

Achieving Learning Outcomes through Drama: An Action Research

Neeraj Kumari

Core Academic Unit, Directorate of Education, Delhi

Email: nrjgahlot@gmail.com

Abstract- *The introduction of Learning Outcomes has been a marvelous step to mark the students on the learning continuum. It would be inappropriate to assess the children on the basis of a pen paper test taken at the end of the term. The expected learning outcomes developed for Classes I to VIII help the teachers to take the right path of teaching-learning. It also helps the teacher to keep a check on the improvements made by the learner. The present action research is regarding the achievement of learning outcomes of Hindi language by Class- I students of a Delhi government school. The difficulty they face in this regard has been the root cause of this research. The research also tries to put forth a possible method to achieve the learning outcomes. This paper tries to explore the potential of Drama. Drama is used to help the students achieve more than they could do earlier. Many drama exercises and activities are used in the classroom situation by the action researcher to achieve the learning outcomes time and again over a period of time in an academic session. Through observations, group discussions, class work and reflective diaries, the inferences have been drawn after cross analysing the data.*

Keywords: Learning Outcomes, Drama, Action Research, Language

Introduction

A child who comes to a formal school system brings along a lot of experiences and understanding about the environment. This treasure with which the child enters the school is the foundation stone for building a new castle. But the moment a teacher starts teaching, all this treasure is locked away. This goes even for language teaching. Children usually find it difficult to express themselves even in their first language i.e Hindi in a Delhi region. Teacher keeps on asking the name of a first grader but even after many different trials, no answer is received or a little murmur is heard. Of course, not all cases are like this but a primary teacher can very well relate to it. Some students who don't participate in classroom dialogue or who are very shy to say something are often the ones who are very talkative at home. What made them so talkative at home and equally hesitant in school? Is it the environment difference which is playing the role? Is it the language that is becoming hindrance? Here, we are not talking about some foreign language but Hindi. As a teacher, the researcher faced many such cases of students who can't express themselves clearly, whose thoughts are not coherent, who can't decide what to say when to say, and who don't use language for their expression.

This action research explores a class teacher's experiences and observations towards achievement of Learning Outcomes related to Hindi Language. Problems in the way of achieving Learning Outcomes are identified by the teacher.

Statement of the Problem

While handling class I students, the teacher researcher observed that most of the students lack confidence in speaking even in the Hindi language. Hindi language is considered the first language of the students who are local residents of Delhi region. They find it difficult to use it to express themselves. This problem couldn't be solved through regular teaching even if carefully planned. The researcher tried to help the students reach a better level of Learning Outcomes but even after 3 months of regular instruction, nothing much could be done.

Objectives

The primary objective of this action research is to improve the levels of learning of the students studying Hindi language. These language skills are directly related to the learning outcomes defined for the Hindi language. The secondary objectives are: (i) to understand the concept of drama; (ii) to determine, through action research, whether there is a relationship between students' behavior and drama; and (iii) to find ways to use drama as a medium of instruction.

Research Questions

1. Why can't students express themselves in Hindi?
2. Why do students find it difficult to achieve expected learning outcomes?
3. How can the teacher-researcher bring about the improvements in Language skills of the students?
4. What is drama?
5. How can it be used in a classroom?
6. How Drama work as a medium of instruction?
2. Which Learning Outcomes of Language (Hindi) can be achieved through Drama?
3. Is there a relationship between learners' behavior and Drama in education?

Methodology

The research model is planned as an action research. Action research is the research that focuses on a particular problem or difficulty faced by the researcher in its way of action. The data on a specific problem is gathered, possible solutions are thought and tried out and finally the results are evaluated. To carry out this action research following steps are taken:

- Determining the problem statement
- Writing the research questions
- Study of related Literature
- Data collection
- Data analysis

- Chalking out an action plan
- Implementing the action plan
- Analysis and evaluation of the implementation

Studygroup

This action research is conducted on the students of class I of a government School of Delhi. The total number of students is 38 (equal number of boys and girls) - to which the researcher is the class teacher for the academic session. The age of the students is between 5-7 years.

DataCollection

This is the status of level of achievement of the 38 children of Class I before using the intervention of Drama.

S.No.	Learning Outcome	Exceeds curricular Expectations	Mastered Curricular Expectation	Partial Competence	Total Students
1	सुनी सामग्री (कहानी, कविताओं, घटनाओं इत्यादि) पर आपस में चर्चा कर सकते हैं।	6	10	22	38
2	पढ़ी गयी कहानियों, वाक्यों आदि को देख कर उनकी शब्दों, कविताओं आदि में अक्षरों, ध्वनियों को सुनकर व समझकर उनकी पहचान करते हैं।	7	7	24	38
3	चित्र को ध्यान से देख कर उसके बारे में बातचीत करते हैं जैसे चित्र में घट रही घटनाएँ, वस्तुएँ, पात्र आदि में रूचि रखते हैं और बातचीत करते हैं।	6	10	22	38
4	स्कूल के बाहर और भीतर अपने पसंद की अन्य किताबों और अन्य लिखित सामग्री को स्वयं चुनकर पढ़ने की कोशिश करते हैं।	7	7	24	38
5	सुनी हुई और अपने मन की बातों को अपने तरीके से अभिव्यक्त करने का प्रयास करते हैं।	6	7	25	38

Action Programme

To help the students to improve their level of learning of the Hindi language, an intervention is thought of and planned. Using drama in the classroom is tried. Since, the teacher researcher had studied Drama Activities and experienced the activities herself during her pre-service teacher training programme. Some drama activities are searched by the teacher-researcher after understanding Drama.

The origin of the word drama is in **Greek** language. The term “Drama” has been derived from the verb “*draō*” which means ‘to do’ or ‘to act’. In Greek it became the synonym of action or play. **Drama** refers to a process where it is used to explore and understand a theme through a pool of activities. Drama is largely concerned with the experience by the participants. **Peter Slade** advocated ‘child drama’ has ‘therapeutic effects of free expression’ and ‘**Brian Way (1967)** insisted that drama was primarily about making better, more developed individuals’. All such developments had an effect in my outlook towards drama and other arts. In India, all the previous **N.C. Fs of 1975, 1988 and 2000** emphasized at Art education by defining its aims and objectives in the school curriculum. **NCF 2005** also describes the objectives that drama education holds. We can articulate the aims of drama in simpler term as

- To develop social skills in children.
- To enable the child to cooperate and communicate with others in solving problems in the drama and through drama.

After having this understanding, various Drama activities are conducted with the students over a period of 5 months. These activities include role play, improvisations, creating drama scenes from the textbook or the story listened, freezing exercises, framing exercises, extempore, ice-breaking exercises, warm-ups, teacher-in-role, children-in-role, hot seating, imitating, dancing, sharing experience, telling *aap beeti*, mime, simulation, dumb charades, exchanging the names, storytelling, what am I holding?, telephonic conversations without the phone, role reversal, characterization, re-enactment, dialogue delivery, deciding storyline, performing a play, acting out poems, group discussions and other group activities. All of these activities are framed and done according to the level and interests of the children. These activities are repeated over a period of time with the students. All the activities are planned keeping the learning outcomes pertaining to Hindi language of class I published by NCERT.

Data Collection

The data is again collected to check the level of students after the intervention i.e. Drama. It is done through **observations** made by the teacher during facilitation, **reflective diary** of the teacher, **class-work** and students’ class tests. **Group discussions** are also done with students where students shared their views without hesitation.

Analysis and Interpretation

All the abilities perceived through various modes are recorded in a checklist. While comparing the level of learning outcomes achieved by the students before the intervention of Drama with the level of students after the intervention of Drama, it is found that there was a significant improvement in the students.

Conclusion

Hence, it can be said that many positive changes regarding usage of language skills in the students of the drama workshop are observed. It is hoped that the positive changes that are observed in this academic session continues in the life of these students. After this whole process of observing and reflecting, some more questions have come on the surface like: Can Drama be used to achieve all the learning outcomes? Can Drama be used for teaching a second language – English? How?

References

- Learning Outcomes at Elementary Stage, NCERT (2017). **ISBN 978-93-5007-785-6**
- Kannan, A. S. (2014). “Action Research on Improving Students’ Ability in Problem Solving in ‘Principles of Accounting’.” *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol 1(2), 89-98, july-December 2014.
- Bolton, G. M. (1984). *Drama as Education: An argument For Placing Drama at the Centre of the Curriculum*. Kongman, England.
- Boylla, H. (2009). Study of the role of drama as education in developing social skills in young children. M.Ed. Dissertation, CIE, Delhi University.
- Leingang, Bradley. (2014). *Improving Reading Skills in Social Studies*. Retrieved from Sophia, the St. Catherine University repository.