



**DEVELOPMENT OF A THEATRE AND DRAMA PROGRAM FOR LANGUAGE  
SKILLS ENHANCEMENT AND STUDY ITS EFFECTIVENESS**

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**ABSTRACT:**

*The study is focused on the development of theater and drama program for Language skills enhancement of sixth standard students from English medium school. The objectives of the study were to develop and implement the theater and drama program for teaching unit (Sahasi Shailendra) of Marathi Language text of Standard VI and to find the effectiveness of the program on the Marathi Language Skills achievement. Sample for the study was sixty students of standard sixth from English medium school of Pune city. The researchers had chosen two equivalent group design for the experiment. The theater and drama program was implemented as a treatment. By using 't' test, the post test scores of two groups were compared and it was found effective .*

**Key Words :** Theater and Drama program ,Language skills enhancement,

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**1 INTRODUCTION:**

Education is the most important and most noble of all human endeavors. All other activities have their foundation in Education. It is education that enables human beings to achieve their fullest personal, physical, social and mental potentials. (*Fundamentals of Philosophy of Education by Arulsami*) The purpose of education as described by philosophers is generally considered to be the reproduction of a culture. In effect, schools serve to create a naturally conducive environment for cultural preservation. Education is a broad comprehensive term, used for the gradual process of acquiring knowledge, for imparting skills and for the



change in behavior of the learner. The cognitive processes involved in producing and understanding

Communication is solely dependent on **Language**. It is language that gives us power of vocal communication. Language sets apart from *Homo sapiens* from all other animals. This system of words used to name things (in speech and writing) is beautifully developed by human beings.

Language is important because, it is what we use to **communicate**. Without good language, it is difficult to express our thoughts and ideas and learn more. In our daily routine, we use countless forms of verbal and non-verbal languages. Thus, it is very important to be proficient in at least our own language (mother tongue) especially when it comes to education.

### 1.1 Significance of language:

In case of young children, language development coincides with development of thoughts. Cognitive skills occur alongside language skills, so *a child who struggles with language development will likewise struggle in other areas of learning*. Does one of the main functions of Indian education (as per the Kothari commission) was the development of languages - Hindi, Sanskrit and Regional language – the 3 language formula. Prof. A. Antony says, “Language is a means of communication. Communication can be within and outside the speech community. In addition to these, languages are a means by which the culture of the community is expressed and recorded. These languages can fulfill two functions, communicative function and cultural function. But the primary function of every language is communicative.” Becoming fluent in another language is not just about the mastery of the vocabulary and grammar of that language. It is a way to expand one’s community. Just as a reader lives in a wider world than a nonreader, so a speaker of more than one language lives more broadly. Both reading and learning another language can also function as ways to gain a perspective on one’s own experience, language, and culture. As Marshall McLuhan said, “I don’t know who discovered water, but I know it wasn’t a fish.” When we are immersed in only one language, we are not likely to be aware of its peculiarities or limitations. As most learners of a second language will tell you, we discover our first language as we dive into a second one. When a person learns another language, something is “undergone”. We undergo when we allow our encounters to modify our established conceptions. When we undergo an experience, we ultimately have to change ourselves and our



way of looking at the world. This is what true learning is-a modification of our very selves. Right from the invention of languages, educational thinkers have stressed upon the importance of *non-cognitive learning processes* and their contribution in the all round development of a child's personality. A study of ancient Indian educational system reveals that education in those times was enriched with cultural activities like “*natya, nritya, raas, raas leela* “. These are nothing but the languages of body movements (dance) and musical instruments. Education through non-cognitive learning processes encompasses various forms of art such as :

1. *Literary arts* (stories, poems, songs, proverbs, captions etc.)
2. *Fine arts* (musical instruments, dance forms, stage performance - acting and expressions)

### 1.2 What can drama or theatre skills do for kids?

1. Drama helps kids to think creatively. Many of the habits that they develop during drama carry over to other everyday and educational settings.
2. It encourages kids to work collaboratively. They take part in activities where they must rely on each other and learn to trust. (By Susan Stephenson)
3. Drama is a wonderful way for children to interact with or interpret literature or text of any sort. It develops communication skills and allows kids to practice higher order thinking skills in a playful context. It prepares them to think critically, apply knowledge to new situations, analyze, solve problems, make decisions - in short prepares them for real life.
4. Drama gives children an outlet for their creativity. I have seen so many children blossom in drama classes. (Susan Stephenson)
5. Drama encourages self discipline. We learn tolerance by walking a mile in another's shoes.
6. Children are natural actors from birth and they imitate words and actions. They create situations to play and assume roles. They direct one another to bring order to a dramatic play. In other words, children arrive at schools with rudimentary skills playwrights, actors and directors.

Although outstanding theatre education programs exist in numerous elementary secondary schools around the country, very few people understand the importance of drama and



education in life. The focus of the present study is to develop a new kind of teaching strategy that overcomes adversities and difficulties in teaching a new language.

## 2 NEED OF THE RESEARCH

- Children love to learn in an environment where they are given adequate opportunities to get actively involved in the process. They become more confident and expressive. To study this, the present research was necessary.
- Although a lot of stress is laid upon revamping the teaching learning process, by incorporating non- cognitive approaches, very little has been done in this field. This situation can be changed if we develop and use innovative techniques like a theatre and drama program to teach languages. For this purpose it was necessary.
- The conventional language class hardly gives the learners an opportunity to use language in this manner and develop fluency in it. Thus, the main purpose of the language teaching course, i.e., developing skills in communication, is unfortunately, neglected.
- An attractive alternative is teaching language through drama because it gives a context for listening and meaningful language production, forcing the learners to use their language resources and, thus, enhancing their linguistic abilities.
- Using drama techniques also fulfils socio-affective requirements of the learners. Moreover, this learner centered approach makes the syllabus personally fulfilling.

## 3 IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

- Drama is seen as the “play way” to education. Both imagination and play are inherent parts of effective education. Thus, drama is a vital part of education in schools.
- A research in this field, can lead to the development of a sound dramatization technique which will provide meaningful situations for speaking and reading the language.
- Comprehension through drama is faster as it involves multi-sensory teaching approach. Thus dramatization reduces the boredom and monotony of class room explanation.
- In the State of Maharashtra, Marathi is the most important language for local communication. It has been observed that the children studying in English Medium Schools, (especially Non-Maharashtrians) are not familiar to this language. As such, *Marathi* poses as a new and difficult challenge to these students.



- This method of teaching can be used for all students from gifted to average and with lower cognitive abilities.
- This research contributed for innovative method for Language teaching.

#### 4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To develop a theatre and drama program for language skills enhancement and study its effectiveness

#### 5 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- **Theatre:** The art of writing and producing plays for teaching unit (Sahasi Shailendra) of Marathi Language text of Standard VI from English medium.
- **Drama:** A literary work intended for performance by actors on stage. A series of steps involved in writing the script and presentation of the text in the form of play based on the text of Sahasi Shailendra,
- **Effectiveness:** The performance or achievement in producing the intended results.
- **Sixth Standard Student:** A child who is studying in standard VI of English Medium SSC Board School.
- **Marathi Language Skills:** Improvement in the four basic language skills - Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing of sixth standard students from English medium school.

#### 6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To develop a program of theatre and drama for Marathi language comprehension and enhancement.
- To implement the program for teaching unit (Sahasi Shailendra) of Marathi Language text of Standard VI.
- To find the effectiveness of the program on the Marathi Language Skills achievement of VI standard students.

#### 7 ASSUMPTIONS

- Marathi is an important regional language.
- Comprehension and expression skills in Marathi are very essential for the students.
- Students of English medium find it difficult to comprehend and fluently express themselves in Marathi.



- Innovative methods such as dramatization technique lead to enhancement of language skills.

## 8 HYPOTHESES

- **Null Hypothesis:** There will be no significant change in the language skills (Marathi) of the students of standard sixth after the dramatization program.

## 9 SCOPE, LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATION

- **Scope**
  - The conclusions of the present research study are applicable to all sixth standard students of English Medium school (SSC Board).
  - This research deals with the effectiveness of drama and theatre as a learning method in teaching Marathi languages.
- **Limitations:**
  - Limitations to this research were individual differences, comprehension levels, fatigue, interest, attitude, Marathi as the mother tongue, age, attention span of students.
  - Tool developed by researcher.
- **Delimitation:**
  - The present research was limited to standard six students of English Medium School of SSC Board .
  - The present research was limited to Marathi Language Skills only.

## 10 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

- **Method:**

Experimental method was used for this research study.
- **Design:**

The researchers have chosen two equivalent group designs.
- **Pre-test Post-test Design.**



Control Group	Pre-test O1	Traditional Method	Post-Test O2
Experimental Group	Pre-test O1	Special Treatment X	Post-Test O2

• **Variables:**

- Independent Variables : Program of theatre and drama
- Dependent Variables : Marathi Language Skills

• **Population**

All sixth standard students studying in English Medium School of Maharashtra State

• **Sample**

Sixty students of standard sixth were selected from English Medium school of Pune city.

• **Data collection:**

- Tool for Experiment : Researchers made language skill test.

• **Tools for Statistical Analysis :**

- Mean
- Standard Deviation.
- 't' test

• **Procedure:**

The theatre and drama program developed used in the following manner :

- The researchers dramatized an entire chapter - Sahasi Shailendra of the sixth standard Marathi text.
- The technique of dramatization involves scripting the contents of the chapter in dialogue form.
- Selected students from the sixth class (Experimental group) were given the script and asked to rehearse the dialogues.



- This chapter was enacted out in front of the class, (Experimental group) by the student actors.
- The students from both the groups were tested by post test.

## 11 TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS:

Table No 1 Testing of Hypothesis

Sr. No.	Student	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value calculated	Null Hypothesis*
1	Sixth Std.-Control Group	30	7.1	3.44	4.23	Rejected
2	Sixth Std.- Exp. Group	30	10.60	2.94		

### Interpretation:

From table no 1 , the obtained value of ‘t’ is greater at 0.01 level of significance i. e.  $4.23 > 2.735$

Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This proved that teaching through theatre and drama was more effective.

As a result of teaching of the selected unit in Marathi Language through Theatre and Drama Program, the scores of post test of experimental group were significantly higher than those of the control group (at 0.01 level). The increase in the post-test mean is significant at 0.01 level.

## 12 OBSERVATIONS

- The students were excited to learn Marathi through Theatre and Drama Program.
- As the topic was a story from Marathi text “Sahasi Shailendra”, the students were eager to learn by watching the drama.
- Student enjoyed viewing the dramatization program as it contained dialogues, actions and interaction between their peers.
- They wanted to see it again & again.
- The drama program caught their attention and the students did not get distracted.





- f). The students solved the given achievement test after the program successfully.
- h). The scores of the test clearly show that dramatization program helped the students to remember and comprehend the content of the chapter.
- i) The students could comprehend the contents of the chapter better as it was enacted live in front of them.

### **13 FINDINGS**

- a). An effective theatre and drama program for language comprehension and enhancement was developed.
- b). The program was successfully implemented for teaching the chapter “Sahasi Shailendra” of sixth standard Marathi Language text.
- c). Mean of experimental test scores was greater than that of the controlled test scores.
- d). The students of experimental group, scored higher than controlled group - which clearly proves that they received the program well.
- e). It was found that the use of dramatization technique helped the teacher to develop the interest of her students in the chapter.
- f). The class has a mixed group of students (which includes slow learners) and this program proved effective in teaching them also.

### **14 CONCLUSIONS**

The significant increase in the achievement scores of the experimental group showed that the dramatization program was effective for teaching Marathi Language. The dramatization technique helped the students to listen dialogues in Marathi with keen interest. The teaching process was a drama - so it was very engaging and interesting for the class. The students who normally find the Marathi lessons very serious and boring, enjoyed watching the drama. This technique gives more options for the development of language skills such as listening, speaking, expression and comprehension. Dramatization of the chapter brought about meaningful interactions by using the language.

### **15 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**



- a). It would be worthwhile to see, if a prolonged use of dramatization technique will continue to lead to better learning.
- b). Most of the chapters in Marathi, Hindi, other languages and other subjects can be presented through dramatization technique and its effectiveness can be studied over a longer period.
- c). This research was done on sixth standard English medium students for Marathi language. The same technique can be used to teach different languages.
- d). Special need students (in an inclusive class room) who find it difficult to learn languages show a great interest in learning through this method.

## **16 DISCUSSION**

In the present research, the researchers has developed a dramatization technique to effectively teach languages. This program was conducted on 30 students of standard sixth of an English medium school where Marathi is taught as the second language. From the scores of achievement test, it was evident to the researcher that there was a substantial understanding of the content by dramatization technique. During review of related literature, the researcher realized that different types of dramatization techniques have been developed to teach languages in India and abroad.

Researches in this technique were conducted in Madras, Pune and Delhi and the effect of activity based programs was tested on improving the reading skills of the students. All such techniques have proved to be more successful than traditional method. For this particular research, the researcher had reviewed a number of researchers from Middle east, Turkey, UK and USA. Almost all conclusions have listed the success of drama as a teaching technique. Thus, it is an established fact that language teachers, even with very little drama experience can successfully integrate creative dramatization in to their own language classrooms. Finally, the researcher concludes that until now, all researches have proved that theatre and drama as a method of teaching has a great potential and if used regularly it will really be a strong and effective tool for teaching languages.

## **17 CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD OF EDUCATION:**



Theatre and drama as a method of teaching school subjects can contribute tremendously to the development of a more effective teaching learning process. For those of us who have experienced the thrill of being on stage or performing in any capacity in front of an audience, needn't be convinced about the magic that is theatre. The term 'Drama in Education' as opposed to 'Theatre in Education' has this element of performance, which is how the role of the art of drama has traditionally been seen as.

- Drama has the element of improvisation and spontaneity, hence more creativity, since it doesn't depend on a pre-prepared script. Drama is increasingly being fit into the time-table and forms a rubric of personality development or self development. The aims are to get children less inhibited and help them express their selves, aspirations, fears, desires – and this happens best when the method is that of process drama.
- Introducing children to local and national cultures is another aim of drama in education, The use of drama and theater will promote to teacher and students to learn more about culture and Language.

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