

Taking Centre Stage: Business English through Drama

Drama in language teaching: many forms of activities are possible

Ranging from short exercises to long-term projects, including open and closed forms, process- or product-orientated approaches - many forms are possible, depending on learners' needs, e.g.:

- a) Short games and exercises with specific focus (e.g. intonation, spontaneous speaking, interaction etc.)
- b) Shorter or longer scripted or improvised role-play based on textbook dialogues, newspaper articles, reports, case studies, movies/TV series, literary texts, pictures etc.

Benefits of drama for language learning:

Students often perceive drama activities as motivating and activating

Drama enables holistic learning: integrates physical, behavioural, affective and cognitive aspects:

- contextualises language, focus on action
- para-verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication are integrated
- integrating emotional aspects: memorable
- collaborative learning, sense of achievement

Some quotes

"...each session brings the reward of **being allowed to 'speak out', express emotions, and 'take centre stage'** as each student realizes that his or her contribution, no matter how small, is of vital importance to the project."

Wessels 1987, 111

"Working together towards a performance created a **work ethic** in the class group and instilled in the students a **sense of ownership, responsibility, commitment and teamwork.**"

Schewe/Scott 2003, 65-66

"Recurring words and phrases with reference to the learner's role in this module include: **"more active", "necessity for participation", "more involvement", "more interaction", "input"**. All of this is seen by the students as having the following results: **"more confidence", "fun", "enthusiasm", "motivated", "part of a team"**."

Schewe/Scott 2003, 71

"The perceived advantages of educational drama were identified as: **retention, imagination, confidence, freedom, application and activity, independent thinking, role/performance, learning, enjoyment, and social relations.**"

Brennan/Pearce 2008

"Marketing students in this exercise made it very clear that the PLC [Product Life Cycle] and the

intricacies (...) of its stages were **indelibly etched into both their minds and their emotions as a result of this simulation**, and this would never be forgotten in the way a lecture on the topic might.“

Pearce/Jackson 2009, 215

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