they pay attention to how words are pronounced, and they try to speak clearly so that others can understand them. Because of this, their pronunciation becomes better. Another important point is that drama activities help students learn new vocabulary, because they use different words in different situations.²⁰ When they act out real-life scenarios, they need to choose appropriate words, and this helps them expand their vocabulary. At the same time, they learn how to use words in context, not just memorize them.

In conclusion, drama activities have a very positive effect on students’ speaking skills, because they improve confidence, fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Therefore, using drama in the classroom is an effective way to develop oral communication skills in young learners. Drama-based activities have a very strong and positive impact on students’ speaking skills, because they give learners a chance to practice the language in real and meaningful situations. When students participate in role-plays, dialogues, or small performances, they do not just repeat words, but they actively use the language to communicate. Because of this, their speaking skills develop more naturally and effectively. First of all, one of the main effects of drama activities is increasing students’ confidence, because many young learners feel shy or nervous when they speak in a foreign language. However, when they act as different characters, they feel less afraid of making mistakes,

²⁰ Mercer, S., & Dörnyei, Z. (2020). *Engaging Language Learners in Contemporary Classrooms*. Cambridge University Press, p. 119.

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since they are not speaking as themselves. As a result, they become more relaxed and willing to speak, and over time their confidence grows.

In addition, drama activities help improve fluency, because students speak more frequently and for a longer time during the lesson. Instead of giving short and simple answers, they try to create full sentences and express their ideas clearly. Moreover, regular practice through drama helps students speak more smoothly and naturally, and therefore their fluency improves step by step. Furthermore, pronunciation also develops through drama activities, because students listen to their classmates and try to imitate correct sounds and intonation. At the same time, teachers can guide them and correct their pronunciation in a supportive way. Because of this, students learn how to speak more clearly and understandably.²¹

Another important point is that drama activities help expand vocabulary, because students use different words and expressions in various situations. For example, when they act out everyday situations such as visiting a shop or talking to a friend, they learn useful vocabulary and phrases. In addition, they understand how to use these words in context, which makes learning more effective. Moreover, drama activities also improve students' interaction skills, because they need to communicate with others, listen carefully, and respond appropriately. As a result, they learn how to have real conversations, not just memorize sentences. This is very important for developing true communication ability.

In conclusion, drama-based activities greatly influence students' speaking skills, because they improve confidence, fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and interaction. Therefore, these activities are very effective and should be widely used in language classrooms to help young learners become better speakers.

Advantages of using drama in the classroom

Using drama in the classroom has many advantages, especially for young learners, because it makes the learning process more interesting, active, and enjoyable. Instead of traditional methods where students only listen and repeat, drama allows them to participate, act, and communicate. Therefore, students become more involved in the lesson and learn more effectively. First of all, one of the main advantages of drama is that it increases students' motivation, because children usually enjoy games, acting, and creative activities. When lessons are fun and interactive, students are more interested and willing to learn. As a result, they pay more attention and participate actively in classroom activities. In addition, drama creates a positive and friendly classroom environment, where students feel comfortable and relaxed. Because of this, they are not afraid of making mistakes and can express their ideas more freely. Moreover, such an environment helps build good relationships between students and teachers, which is very important for effective learning.²²

²¹ Copland, F., Garton, S., & Burns, A. (2020). *Teaching English to Young Learners: Research and Practice*. British Council Publishing, p. 88.

²² Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2020). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press, p. 98.

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Furthermore, drama helps develop creativity and imagination, because students need to think, create situations, and act as different characters. This not only improves their language skills, but also develops their thinking ability. At the same time, students learn how to solve problems and express themselves in different ways.

Another important advantage is that drama encourages teamwork and cooperation, since many activities are done in pairs or groups. Students learn how to work together, share ideas, and support each other. As a result, their social and communication skills improve along with their language skills. In addition, drama integrates different language skills, such as speaking, listening, and even reading and writing. Because of this, students develop their overall language ability, not just one skill. Moreover, they learn how to use language in real-life situations, which makes learning more practical.

In conclusion, using drama in the classroom has many benefits, because it makes learning enjoyable, increases motivation, improves communication skills, and develops creativity. Therefore, it is an effective and useful method for teaching young learners.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of drama-based classroom activities has a very positive effect on young learners' oral communication skills, because it makes learning more active, interesting, and meaningful. Through activities such as role-plays, dialogues, and games, students are able to practice speaking in a natural way, and therefore they improve their ability to communicate more effectively. Moreover, drama activities help students become more confident, since they reduce fear and allow learners to express themselves freely. At the same time, these activities improve important aspects of speaking, such as fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Because of this, students not only learn the language, but also use it in real-life situations. In addition, drama creates a positive and supportive classroom environment, where students feel comfortable and motivated to participate. As a result, they become more active, work better with others, and develop both language and social skills. Furthermore, such activities help students enjoy the learning process, which is very important for young learners. To sum up, drama-based activities are an effective and useful method in language teaching, because they improve oral communication skills and make lessons more engaging. Therefore, teachers should use drama more often in the classroom to help students become confident and successful speakers.

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