

Improving Learners Vocabulary through Drama

A.MELWIN

*M.Phil Research Scholar, Department of English
Loyola College, Chennai*

Dr K.S.ANTONY SAMY

*Head, PG & Research Department of English
Loyola College, Chennai*

Abstract

This study investigates the effect of task based Approach in vocabulary enhancement and also the creative drama in language class room. This study tries an attempt to improvise a theatre play. Drama is highly effective than any other genres in literature because, it has visual impact on learners. For this study, the researcher has chosen sixteen students from the Department of Economics and four students from the Department of Sociology, Loyola College. Based on the level of learners, the task was conducted during the study. The study has revealed that learners have enhanced their vocabulary through the task. Students learn both meaning and context of a word. The study concludes that drama is useful for vocabulary acquisition. Teachers are encouraged to reenact the theatrical play in language classroom.

Keywords: creative drama, theatre play, task based approach and improvisation

Introduction

Vocabulary is a root item in a language. In order to communicate with other people, we need to learn more number of words. Norbert Schmitt says, "Vocabulary continues to be learned throughout one's lifetime", so we need to learn vocabularies to upgrade our language skills. People can communicate without grammar knowledge, but it is impossible without the words, because words have become a basic element in a language. Through words, language standard of a person is analyzed, so it is necessary for everyone to acquire a new word. Drama is a supportive element to enhance the vocabulary of the learners.

Significance of the Study

There are three significant elements in this study. The first aspect is to strengthen the recalling power of the language learners, because everyone learns the words but fails to recollect in a discourse. Drama has a high impact in enhancing the memory power. Second aspect is to help the learners in acquiring word meaning in a right context. Most of the people, utter a word without knowing the meaning. Drama activities provide an opportunity for learners to learn a word in meaningful way. The final

aspect is to trigger the creativity of the learners. Implementing a drama in language classroom would shape the creative power of the learners.

Review of Literature

Serife Demircioglu (2010) has suggested that the use of creative drama is more effective in vocabulary teaching. Creative drama is like a brainstorming activity, because the script was improvised on the spot. He preferred Task based language teaching in vocabulary enhancement of language learners and discussed the advantages of TBLL, which includes learning new words, communicative competence, strengthening the memory capacity and building interpersonal relationship among learners.

Do Thi Bich Thuy (2017) says that, drama promotes language learning in many ways. Drama connects cognitive, emotional and social factor of the learners. Drama prevents stress, creating an interest and willingness to take up an activity. It creates a chance for learners to understand the subject in a visual form. Improvisation helps the learners to improve creativity thinking. He focuses on fluency than accuracy. Drama provides a chance for learners to use a word in discourse.

This study combines a theatre play and creative drama to enhance the vocabulary of the Tertiary level learners. In this research, literary text has been used as a study material for improving the learners' vocabulary level.

Methodology

The researcher has applied task based methodology to investigate vocabulary enhancement of the learners.

Willis and Willis (2007) has defined the criteria for a task namely,

1. Task should engage learner's interest.
2. It should focus on meaning.
3. It should have a goal.
4. Task should have an outcome.
5. It should give priority to its completion
6. It should relate to real life activity.

Preparation: The teacher has taught detailed summary of the play 'kamala' to the students. Learners are divided into groups. Each group has seven learners and they sit in a Circle. The teacher carries a set of vocabulary cards. Each card carries one word like countrified, smash etc.

Materials: Vocabulary Cards, Paper, Pen and the summary of the play 'Kamala'

Participants: The researcher has chosen sixteen students in Loyola College to conduct this study.

Pre task: Each group will be given five vocabulary cards. One participant from each group will come and get one vocabulary card at a time. Participant will enact the word in card, without uttering a word. Other participants will find out the word. After identifying the word, they should note it down.

Task: Each group has to describe any one context from the play. Participants must use all words in the vocabulary card. One participant from each group will collect all the sentences of his group members and write in a piece of paper. Every participant should frame at least one sentence using the given words.

Post Task: Every participant should be ready to present the ideas discussed by the group. Teacher randomly chooses a participant from each group. Participant should summarize the ideas orally in front of

class. After presentation, participants from other groups can add their own ideas related to the topic.

Discussion

Problems of the learners

During the course of study, researcher has observed that learners had few difficulties while performing the tasks namely,

Shyness

Majority of learners find it difficult to perform the pre task. They were nervous whether they could perform the action. They were worried that they will not be able to express the correct meaning through their expressions.

Stage Fear

During the speaking activity, learners were very much afraid to face the audience, though they are their friends. A learner speaking fluently is not acceptable level and eye contact is not stable.

Unbalanced Participation

In a task, only few learners have actively participated in the entire activities. Some students remain quiet and didn't take up the task. They had a negative assumption that they are not capable.

Mother Tongue Use

The influence of mother tongue disturbs the learning process. While performing the task, learners try to communicate in their mother tongue. In dumb Charades activity, learners try to speak in mother tongue and in group discussion, learners communicate in their mother tongue.

I don't know

Some learners were lack in confidence, to take up in task. They often say, "I don't know". They are not in a mode to participate in task and remain silent in the group.

Method Adopted to Solve the Problem

Clue cards: In the pre task, participants find it hard to find out a word. The researcher provides a clue card to reduce the burden of learners. Learners use their own creative techniques to convey the message.

Use of dictionary: By using dictionary, learners can learn the meaning of the words easily. The learners by using the dictionary were able to guess the right word and

also their related meanings and the usage of these words in a particular context in relation to the play Kamala.

Group task: The learners were divided into groups. They learn the team working skills and also co operated each other to complete the task. The group task had a healthy completion among the learners.

Learners speak in target language: During the period of implementing a task, learners were encouraged to speak in target language. Learners try to communicate in target language, because learners have to complete the post task.

Clarify the content of the play: Though the teacher summaries the play in class, but still learners had doubts on the characters and the content. The teacher helps to clarify the queries and helps to strengthen the outline of the play.

Learner's outcome in this study

There are many positive outcomes in this study. Learners tried to use vocabulary in oral form. The learners were highly motivated to know the meaning of the words. Learners learned the meaning of the word and how to use it in a particular context. The confidence level of the students has improved a lot during the research period. . The students were able to learn more vocabularies; especially they learned the synonyms of the given words in the tasks. There was a considerable growth in the oral fluency of the language learners compared to the initial stage. They were able to connect the right word at the right place of a sentence.

Results and Suggestions

This study improving learners vocabulary through drama has an impact on the learners. At the end of the study, majority of the learners knows both meaning and context of a word. Learners have improved their speaking fluency. They have also learned the content of the play. Teacher should create series of task for the learners. There are few suggestions namely, Creative drama should be encouraged in the curriculum of General English courses. Creative drama methods should be encouraged as a teaching method in language classes. The teachers should find out the learning level of the students in creative drama , especially with reference to vocabulary and communicative skills and then employ possible techniques and methods in teaching the play.

References

1. Thuy, Do Thi Bich. (2017). Dramatizing vocabulary Teaching in Classes of Young Learners. *Van hien University Journal of Science*, 5(2), 45-49.
2. Demircio, Sürife. (2010). Teaching English vocabulary to young learners via drama. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2 (2), 439-443.
3. Davies, Paul. (1990). Use of Drama in English Language Teaching. *TESL CANADA JOURNAL*, 8(1), 87-97.
4. Sanchez, Aquilino. (2004). The Task-based Approach in Language Teaching. *International Journal of English Studies*, 4(1), 39-65.
5. Criteria for identifying tasks for TBL. (n.d.). Retrieved December 2, 2019, from <https://www.Teachingenglish.org.uk/article/criteria-identifying-tasks-tbl>
6. Tendulkar, V. (1995). Five Plays. Bombay: OUP.