

**ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS
IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE THROUGH DRAMA
ACTIVITIES AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL**

AN

ABSTRACT SUBMITTED

To

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely the medium of instruction at all the level of education but also the medium of growth of one's personality. It provides the individual with the capacity for preservation and communication of intellectual life. In education, it is supposed to communicate knowledge and in general day to day life and it is the instrument to pick up the information. The English language is a common communicative and international link language. National Policy on Education (1968) states that special needs are to be paid for the study of English and other international languages.

POLICY PERSPECTIVES (1952-1953)

Mudaliar Commission was appointed in 1952 under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanswamy Mudaliar. It stated, "it should be recognized that even in regard to many of the diversified courses of instruction as matters stand at present, a knowledge of English will be extremely useful for understanding the subject matter and for the further study of the same subject."

In 1964, The Education Commission headed by Dr. S. Kothari reported that English should be continued as we need it as library language in the field of higher education, so a strong foundation must be laid at school level.

The NCF 2000 stressed the value of integrating students' lives into English language instruction and making it more interactive, context-based, and relevant to develop language competency.

National Knowledge Commission report (2007) of the government of India recommends " In the current scenario, an understanding and command over English Language is the most determinant of access to higher education, employment possibility and a social opportunity; the time has come for us to teach our people- ordinary people English Language."

Thus these commissions and committees emphasized the importance of the English language in the education system.

According to NEP 2020 At every level, experiential learning will be implemented, encompassing a variety of methods such as hands-on instruction, education that integrates the arts and sports, storytelling pedagogy, and conventional pedagogy within each subject, as well as investigations into the relationships between various subjects.

The Importance of Drama

Drama is the centre of existence; because it is a valuable form of communication. Drama provides children with an opportunity to work together cooperatively in a shared life. As a result, it gives children the chance to express themselves more effectively in everyday situations. Moreover, drama encourages children to learn how to influence others and how to put themselves in other people's shoes. Drama allows students to include their personal experiences, emotions and their personality in the process of learning and this is a great advantage.

Another advantage is that drama is the opportunity to enter another world and explore various situations. It offers to escape from our everyday selves and to put on a role. It is easier to speak as somebody else. It is like hiding behind a mask. It gives a person the freedom to express his/her feelings easier and without anxiety. This means that people feel free to scream, cry, laugh, dance and do other things that they do not usually do without the 'mask'. The 'mask' is a great opportunity for shy people. It helps them to do the activities listed above and it helps them improve their speaking skills. (Cockett and Fox 1999)

There are many reasons in favour of using drama activities and techniques in the language classroom. First of all, it is entertaining and can motivate you to learn. It can provide varied opportunities for different uses of language and because it engages feelings it can provide a rich experience of language for the participants. Maley (2005) listed many points supporting the use of drama and these are: 1. It naturally integrates language skills. Careful listening is a key feature. Spontaneous verbal expression is integral to most of the activities; and many of them require reading and writing, both as part of the input and the output. 2. It integrates verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication, thus bringing together both mind and body, and restoring the balance between physical and intellectual aspects of learning. 3. It draws upon both cognitive and affective domains, thus restoring the importance of feeling as well as thinking. 4. By fully contextualizing the language, it brings classroom interaction to life through an intensive focus on meaning. 5. The emphasis on whole-person learning and multi-sensory inputs helps learners to capitalize on their strengths and to extend their range. In doing so, it offers unequalled opportunities for catering to learner differences. 6. It fosters self-awareness (and awareness of others), self-esteem and confidence; and through this, motivation is developed. 7. Motivation is likewise fostered and sustained through the variety and sense of expectancy generated by the activities. 8. There is a

transfer of responsibility for learning from teacher to learners which is where it belongs. 9. It encourages an open, exploratory style of learning where creativity and imagination are given scope to develop. This, in turn, promotes risk-taking, which is an essential element in effective language learning. 10. It has a positive effect on classroom dynamics and atmosphere, thus facilitating the formation of a bonded group, which learns together. 11. It is an enjoyable experience.

Drama Activities: A description

Drama used as a method of instruction allows students to explore and effectively master the subject. It takes advantage of the basic theatre methods such as role-play, improvisation and interpretation, but it also exploits traditional methods of other school disciplines such as interview, description or debate. Scrivener (1994) gives the following list of several drama activities that are commonly found in English language teaching:

- 1. Role play** – Role plays enable students to step outside themselves, to accept and change into a different character. Students either improvise or create their character or they are given role cards.
- 3. Drama games** - There are many forms of games with various functions i.e. ice-breakers, warm-ups, fillers, concentration games etc.
- 4. Guided improvisation** – This kind of practice requires the teacher to guide students through the initial stage of an activity. When students join in and become part of the evolving activity, they use their imagination and improvisation, and then the teacher steps out and becomes more like an observer who helps if there is a need. Examples of activities for guided improvisation: a scene of a crime; a company meeting; a summer camp at night etc.
- 5. Acting play scripts** –Students are presented with the script by the teacher or even prepare their own.
- 6. Prepared improvised drama** – Students themselves work and perform a story, a situation or several situations. They can also work within a given framework that is set by the teacher. It is students who are in charge of their work.

7. **Hot-seating** - questions are posed to a character in a role. One person takes a seat in the middle of the room as a particular character, and the other participants sit around and ask direct questions about this character's present life, past experiences, wishes for the future etc.
8. **Freeze frames or tableaux** - moments captured and frozen. The students in role froze at a certain moment to present their thoughts on the characters. Freeze frames can be used to explore many emotional situations.
9. **Thought tracking** – speaking aloud the character's inner thoughts, sometimes contrasting with what is spoken.
10. **Forum theatre**- pupils from the audience offer ideas at critical moments about the drama they are watching to influence its direction.
11. **Casting director** – deciding on the appropriate actors for particular characters.
12. **Role on the wall**- enlarged character outline posted on the wall for the pupils to annotate by writing keywords or phrases.
13. **Alley of opinions**- A useful technique for exploring any kind of dilemma faced by a character, providing an opportunity to analyse a decisive moment in greater detail.
14. **The teacher in the role**- the instructor can enter into dramatic improvisation as the teacher in the role.

17. **Where Are We?**

In this activity, students will be acting out different objects that are characteristic of a certain place. Though they are miming the objects, students should also use verbal language related to the room.

18. **Choral speaking**

Choral dramatization involves students reading aloud by assigning parts to each group member. Choral dramatization can use texts such as rhymes, poetry, and picture books.

19. **Expert panel**

Students themselves become an expert. To prepare for this students must determine what an expert in the area might know.

DRAMA AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL FOR DEVELOPING ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- **Language systems and language skills in the context of drama**

According to Scrivener (1994), when considering language skills, it is important to make a distinction between 'language systems and 'language skills. Language systems pertains to structural and functional parts of it. On the other side language skills pertains to listening , speaking, reading and writing skills.

Because of its nature, drama can be used to develop both productive and receptive skills and it can also be successfully used in mastering language systems. Concerning language skills, its prime value naturally lies especially in learning to speak and listen.

Harmer says that "It is often true that one skill cannot be performed without the other. It is impossible to speak in a conversation without listening and people seldom write without reading" (1991). A competent user of a language has to master all the skills, therefore, it is important not to neglect any of them, but provide students with sufficient practice and focus on all the skills in a balanced way.

Drama provides a framework for the language to be used. It generally contributes to the nature of communication as a means of reinforcement and stimulation.

- **Speaking**

The presence of drama and its techniques is an ideal tool to stimulate and carry on different speaking activities with a focus on fluency, pronunciation, stress, intonation etc. It provides a field for sufficient practice in acquiring language skills. Harmer points out that "in the face-to-face interaction the speaker can use a whole range of facial expressions, gestures and general body language to help to convey the message". These characteristics are essential and inseparable parts of the drama and they ought to be incorporated into the learning process.

- **Writing**

Several writing activities include the aspects of drama and serve to be a source for later dramatization. Among those are writing poetry, a story, a narrative, a play, a role-play, a scene, a

song, an advertisement, different kinds of letters and postcards etc. They essentially involve the use of imagination and creativity.

- **Reading**

In considering the use of drama to develop a reading skill, one has to realize that the quality of the reading texts and preparation of several connecting activities are necessary to secure success in learning the reading skill. The teacher is provided with a large pool of literary texts that can be adopted for teaching purposes. But there are other texts as well. Examples of those are newspapers, magazines, cartoons and advertisements, all of these can be used for dramatization. They provide the learners with a starting point for further activities and for the work with the text itself. The potential also lies in the character of the narrator. Students should be encouraged to read the script as if an actor would read it. This kind of practice brings another dimension to reading.

Scrivener defines two basic approaches to a text:

1. *Extensive reading* (or fluent reading, or gist reading): reading to gain an overall understanding of a longer piece of text.
2. *Intensive reading* (or accurate reading): typically used with short sections or sentences when we need to understand or study information or language use in detail. Scrivener (1994)

Students need to develop both approaches to a text. The first approach suggests reading to understand the main points of a text rather than the details of it, the second covers reading that elicits details. Drama activity can be planned in a way that helps to develop both approaches.

- **Listening**

Similar to teaching reading skills, teaching listening skills also needs to cover two areas. According to Scrivener (1994), these two areas are:

1. *Extensive listening* (listening for gist): listening to an entire piece, to gain an overall impression or understanding of what it is about.
2. *Intensive listening* (listening for detail): the listening effort is concentrated on a small

A portion of a tape or a CD (perhaps a sentence, or a short phrase)

Drama encourages concentrated listening. Drama provides context for listening. Listening exercises include listening to music, news, TV programmes, movies, telephone calls, small talks, directions, announcements and many more. All these can be easily linked with drama activities. Activities can either take place while or after listening to a text or listening can serve to be a source of follow-up drama activities.

Theoretical Basis for using Drama in English language Teaching

Socio-cultural theory

The use of drama in language teaching has its theoretical basis in the socio-cultural theory proposed by a Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934). Vygotsky believes that children construct their knowledge. One of his assumptions is that cognitive skills are mediated by words, language, and forms of discourse which serve as tools for facilitating and transforming mental activities. In his view, children's cognitive skills are ignited and stimulated by social interaction and are embedded in a socio-cultural background.

Regarding the use of drama in language teaching, Vygotsky proposed that play which is a form of activity is important in a child's cognitive development and that through the process of internalization, social activities become mental activities. He emphasized collaboration between the teacher and the students and among the students themselves. He also emphasized the kind of learning that occurs authentically, within a collaborative environment. This means that the learning environment should be such that enables students to play active roles. The teacher and the students should collaborate to create meaningful learning.

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory was developed by Albert Bandura. Social learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modelling, and individuals learn by observing the behaviours of others and the consequences of those behaviours (Berge and County, 2012). According to van de Water (2021), drama provides students with the opportunity to watch and imitate the language and actions of others in a secure and supportive environment and develops students' speaking skills in a pleasant and interesting way by using drama in the classroom.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory

The foundations of experiential learning were set by John Dewey in his work *Experience and Education*, and his ideas were further developed by David Kolb. His famous model of the experiential learning cycle is widely applied in education, including adult development. It is extensively applied in the field of education and adult development. His model emphasizes the use of drama techniques in language teaching. Children are exposed to concrete experiences which show their active engagement which is crucial for experiential learning. Kolb has structured his theory into four stages namely concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The learners start with concrete experience which means active involvement in the task given. At the next stage, they observe and reflect on what they experienced. This reflective phase leads to abstract conceptualization and in the end, the learners try to put into practice what they have experienced.

The Flow Theory

Csikszentmihalyi developed a model that illustrates the key elements and circumstances that impact experience quality. Flow happens "when a person's skills are fully involved in overcoming a challenge that is just about manageable," as one model puts it. Csikszentmihalyi (1997), p. 30. The opportunity to do something and the person's capacity to do it must be balanced. An excessive level of difficulty could lead to frustration and worry. Conversely, if it is too low, people may get overly at ease or bored. If there are few obstacles and few abilities, apathy arises. "However, the deep involvement that distinguishes flow from everyday life is likely to happen when high challenges are paired with high skills."

The flow experience can serve as a strong intrinsic motivation for life-long learning as well. By using drama techniques in language classes, teachers have the opportunity to create circumstances in which students can learn by doing, through here-and-now experience. Learners are offered the possibility to stretch and push their limits further and develop their skills – a possibility to experience flow.

Constructivist Learning Theory and Constructive Drama

The fundamental ideas of drama in education and constructivist learning theory have a significant area of overlap. Developed from the use of "as if" games, drama in education is a process- and

personality-centered approach founded on pedagogical and psychological concepts. It is frequently linked to reform pedagogy, which strives to foster students' creativity, spontaneity, and communicative ability to better equip them to handle real-world circumstances.

The basic principle of constructivist pedagogy is that our knowledge of ourselves and the world is our own construction. This can be brought into connection with an essential principle of drama in education: the most important goal of learning is to develop and define an attitude towards a given problem.

One of the main goals of using drama techniques in education is to form and develop social skills, therefore enhancing the awareness of the art of impression-making and the art of playing different roles. In everyday social life the impression we make can be very important. The way other people see us is mainly the result of our interactions and communication skills. Drama techniques have the potential power to help us practice different ways of presenting ourselves in everyday life, offering the possibility to develop and polish the necessary skills.

Drama Activities Selected for the Study

1. Hot-Seating

Hot-seat questions are aimed at a fictional character. One person, acting as the character, sits in the middle of the group, and the other participants assemble around to ask probing questions concerning the character's current situation, past experiences, future objectives, etc. Students gain a better grasp of the character in the issue due to this activity, making the character's situation more transparent.

2. Freeze Frames

It is an image, which appears frozen and conveys a message. It is often referred to as a tableau or freeze frame. It can shed light on character interactions with a particular emphasis on how space, levels, body language, and facial expressions are used. The students in role-playing froze at a specific point to discuss their opinions of the characters. It is used to examine a variety of emotional scenarios.

3. Thought tracking - When a character exits a scene to discuss their feelings with the viewer, it is known as a thought track. An audience gains a deeper understanding of the character when thoughts are shared in this way.

4. Alley of Opinion - An effective method for delving into any type of moral quandary that a character may encounter, offering a chance to examine a pivotal point in further detail. The students stand in two lines, facing one another. As each group member gives their piece of advice, one person—either the teacher or a participant—moves between the lines.

7. Poetry Brought Alive - Lines of poetry are brought to life with clear recitation and accompanying gestures and movements. Students will be divided into groups of five and each group will **enact** the poem. They will have to create stories related to the core themes of the poem and present them in front of the class. Students will also be asked to find out poems on trees or on similar themes and to dramatize them.

8. Bringing a picture to life - Pupils collaborate in pairs. Give each couple a different photo. Couples must talk about their relationship, decide what is happening, and determine the identities and characteristics of the two individuals. (This will take five minutes.) Students create a brief exchange between the two individuals in their picture using the knowledge they have learned. What are they exchanging with one another? What is the subject? What is the result? They practice and get ready to act out their exchange.

9. Improvised Drama - Students work and execute a story, a situation, or several situations in improvised drama. They might also operate inside the parameters that the instructor has established. Students are responsible for their own work. The feeling of ownership adds even more incentive to complete the task successfully. A more intricate scenario can incorporate the entire class, but working in smaller groups may be more advantageous for affectivity and practical considerations.

Listening Activities – The following listening activities were based on the implemented drama activities. Where students had to listen keenly to the drama activities conducted and answer the listening worksheet. The listening worksheet had the following types of questions.

- Short Answer Questions
- Sentence Completion

Summarising – It means to tell the most important facts or ideas about something or someone in short or clear form.

Questioning – Inter-questioning was done between students. Teacher-to-student questioning was done.

Discussion – It is the process of talking about something to reach a decision.

Rationale of the study

Communication skills are essential for personal and professional success. Despite the importance of these skills, many individuals struggle with effective communication, which can lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, and missed opportunities. Traditional methods of teaching communication skills often focus on theoretical knowledge rather than practical application. This research study proposes that drama activities offer a unique and effective approach to enhancing communication skills. In the present scenario, Studies reveal that reading and writing are given significant weight in Indian school curricula and evaluation procedures. For example, a study conducted in 2006 by Bhatia and Ritchie discovered that oral communication receives minimal emphasis in the classroom and is mostly focused on written tasks and reading comprehension.

According to a study by Nunan (2003), listening and speaking skills are often neglected in the classroom. Teachers tend to focus on activities that prepare students for written exams, leaving little room for interactive speaking activities or listening practice. Indian classrooms often follow a teacher-centered approach, where the teacher lectures and students passively receive information. This method does not encourage active participation or the development of speaking and listening skills (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). A report by the British Council (2010) highlighted that many Indian teachers lack the training and resources to effectively teach listening and speaking skills. Large class sizes and limited access to audio-visual aids further exacerbate the problem

Therefore, the researcher has undertaken the present study with a different pedagogical tool of drama activities to enhance listening and speaking skills.

Drama activities in English language learning have been widely researched and recognized for their pedagogical benefits. Integrating drama into language instruction not only enhances linguistic skills but also promotes socio-emotional development and cultural understanding. This rationale is grounded in research studies that highlight the multifaceted benefits of using drama activities in the classroom. Research indicates that drama activities facilitate deeper language acquisition by providing a meaningful context for language use. According to Kao and O'Neill (1998), drama offers authentic communication opportunities, allowing learners to practice and internalize language in realistic settings. Engaging in drama activities improves memory retention. Medina (2002) found that students who participate in drama activities remember vocabulary and grammatical structures better than those who learn through traditional methods. Drama activities require active verbal participation, which enhances speaking skills. Maley and Duff (2005) assert that drama provides a safe environment for students to experiment with language, leading to increased fluency and confidence. Through role-play and performance, students can practice pronunciation and intonation in a natural context. A study by Stinson and Freebody (2006) shows that drama helps learners acquire more native-like pronunciation patterns. Drama activities are inherently engaging and enjoyable, leading to higher levels of motivation. According to Wagner (1998), students are more likely to participate actively and persist in learning tasks when they find them enjoyable.

Drama allows students to express emotions and develop empathy by taking on different roles. This emotional engagement can lead to a deeper understanding of the language and its cultural nuances (Kao & O'Neill, 1998). Drama activities often involve exploring cultural contexts and perspectives. This exposure helps students develop cultural awareness and sensitivity, which are crucial for effective communication in a globalized world (Schewe, 2002).

By reenacting cultural scenarios, students gain insights into the socio-cultural aspects of the language they are learning. This contextual understanding enriches their linguistic competence and intercultural communication skills (Byram, 1997). Drama fosters collaborative learning, as students often work in groups to prepare and perform. This collaborative aspect promotes peer learning and enhances social skills (Vygotsky, 1978). Drama activities often involve improvisation and problem-solving, encouraging students to think critically and creatively. This aligns with the goals of developing higher-order thinking skills in language education (Dodson, 2002)

The integration of drama activities in English language learning offers a comprehensive approach that addresses linguistic, cognitive, socio-emotional, and cultural dimensions of language acquisition. Grounded in research, drama-based pedagogy not only enhances language proficiency but also fosters holistic development, making it a powerful tool in the language classroom. By creating a dynamic and interactive learning environment, drama activities can significantly contribute to the effectiveness of English language education.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were in the mind of the investigator which lead the investigator to undertake the present study.

- How will drama activities enhance communication skills in English?
- What are the reactions of students on teaching English communication skills through drama activities?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Enhancing Communication Skills in the English Language through Drama Activities at the Secondary level

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study will be conducted with the following objectives.

1. To develop drama activities for enhancing communication skills in the English language.
2. To implement drama activities to enhance communication skills in the English language.
3. To study the effectiveness of the drama activities in terms of achievement in (i) speaking skills and (ii) listening skills.
4. To study the reaction of the students towards the drama activities used for teaching English.

HYPOTHESIS

The following null hypotheses are formulated to achieve the stated objectives of the proposed study and those will be tested at a 0.01 level of significance.

- There will be no significant difference between the mean pre-test and post-test scores of students of the experimental group of class XI in the overall enhancement of speaking and listening skills.

- There will be no significant difference between the mean post-test scores of students of the experimental and control group of class XI in the achievement of speaking skills.
- There will be no significant difference between the mean post-test scores of students of the experimental and control groups of class XI in the achievement of listening skills.
- There will be no significant difference in the mean post-test scores of students of the experimental and control groups of class XI in the overall achievement of speaking and listening skills.

EXPLANATION OF THE TERM

Drama activities: In this study, drama activities imply a wide range of techniques that involve interaction, movement, vocal action and mental concentration.

Communication skills: In the study, it constitutes listening and speaking skills.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE TERM

Effectiveness : The significant difference in the achievement of speaking and listening skills found between the experimental and control group.

Reaction : The reaction of the students towards drama activity is the score obtained on the reaction scale.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY In the proposed study students are limited to class XI secondary students affiliated with Gujrat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board. (GSHSEB). It is delimited to English medium where the medium of instruction is English.

SUMMARY OF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The investigator reviewed a total of 50 studies. There were seventeen studies related to developing strategies and designs for teaching English. fifteen studies were related to listening and speaking skills and thirteen studies were related to the area of using drama as a method of teaching English.

The reviews had different research designs i.e., qualitative, quantitative, experimental, mixed-method, survey and correlational. Questionnaires, interviews, observations, proficiency tests, and diagnostic tests were used for data collection.

Out of the literature reviewed the researcher could not find any study which focuses on developing speaking and listening skills through drama activities and is integrated with the English course book for class XI students to develop both the listening and speaking skills. It was clear that no

study has been conducted in developing a programme for enhancing Listening and Speaking skills through drama for the students of English medium schools.

Methodology

The research design used in the study was quasi-experimental. The study's design is represented graphically as follows.

Experimental Group:	O1	X	O2
Control Group:	O3	C	O4
➤ O1 & O3 = Pre-test			
➤ O2 & O4 = Post-test			
❖ X= Treatment			
❖ C= No Treatment			

Population

The study's population comprised all class XI students enrolled in Gujarati secondary schools that had an affiliation with the Gujarat Secondary Education Board (GSEB) in the state of Gujarat during the academic year 2022–2023.

Sample

The sample for this study was chosen using the convenience sampling technique. Two sections of class XI from the A.G. High School in Ahmedabad were chosen. One section was the control group and another section was taken as the experimental group.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY The study was delimited to class XI students of the school affiliated with the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board. It was delimited to English medium where the medium of instruction is English.

The Methodology of the Study consisted of two sections

Section I

Systematisation

The drama activities were developed keeping in mind the relevancy, suitability, age and interest level of the students of class XI. The lesson plans for each chapter were arranged according to the relevancy, and logical sequence of the content, understanding the mental level of the students

The drama activities were implemented according to the theme of the chapters. Class XI was selected as these students like exploring new ways, ideas and things.

Development of Drama Activities

Step 1: Content Analysis and Identification of the Drama Activities

The XI standard was chosen for the experimentation; therefore, the textbook prescribed by the GSEB and published by the NCERT, i.e., Hornbill and Snapshot, was taught to the students of this class.

The Hornbill textbook has eleven prose chapters. The prose chapters were Ch1. The Portrait of a Lady; Ch2. We are not afraid to die... if we are together, Ch.3 Discovering Tut: the saga continues; Ch.4. Landscape of the soul; Ch.5 The Ailing Planet; Ch.6 The Browning Version; Ch.7 The Adventure; Ch.8 Silk Road.

The Hornbill textbook also has poems. The poems in the text were Poem.1 The Photograph; Poem. 2 The laburnum Top; Poem. 3 The voice of the rain; Poem 4. Childhood; Poem5. Father to son.

The other textbook which is taught in English in class XI is Snapshot which is a supplementary reader. It has seven prose chapters i.e. Sr.1 The Summer of the beautiful white horse; Sr.2 The Address; Sr.3 Ranga's Marriage; Sr.4 Albert Einstein at School, Sr.5 Mother's Day, Sr.7 Birth and Sr. 8 The Tale of the Melon City (it was a poem).

Step 2: Description of the selected Drama Activities

1. Hot-Seating

Hot-seat questions are aimed at a fictional character. One person, acting as the character, sits in the middle of the group, and the other participants assemble around to ask probing questions concerning the character's current situation, past experiences, future objectives, etc. Students gain a better grasp of the character in the issue due to this activity, making the character's situation more transparent.

2. Freeze Frames

It is an image, which appears frozen and conveys a message. It is often referred to as a tableau or freeze frame. It can shed light on character interactions with a particular emphasis on how space, levels, body language, and facial expressions are used. The students in role-playing froze at a specific point to discuss their opinions of the characters. It is used to examine a variety of emotional scenarios.

3. **Thought tracking** - When a character exits a scene to discuss their feelings with the viewer, it is known as a thought track. An audience gains a deeper understanding of the character when thoughts are shared in this way.
4. **Alley of Opinion** - An effective method for delving into any type of moral quandary that a character may encounter, offering a chance to examine a pivotal point in further detail. The students stand in two lines, facing one another. As each group member gives their piece of advice, one person—either the teacher or a participant—moves between the lines.
5. **Poetry Brought Alive** -Lines of poetry are brought to life with clear recitation and accompanying gestures and movements. Students will be divided into groups of five and each group will **enact** the poem. They will have to create stories related to the core themes of the poem and present them in front of the class. Students will also be asked to find out poems on trees or on similar themes and to dramatize them.
6. **Poetry in Motion** Participants in this activity are instructed to use short poems or break a long poem into separate verses. This is followed by giving print-outs to groups of four to six participants and asking them to read through the poem and devise freeze frames representing significant phrases. Students are tasked with finding a way to perform a poem by incorporating still images and sharing the lines between them, experimenting with speaking while still and moving. This approach can lead to effective work. The groups have the option to perform their pieces in sequence if a long poem is chosen, and they can also utilize short stories, raps, or texts for their performance.

7. **Bringing a picture to life** - Pupils collaborate in pairs. Give each couple a different photo. Couples must talk about their relationship, decide what is happening, and determine the identities and characteristics of the two individuals. Students create a brief exchange between the two individuals in their picture using the knowledge they have learned. What are they exchanging with one another? What is the subject? What is the result? They practice and get ready to act out their exchange.
8. **Character profiles** – Students explore characters using rapid hot seating techniques and questions that involve the whole class.
9. **Improvised Drama** - Students work and execute a story, a situation, or several situations in improvised drama. They might also operate inside the parameters that the instructor has established. Students are responsible for their own work. The feeling of ownership adds even more incentive to complete the task successfully. A more intricate scenario can incorporate the entire class, but working in smaller groups may be more advantageous for affectivity and practical considerations.

Listening Activities – The following listening activities were based on the implemented drama activities. Where students had to listen keenly to the drama activities conducted and answer the listening worksheet. The listening worksheet had the following types of questions.

- Short Answer Questions
- Sentence Completion

Questioning – Inter-questioning was done between students. Teacher-to-student questioning was done.

Summarising – It means to tell the most important facts or ideas about something or someone in short or clear form.

Discussion – It is the process of talking about something to reach a decision.

Step 2 Instructional Components

The different chapters in prose and poetry were analysed and relevant and drama activities were chosen according to the content and objective of the chapter.

Step 3: Description of Lesson plan format

The lesson plan includes general objectives, specific objectives, approach, method, resources, teacher activity, discussion points, drama implementation, student activity, home assignment and blackboard work.

Section II

Research Design

In this study, an experimental research design was used. An organized and rational approach to addressing the subject is offered by experimental research. Researchers modify certain treatments, stimuli, or environmental factors to alter or alter a subject's behaviour. They manipulate in a methodical and planned way.

In this study, a quasi-experimental research design was used. In this study, the Pretest-Posttest Non-Equivalent-Control Group Design was used. "This design is frequently used in classroom experiments when experimental and control groups are such naturally assembled groups as intact classes, which may be similar," according to Best and Kahn (1996).

The study's design is represented graphically as follows.

Experimental Group:	O1	X	O2
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	➤ O2 & O4 = Post-test		
	❖ X= Treatment		
	❖ C= No Treatment		

Population

The study's population comprised all class XI students enrolled in Gujarati secondary schools that had an affiliation with the Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board (GSHEB) in the state of Gujarat during the academic year 2022–2023.

Sample

The sample for this study was chosen using the convenience sampling strategy. Two sections of class XI from the A.G. High School in Ahmedabad were chosen.

One division from 11 Commerce and one division from 11 Science were selected for the present study. Standard XI commerce 'A' formed the experimental group while class XI science 'A' formed the control group. Both these classes follow the same textbook in English subject.

There were 56 students in XI Science and 55 in XI Commerce. Pre-test involved giving both the experimental and control groups an achievement test in listening and speaking skills. The pre-test scores from both groups were taken into consideration while doing a one-to-one matching. As a result, the groups were matched. The sample was made up of 26 students in the experimental group and 26 students in the control group after one-to-one matching.

Description of the tool

The following tools were constructed for the present study.

Listening Skills Achievement Test

The listening test was prepared to evaluate the students' listening abilities. Six listening tasks were formulated for the purpose. It was of 50 marks. The listening tasks were based on short extracts of the teacher's thoughts, audio track of poem, an audio track of a talk, an audio track based on a profession, an informational piece and a job interview.

Table: Listening Skills Test: Type of Questions, Allocation of Marks.

Que. No.	Type of question	Marks allotted
Task 1	Listen to the audio track and match the following	05
Task 2	Listen to the audio track of the poem and mark it as true or false.	10
Task 3	Listen to the recorded talk and fill in the gaps.	08
Task 4	Listen to the audio track and answer in a few words or phrases.	09
Task 5	Listen to the recorded conversation and write true or false.	09
Task 6	Listen to the interview	09
	Total marks-	50
	Time Given-	2 hrs

Speaking Skills Achievement Test

The Speaking test was prepared to evaluate the students' Speaking abilities. Six Speaking tasks were formulated for the purpose. It was of 50 marks. The Speaking tasks were based on giving self-introduction, talking on the topic given, pair activity of discussion on a problem scenario, describing two images, storytelling based on the set of images, observing the event details and answering the questions asked by the examiner.

Table: Speaking skills test: Type of questions, time given and question-wise mark allotment.

Que. No.	Type of question	Time given	Marks allotted
Task 1	Giving self-introduction	2 mins	05
Task 2	Talk on one topic	2 mins	10
Task 3	Discussing problem situation	3mins	05
Task 4	Describe the image (2 images)	4 mins (2 mins per image)	20
Task 5	Looking at a set of images and making a story out of it	2 mins	05
Task 6	Observe the program details and answer the question asked by the examiner	2mins	05
		Total marks-	50
		Time given-	15 mins

Reaction Scale

The researcher created a 5-point reaction scale for the experimental group pupils. The reaction scale was designed to gauge students' attitudes about the teaching of English prose and poetry lessons through drama activities.

The prepared tools were shown to the experts in the English language and in the field of education.

DATA COLLECTION

Phase I: Pre-Test

was conducted during July '2022. The permission was sought from the principal of the school to administer the pre-tests. During this phase, pre-tests were administered to both the control and the experimental group. The listening skills test and speaking skills test were administered to both control and experimental groups. The time allotted for the listening skills test was two hours and for the speaking skills test the time given to each student was 15 minutes. Most of the students finished answering the listening test within 2 hours. It was taken to match the groups and to see the enhancement in the communication skills of the experimental group.

Phase II: Experimentation Phase

This phase was conducted during the academic year July'2022 to April 2023. There were 234 working days during this academic session. There were two terms during this session following an annual term pattern. There were 5 periods of the subject English in a week of 40 minutes duration. The total hours of teaching English was calculated to be 32 hours out of which English teaching through drama activities for enhancement of listening and speaking skills was done in 32 hours. During this phase, the experiment was conducted. The experimental group consisted of students who were taught English using the Drama activities by the researcher. The researcher used lesson plans where English Prose and poetry lessons were integrated with drama activities.

There were a total of nine drama activities which were implemented they were hot-seating, freeze frames, thought tracking, alley of opinion, dramatic monologues, poetry brought alive, role play, poetry in motion and bringing a picture to life. The speaking and listening activities were based on the drama activities. The listening exercises were designed based on the implemented drama activities.

Phase III: Post-test Phase

Phase III was conducted in December 2022. The post-tests were administered to both the control and the experimental group. The listening and speaking tests in the English language were administered to both the experimental and control groups. It was administered in December 2022. The time allotted for the listening test was 2 hours. Students were able to answer tasks in the speaking test within the time limit of 15 minutes given to each student.

The reaction scale was administered to the experimental group in December 2022. The time allotted for this test was 1 period i.e. 40 minutes. The students finished the test within a given time.

The data from the post-tests comprised the scores achieved by students in listening and speaking tests and reaction scales were collected.

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The collected data were analysed quantitatively using non-parametric statistics of Mean, SD, Mann Whitney- U-test, Wilcoxon signed rank test and intensity index. Data related to the reaction scale was analysed as percentage and intensity index.

FINDINGS

- It was found that there was an enhancement in the communication skills of the experimental group due to drama activities.
- It was found that the drama activities used to teach English to class XI students were effective in terms of enhancing communication skills i.e. listening skills and speaking skills of the experimental group. The post-test scores of the experimental group were higher than the pre-test scores.
- It was found that there was a significant increase in listening skills in the experimental group of class XI.
- It was found that there was a significant increase in speaking skills in the experimental group of class XI.
- It was found that there was a significant increase in communication skills of listening and speaking skills as a whole in the experimental group of class XI.
- The reaction of the students towards the implemented drama activities was favourable. The overall intensity index was found to be 4.63.

Discussion

The present study where in drama activities were used for teaching English to the students of class XI was in accordance with NEP's (2020) proposed Art-Integrated Learning. The drama activities were found to be effective in enhancing listening and speaking skills in the English language. The classroom teaching in English emphasizes course completion and it is more exam-oriented. There is more emphasis on writing skills while assessing the students in the English language and less emphasis on other skills. Moreover, as stated by Krishnaveni (2010), performance in examination takes precedence over actual performance in using language effectively. She also mentions that

language teaching in India gives more importance to reading and writing, ignoring the important skills of listening and speaking. Sindkhedkar (2012), states that the teacher has to attempt to train the students in accomplishing the skills of language and there is no need to acquire knowledge about the language. The drama activities were used to teach English to students of class XI to enhance their listening and speaking skills. The drama activities were integrated with the chapters both prose and poetry. The classes integrated with drama activities were taken six days a week. The period for the English class was for forty minutes. The implementation of drama activities in the teaching of English was found to be effective. It enhanced the listening and speaking skills in English. The sub-skills of speaking which include intonation, pause, fluency, articulation etc. also improve. In support of using drama pedagogy, Goodwin (2001) states drama is a particularly effective tool for pronunciation teaching because various components of communicative competence (discourse, intonation, pragmatic awareness, nonverbal communication) can be practised in an integrated way. There are some other elements involved in acquiring oral communication skills: adding efficiency to communication and drama activities facilitates the improvement of these elements.

All the different drama activities that were used in the study were found to be interesting by the students. They were motivated to participate which helped them practice in speaking and listening skills. This is aligned with Whitear's (1998) study which stated that speaking is not only about words, structure and pronunciation, but also feelings, motivations and meanings that are valuable benefits for bringing drama to the language learner.

It was found that there was a total involvement of students in the drama activities. The drama activities can be used to provide opportunities for the students to be involved actively, the activities involve the students, whole personalities and not merely their mental process (Sam, 1990). Peregoy and Boyle (2008) state that "Drama activities provide students with a variety of contextualized and scaffold activities that gradually involve more participation and more oral language proficiency, they are also non-threatening and a lot of fun. The environment provided to the students for drama activities in the present study was joyful, fun-filled and safe.

One of the drama activities was called improvised drama which was used in the study and was found to be effective wherein students participated wholeheartedly. They were able to create meaning and understand the situation of the character presented in the chapter. Students'

involvement in negotiation and construction of meaning during a drama allows them insights into the relationship between context and language and lets them link the language they are learning to the world around them (Maley and Duff, 1978). The various drama activities implemented allowed the students to express their thoughts and ideas freely and made them feel empowered and full of confidence. Drama has been credited with the ability to empower students and allow them some ownership and control over their own learning (Wilburn, 1992). Kao and O, Neill (1998) propose that confidence levels increase when students have something to talk about and, most importantly, when they know how to express their ideas.

Implications of the Findings

➤ School Textbook Board

The study has implications for the Gujarat State Textbook Board. The English language curriculum at the secondary level can be made more activity-based. The focus can be on language skill development rather than being content-centric. The English Language textbook designers and developers can provide drama activities for developing listening and speaking skills in English textbooks.

➤ School Principals & Educational Administrators

The school principals can organize training programs and workshops for English school teachers on using drama as a tool of pedagogy. It will equip them for drama integration in teaching of English in order to enhance communication skills of listening and speaking. The school principals and administrators must also ensure that these drama activities are implemented by their school teachers in the English classrooms.

➤ School Teachers

English school teachers can be creative and develop or modify drama activities to inculcate listening and speaking skills. They can also develop a program based on drama activities to develop language skills.

➤ Teacher Education Programs

The Teacher Education curriculum of the two-year B.Ed program has a course called “Drama and Art in Education”. However, drama activities can also be included in the English pedagogy courses of the B.Ed curriculum. A course on drama activities can also be made mandatory in the D.El.Ed programs of India.

Suggestions For Further Research

- A study on the development and implementation of drama activities can be conducted at the primary level.
- A case study of the educational institutions can be done where the curriculum is transacted through drama activities.
- A study can be conducted where language skills are taught through drama activities in the language subjects of Hindi, Gujarati, Sanskrit etc.
- A study can be conducted where the curriculum of subjects like Maths, Science, Social Science etc. are transacted through drama activities.
- Correlational studies can be conducted to examine the effect of drama activities on language skills.

Conclusion

The study examined the effectiveness of the of drama activities in enhancing the communication skills i.e. listening and speaking skills in the English language of the class XI students. The drama activities were found to be effective in terms of enhancing the listening and speaking skills in the English. Several efforts are made to develop language skills among school children, But there is a need for more conscious efforts to be made by the school administrators and teachers to improve language skills among school students. As, lack of proficiency in the language skills affects the students in their adulthood. The drama activities not improve the language skills among students but it also helps them to be more sensitive to the world around them. If from the beginning levels of education students are taught through drama activities it help them to develop empathy and critical thinking skills. The students become more aware of themselves. The student's reactions towards the programme were found to be favourable. As the results of the study were efficacious it has shown new dimension to focus on for curriculum developers, educators and administrators to utilize the benefits of the drama activities for not only the enhancement of language skills but also for the development of the overall personality of a learner.