

Drama, a tool of learning in deaf Primary Schools

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1. Abstract:

The school is a form of community. It helps a child to share the experiences of the secured life. The environment around the child is very informal. In the pre- primary school, most children faced with formal learning. The learning informally becomes formal. Atmosphere changes, the language in surrounding changes, different types of interactions occurs, new friends started impacting. The joy of learning and pressure of exploring the world simultaneously increases. This is more demanding cognitive and psychological experience than at home. At this moment the role of the teacher is very imperative. Different methods for relaxing students can understand their feelings. This is the point of intervening skillfully and efficiently in complex situations. Handling the toddlers with delicately is a multifaceted task. The teacher must know the science as well as the art of effective pedagogy. Dramatic forms are inclusive of all other educational and arts forms. That is, dramatic activity can be employed language, music, dance and movement. There are two main categories of dramatic forms: play and improvisation.

Keywords: Deaf primary school, drama as a learning tool, improvisation, method.

2. Introduction:

Improvisation¹ is the practice of acting, reacting, verbal expressions in real time and in response to one's immediate environment and emotions. This may result in new thought process, new signs and symbols, rather new way to act. This occurs effectively when the student has a profound intuitive and technical knowledge of the necessary skills. Improvisation encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into context, and by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations. It should support them confidently for tackling the world outside the classroom².

Improvisation encourages students to mobilize their vocabulary, answer grammatical and syntactical accuracy, and develop cultural and social awareness, and gain confidence with fluency. Through constant repetition of words and phrases, they become conversant in them and are ready to say them with increasing fluency by encouraging self-expression. Drama motivates students to use language confidently and creatively³. Improvisational techniques, sometimes referred to as activities, exercises, or games, are tools that can be added to any existing set of teaching strategies.

3. Existing tools and techniques:

Teachers use Internet, pictured books, computer / e-learning, doing experiments, projector, news paper, dramatization, charts, models, word chits, gives actual experiences, Google apps, mobile phone. There is a large range of the sources used by the teachers for language learning other than books. The teachers are

user friendly with new technology and experienced in advance technology. Use of these tools and techniques is sufficient for teaching, but two-way communication is necessary for learning. Drama is the most significant model of learning and is a basic activity for learning. It helps children to think about their individual or social problems. Through dramatics, children can learn to explore issues, events, situations and connections. Drama is the centre of existence of an individual; because, it is a precious form of communication. Drama provides children with an opportunity to work together cooperatively, collaboratively on a mutual life. As a result, it gives children the change to communicate themselves more effectively in everyday situations. Moreover, drama encourages children to learn how to induce others and how to set themselves in other people's positions. This activity is thought to have educational value.

Improvisation is a form of dramatic play or creative drama which has a regular shape. In education, this form can be called child drama or similar terms can be used. It is seen as the "play way" to education. Both imagination and play are accepted parts of effective education. These activities, which are the most important characteristic of natural learning in education, have different views concerning their use in schools. Dramatic improvisation followed by reflection gives children practice in analysis and acknowledgment. It may help children to find drama very striking because, they can respond in a natural way during their play activities. It also provides exciting and expressive content in their socialization. Play and improvisation symbolize the real life situations which children experience. They understand the essence of human experience within focused meaning and collaboration in which ideas are mutually explored.⁴

4. Technique used in the Experiment:

Step 1: Principles of Improvisation: There are seven principles of improvisation:

1. Trust: so as for a gaggle to achieve success and artistic, the participants of the group, must to be ready to trust each other.
2. Acceptance: Participants must be willing to simply accept a replacement idea so as to explore its possibilities. Every participant must accept the offer, repose on it, contribute, and find out new ideas. It's this process that harnesses the facility of collaboration.
3. Attentive listening: Participants must be responsive of the partners with whom they're co-creating. This results in increase their understanding of every other and to be ready to communicate effectively.
4. Spontaneity: Spontaneity allows participants to initiate words and actions, building trust with the opposite players. Participants must defer any significant judgment or spirit about what others say.
5. Storytelling: Participants develop the power to make a collaborative description that connects their dialogue through a story. This process leads to memorable content.
6. Nonverbal communication: Participants use facial expressions and visual communication to assist communicates thoughts, nature, and trustworthiness.
7. Warm-ups: Warm-ups provide to develop trust and safe environments, where the participants can be happy. Warm-up activities core on transitioning individuals into an improvisational mode to permit them to improvise verbally and physically.⁵

Improvisation as a Teaching Tool for kids to 1) build trust, 2) promote teamwork and better brainstorming, 3) improve communication and presentation skills, 4) promote creative problem solving, 5) respond quickly and decisively to unanticipated challenges, 6) think on their feet and

recognize opportunities as they arise, 7) increase their comfort level with change and willingness to require risks, and 8) manage change and promote a supportive, improvisational culture.⁶

The scholars got to find out how to adapt, adjust, listen, observe, agree, support, trust, and think fast. The inclusion of improvisation as a teaching strategy provides a superb opportunity to show students these necessary skills, as they increase in their abilities to realize academic and professional success.

Step 2- Specific Objectives of the training programme.

Overall objective of this training program was to develop learning ways of hearing impaired through expressions.

Following were the objectives:

- 1) To respond in proper reactions with other member's action in the group
- 2) To build self confidence and believe in others
- 3) To share our thoughts with actions and signs
- 4) To express abstract concepts through actions and signs, e.g. famine, freedom, loyalty.
- 5) To use facial expressions, signs and body language to improve communication.
- 6) To create awareness for knowing body language and sign language
- 7) To express the situation or incident through actions without audible or verbal expressions.

Step 3-Nature and Planning of the training programme

The training program consists of series of techniques such as attention, perception, memory, significance of experiences, time experience, emotional feeling and expression, self-control, body image, and sense of personal identity⁷.

4: Construction of the improvisation programme

While the improvisation programme being implemented the constant discussions with experts, from the field of Education, improvisation Training Educators is necessary. Referring previous case studies, working with different school and college groups, helped to short list activities in improvisation programme. Orientation from drama and improvisation books, programme manual, and going through various training programs from internet may be secondary source.

Session No-1:

This session satisfies the purpose of ice-breaking and can be started with a physical activity. Some instructions regarding awareness of body, readiness for knowing body language of the participants is essential.

Ice braking game like wolf-goat can be conducted to interact each other. The participants were divided into two groups. One group named WOLF and another GOAT. As the instructor calls WOLF, every member from group WOLF tried to catch the member of the group GOAT. All the members from the group GOAT ran away and touched the side wall of the hall. Same procedure is repeated for the GOAT group. After 10 minutes the numbers of more members who can catch the members of another group were declared the winners.

Another activity named mirror image can be conducted. In this activity, one member stands in front of all others seated in a hall. Another member comes face to face with first member. First member make an action, the other member imitates the same action like reflection in a mirror.

Session No-2:

1) To respond in proper reactions with other member's action in the group

The instructor started training sessions to react in proper manner with other members in the group. Physical movements of body parts leads to create awareness of own body, ready for knowing body language. All members sit in a circle with the instructor. The first member at the instructor's right side mimes and describes his action, and the next member to him repeats that action and then adds a new action of his own. The third one repeats the actions of the first two and then adds one of his own. Each member in the circle must first repeat the actions already shown and then add a new mime. Should he forget an action, give it in the wrong sequence, or identify incorrectly, he is out of the game. The winning member is the last one left in the group.

Session No- 3:

2) To build self confidence and believe in others

In this session the instructor conducted the activity to build self confidence and to believe in others. Exercise like Mirror image helped in action and reaction to react in proper manner with other

members in the group. There were two players. 'B' is the follower (mirror) and 'A' starts all the action. 'B' reflects all A's movements and facial expressions. Simple activities for 'B' to initiate like combing hair, washing hands, getting dressed, and brushing teeth etc. This exercise promotes inventiveness, clowning, and timing. The children should be encouraged to be as specific as they can with each movement. When "B" is finished, it is "A's" turn.

Session No- 4:

3) To share our thoughts with actions and signs

The exercise to share our thoughts with actions and signs can be conducted in this session. Believe in others exercise build self confidence as well as believe in others. The participants formed a circle. One participant will stand in the middle of the circle, closing eyes. After a predetermined signal, the participant in the centre will stiffen his/her body and fall forward, backward or wherever toward the participants standing in closed circle. It's their job who stands in the circle, to gently catch the blind participant and keep from hitting the ground. As participants became more comfortable with one another, the distance between them can be increased.

Session No-5:

4) To express abstract concepts through actions and signs, e.g. famine, freedom, loyalty.

This session help to express abstract concepts through actions e.g. famine, freedom, loyalty. Entire team comes in open space. A scene based on an abstract concept was given to them and within stipulated time all have to form a statue depicting the given scene. The scene can be shot on mobile camera and shown to entire group. The discussion conducted on right and wrong parts of the scene help in thinking about the concepts. Taking valuable suggestions about the particular concepts, scene can be altered again with the help of same participants.

Session No-6:

5) To use facial expressions, signs and body language to improve communication.

This session help to trust one another and accept and discover new ideas. Participants were divided into pairs. Two students act out a scene with standing behind each other. One student stands behind the other, sticking his arms through the arms of the front student, becoming his hands. The student stands in front gave facial or verbal expressions and the student at the back made the hand gestures relatively.

Session No-7:

6) To create awareness for knowing body language and sign language

This session help to allow initiating words and actions, building trust with the other. All participants carried out a series of commands e.g. walk slowly, fly, run etc through sign language. This also helps to provide an opportunity to develop trust and safe environments .Each participant was encouraged to volunteer for all the above activities. Everyone began to realise that what they say and do is important to other. The importance of these activities lies in the process and not in the product.

Session No-8:

7) To express the situation or incident through actions without audible or verbal expressions.

touse facial expressions and body language to help communicate. Each participant learned to use all parts of the body to express the different actions. Every single action was clearly and precisely presented so that it was easily identified.

5. Results:

1. Ice braking games like wolf-goat, mirror image were conducted leads to form a uniform group. Every member of the group develops the communication skill to build trust and support teamwork.
2. Physical movements of own body parts show the way to create awareness of own body, ready for knowing body language. Many of them try to communicate through signs and sign language.
3. Exercise like Mirror image helped in action and reaction to react attentively and positively to unexpected challenges.
4. Believe in others exercise built self confidence as well as believe in others to express their thoughts and feelings.
5. Theatrical games and team building exercises were executed to share thoughts with actions and signs.
6. Drawings on paper with colours for self expressions were drawn.
7. Improvising various incidents using mime help to know the roles of professionals like a painter, a sculptor, a policeman.

8. A structured frame work – composition of an incident to suggest the situation with body language developed spontaneity and faith.
9. Enacting concrete incident improved communication with others and helped in comprehension.
10. Theatrical games were organised to enact abstract images to express abstract concepts through actions like famine, freedom, loyalty.
11. Improvisation explored opportunities to discover new ideas, improve communication and presentation skills.
12. Role playing and warm-ups provided harmless, protected environment.
13. If Training Program is introduced in the school infrastructure, students will get abundant opportunities to educate themselves about language development.
14. For acquiring language of hearing challenged, early intervention helps in development. It can be taught at primary school level, with easy and activity-based training sessions.

6. Conclusion:

After the training everyone was willing to talk and share his/ her experience with each other and their parents. Parents were pleased and satisfied with the process of practice and performance. The process of improvisation helps the students to raise their confidence level. They tried to communicate more people. They like to interact with unknown person also. Their informal communication with others became more free and confident. Some of the students shared their experience with their relatives also. Very long time after their performance, they recall their emotions, actions, the movements they performed in their presentation. The improvisation technique was bringing into being effective in the learning process of the hearing impaired children.

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