USING DRAMA-BASED PEDAGOGY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA

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USING DRAMA-BASED PEDAGOGY IN PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA

Jianing Zhang

Under the Supervision of Professor David Gillota

Drama-based teaching method is a way of integrating drama into the school curriculum. It is usually based on a story that brings students into a specific situation, and through drama games, students can experience the use of the English language in a simulated situation and increase their interest in learning.

This paper summarizes the relevant literature and theories concerning the drama-based teaching method, introduces the development and research overview of the drama-based teaching method in both theoretical and practical contexts at home and abroad, and defines the relevant concepts. In view of the current basic status of the application of the drama-based teaching method in China’s primary school English education, this paper focuses on four main aspects: the role of the drama-based teaching method in teaching, associated problems, teaching design, and strategy usage. Firstly, it explores the role and impact of this teaching method on primary English education by comparing the use of the drama-based teaching method with the advantages and disadvantages of traditional teaching methods. The aim is to determine students’ preferences for the drama-based teaching method and its contributions to English learning. The second aim of this project is to explore the main problems of the practical use of drama-based teaching method in primary school English teaching. The main problems are analyzed through the practical use of the sources and channels of drama resources, the design of drama-based teaching, and the evaluation of teaching effects. Thirdly, this projects studies and explores the teaching design of drama methods in English
teaching. In view of the objectives for students’ listening, reading, and writing in classroom teaching, this proposal outlines how to apply drama teaching in classroom instruction and also how to design the specific drama teaching content. The fourth aim is to study the best implementation strategy of drama-based teaching methods in primary school English teaching. I mainly focus on the contradictory problems that restrict the development of drama-based teaching. The study puts forward suggestions for strengthening the construction of specialized teachers’ team packages and integrating teaching resources.

It is hoped that this study will encourage more educational researchers to acknowledge the benefits of the drama-based teaching model for teachers and students. Additionally, it is anticipated that this research will offer some insightful inspirations for the application and further development of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English classrooms.
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Chapter I Introduction

Drama-based Pedagogy is a way of teaching English by using the techniques of drama. Its teaching concepts and methods provide new ideas for current English teaching. Drama-based Pedagogy originated in France in the 18th century, but it is only in recent decades that it has been developed and used in practice. Drama teaching is usually based on stories, which bring students into a specific situation. Through drama games, students can experience the use of the English language in a simulated situation, thus enhancing the sense of immersion and participation in learning and increasing their interest in learning.

This paper focuses on four goals of study: The first is to explore the role and impact of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching, and to find out how much students prefer drama-based pedagogy and how it promotes English learning by comparing the advantages and disadvantages of using drama-based pedagogy and traditional teaching methods. The second is to explore the main problems of the practical use of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching. The main problems are analyzed through the practical use of drama source channels, teaching design, and teaching effect evaluation. Third is to explore the teaching design of the drama-based pedagogy in English teaching. In view of the students’ listening, reading and writing teaching objectives, I will propose the way of utilizing drama-based pedagogy in teaching and specific content design. Fourthly, I will study the best implementation strategies of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching. This includes instructional design, role-playing activities, and selection of teaching materials in order to provide recommendations.
The study can provide useful references and guidance for further understanding the application effect of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching, optimizing the implementation strategy, and solving the problems in teaching.

**Statement of the Problem**

Based on the research, the following relevant questions can be asked:

**Issues relating to the content of Part I**

1. What are the forms of using drama-based pedagogy? What are its characteristics?
2. How effective is the drama-based pedagogy to primary school English teaching?
3. How does the drama-based pedagogy influence and enhance students’ motivation and interest in learning English?
4. How does the drama-based pedagogy compare with traditional teaching methods?

**Issues relating to the content of Part II**

1. What is the implementation and popularity of the use of drama-based pedagogy in the classroom?
2. What are all the drama-based pedagogy resources? How can teachers access these resources?

**Issues related to the content of Part III:**

1. How does the drama-based pedagogy contribute to the improvement of primary school children’s oral language skills?
2. How does the drama-based pedagogy contribute to the improvement of primary school children’s listening skills?
3. When using the drama-based pedagogy, how should teacher design teaching activities and role assignments to improve student learning?
Issues related to the content of Part IV:

1. What are the problems in implementing and evaluating the drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching?
2. How is drama-based pedagogy developed and applied in classroom practice?
3. What are some measures that can be taken to help solve the problems of the drama-based pedagogy?

The above research questions can be used as a starting point for studying the application of drama pedagogy in primary school English education, and an in-depth study of these questions can provide teachers and educational policy makers with more practical guidance and suggestions for improvement.

Definition of Terms

1. Educational drama: Educational drama is a kind of teaching method that makes use of a narrative framework to explore a topic from multiple perspectives. “It is seen as especially useful for learning languages because of its potential to bring real-life-like tasks into the classroom and to engage the learners’ emotions” (Korkut & Ozmen, 2023, p. 1).
2. Creative drama: Creative drama in English teaching is based on the real language materials and nearly perfect learning environment so that “students can easily integrate into the real context” (Mao, 2021, p.20).
3. Role Playing: Role Playing is one of the main parts of the drama teaching method, “which is to simulate the real situation of the characters by letting the students play different roles in the scripts to stimulate the students’ interest in learning and improve their oral expression ability” (Fu, 2017, p.30).
4. Dramatized Materials: “Dramatized materials typically include scripts, character lines, etc., and incorporate traditional teaching into the drama element by adapting and incorporating dramatic elements” (Peng, 2021, p.21).

5. Multiple Intelligences Theory: “Multiple intelligences theory mentions that drama-based pedagogy promotes the holistic development of students through the integrated use of multiple intelligences such as linguistic, spatial, musical, and interpersonal” (Chen, 2018, p.57).

**Purpose of the Study**

In Chinese primary school English classrooms, students are often reluctant to open their mouths and say they don’t know how to apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned to daily communication. Traditional teaching focuses on memorization and recitation, and there are many deficiencies in the students’ communicative and listening and speaking abilities. The study of drama-based pedagogy aims to find out a proven and effective method that can help students improve their communicative skills and practical use of English in some ways. The purpose of the study is twofold: on the one hand, drama-based pedagogy helps to improve students’ learning interest and learning ability. And it can create a relaxing and pleasant classroom atmosphere and motivate students to learn English. On the other hand, drama-based pedagogy helps teachers find a better way to assist English language teaching to improve the quality of teaching. By using drama-based pedagogy, teachers are more likely to create teaching situations close to students’ real life, which is conducive to students’ mastery of knowledge, leading to better teaching and learning outcomes.

This paper analyzes and identifies the problems in classroom practice by studying the characteristics and roles of drama-based pedagogy in English teaching. I have designed drama teaching content and activities suitable for use in primary school English classrooms.
Subsequently, I proposed strategies for developing and promoting the practical application of drama-based pedagogy. Finally I provides reference suggestions in view of the problems in the practical use of drama-based pedagogy.

**Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is threefold: first, for students, the drama-based pedagogy can bring fun and participation through activities such as role-playing, which can stimulate students’ interest in learning, as well as increase their motivation in primary school English teaching. It can improve their oral and phonological expression skills and develop a sense of teamwork. Second, for teachers, the study of drama-based pedagogy helps to expand the ability to provide teachers with guidance and support on how to flexibly use drama-based pedagogy, and to promote their professional development and pedagogical innovation. Thirdly, for schools and the society, the significance of these studies can be explored to further recognize the important role of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching, to enrich the classroom teaching methods, and to provide a scientific basis for teachers and researchers.

**Methodology**

Literature review and analysis, problem survey research, and classroom instructional design are the main approaches and methods used to conduct the research. First, I will do some literature search and analysis. Through searching relevant literature on drama-based pedagogy at home and abroad, I can find out the theoretical basis of drama-based pedagogy, analyze the development and evolution of drama-based pedagogy, summarize the types of drama-based pedagogy and the characteristics of its application, so as to reveal the significance and promotion of drama-based pedagogy to primary school English teaching.
Second, it is an investigation and research on problems. Through the understanding and investigation of the situations related to the practical use of drama-based pedagogy in primary school classrooms, I analyze and find out the current situation of resource means, teaching design, teaching evaluation and other aspects of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching, as well as the outstanding problems that constrain the development.

Third, classroom teaching design involves a comprehensive approach. This includes aligning with the syllabus requirements and teaching objectives to explore the most effective implementation strategies of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English instruction. It encompasses aspects such as the design of teaching activities, selection of role-playing exercises, choice of teaching materials and so on.

Chapter II Review of Literature

This paper meticulously examines the pedagogical approach of drama-based pedagogy, by systematically organizing its theoretical foundations, analyzing the connotation of the concept, studying and analyzing the development and evolution at home and abroad. It articulates the significance of this study from both a theoretical and practical perspective, and finally summarizing and proposing the conclusions of the research.

The Theoretical Basis of The Drama-based Pedagogy

Upon perusing pertinent scholarly materials, I think the basis of the drama-based pedagogy principally stem from the following aspects:

Experiential Learning Theory. This theory suggests that learners construct knowledge through direct experience. Abraham (2018) mentions that drama-based pedagogy emphasizes role-playing to allow students to learn by doing and deepen their understanding of learning
Social constructivism theory. Social constructivists believe that knowledge is constructed through interactions between individuals and society. Chen (2019) points out that drama-based pedagogy encourages collaboration and communication among students to co-construct knowledge through interaction.

Cognitive Development Theory. Piaget’s theory of cognitive development emphasizes the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. Peng (2021) mentions that drama-based pedagogy promotes students’ cognitive development by providing social interaction situations.

Multiple Intelligences Theory. Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences Theory states that everyone has multiple intelligences. Chen (2018) mentions that drama-based pedagogy promotes the holistic development of students through the integrated use of multiple intelligences such as linguistic, spatial, musical, and interpersonal.

**The Conceptual Connotations of Drama-based Pedagogy**

Drama, originated from ancient Greek, means action or game. Chinese and foreign researchers have different views about the connotation of drama-based pedagogy. For example, Bessadet (2022) argues that “creative theater” is an improvisational performance, representing a principal form within the dramaturgical process. According to Fu (2017), drama education is a form of applying drama to teaching and learning various subjects through dramatic situations to develop learners’ cognitive, linguistic and interactive skills.

Abraham (2018) points out that drama-based pedagogy establishes interdisciplinary connections between multiple disciplines (education, psychology, sociolinguistics). Ren and Ke (2023) mention that Drama pedagogy, also known as drama education, refer to the application of
dramatic methods and theatrical elements in teaching, so that students can achieve their learning goals in dramatic practice. Mao (2021) suggests that drama-based pedagogy is a teaching methodology in which drama elements such as roles, scenarios, and stories are integrated into classroom instruction to achieve the educational objectives of skill enhancement and personal growth.

The Evolution of Drama-based Pedagogy

The origins of the drama pedagogy can be traced back to two educational concepts of Rousseau: “Learning by practice” and “Learning by drama practice.” Subsequently, the pedagogical methodologies such as John Dewey’s “Progressive Teaching” and other teaching methods further promoted the use of drama in education. The United States is believed to be the first country to establish a series of “Creative Drama” courses, which are child-centered and foster comprehensive personal development in children through rhythmic movement, inventive playwriting, and various other techniques (Nanda & Susanto, 2021).

After the Second World War, pedagogical approaches to drama-based pedagogy expanded rapidly in Europe and North America. DIETIE (a drama activity centered on fictional role-playing and improvisation) became popular, which has no scripts, only outlines and partial scenarios, and the plot changes as participants react and create (Briones et al., 2022). Beginning in the 1980s, the United States began to establish national arts curriculum standards, the position of the drama program became clearer (Gong, 2015). In 1983, 70 scholars completed the Report on Drama Curriculum Models, which divided the drama curriculum into six phases and set different instructional emphases for different age groups (Stephenson, 2023).

In China, drama-based pedagogy has also been gradually developed. For example, relevant scholars and teachers in some university institutions have conducted research on drama-based
pedagogy and explored its role in improving classroom atmosphere, teaching quality and changing teacher-student relationships.

The Research Implications of Drama-based Pedagogy

Primarily, from the perspective of theoretical research, an in-depth comprehension of the concepts and definitions pertaining to the methodology of drama instruction can be achieved through an examination of its associated theories. The development system of drama-based pedagogy is more complete in foreign countries, and there is a set of more complete and mature experiences and models for its use in language teaching, and the policies of education authorities and schools are also in line with it. For example, in U.K., in the early twentieth century, there were two fundamentally conflicting theories of educational philosophy, one placing greater emphasis on the teacher’s primary role in instruction, the other focusing more on honoring the organic development of children and the uniqueness of each individual (Bessadet, 2022).

In the United States, drama education not only provides students with artistic edification, but many schools also use drama as an important cognitive tool. It emphasizes students’ participation and focuses on learning actions and results. Drama activities can make students know the world in a more visual way and promote the overall development of students through drama activities. For example, Korkut and Ozmen (2023) emphasize students’ creative freedom and encourages the development of personal style through diverse writing exercises. At the same time, students have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of theater production, thus gaining a well-rounded practical experience.

From the point of view of the development of domestic drama education, China’s drama education theory and practice is still in the initial stage of development, compared with the Western drama education. After nearly a century of development, the Western drama education
model is in a leading position in both theoretical research and practical activities. The evolution and implementation of Chinese theatrical pedagogy are marked by diversity and extensiveness, garnering increasing attention in the application within elementary and secondary education. The focal point of their research predominantly revolves around disciplines such as morals, history, and music. However, in terms of practical classroom application, the investigation remains superficial and not sufficiently comprehensive. Presently, the Ministry of Education in China has incorporated drama into the compulsory educational curriculum for the arts. For instance, for first and second graders, the emphasis is on engaging in “role-playing” activities to cultivate their observational and summarization skills. For students in grades three to four, the approach involves conducting “textbook drama performances” and “drama games” based on English. Meanwhile, students in grades five and six are involved in “performing stage plays,” “composing the story script” and “organizing dramatized activities” (Peng, 2021).

Compared with western developed countries, the application of educational drama within China’s higher education sphere remains in its initial stages. However, as time progresses, the pedagogical approach of utilizing drama in elementary and secondary education is gaining increasing prominence and possesses vast potential for future growth and expansion. Compared with western developed countries, the application of educational drama in higher education in China is relatively small, subject to the objective conditions and the influence of traditional education, it is still in the initial stage, but with the passage of time, the drama teaching method receives more and more attention in primary and secondary education, and it has a broad prospect for development.

Secondly, from the viewpoint of teaching practice, drama-based pedagogy is a method of applying drama elements and techniques to the teaching process, which helps to improve
students’ participation, creativity and thinking ability. Summarizing the research views of Chinese and foreign scholars, the research significance of drama pedagogy is mainly reflected in the following aspects. First, it can improve the comprehensive quality of students and promote their overall development. Second, it can promote students’ emotional development and improve their language communication skills. Through role-playing and scenario simulation, the drama-based pedagogy allows students to experience life and think about problems from different perspectives in dramatic performances and role simulations, which helps to promote the development of students’ mental health. Third, it helps to enrich teaching methods and stimulate students’ interest in learning. drama-based pedagogy let students naturally master the ability to use language in performance activities, which helps to stimulate learning interest. Fourth, it helps to improve teachers’ professionalism. Drama-based pedagogy not only requires teachers to have the knowledge of their own specialty, but also requires teachers to have certain knowledge of drama and scriptwriting skills, which puts higher requirements on teachers’ professionalism.

**Summary**

Based on the theoretical basis, conceptual connotation, developmental evolution and research significance of drama-based pedagogy, the following main conclusions can be drawn:

First, the drama-based pedagogy has a deep historical origin, a broad development prospect and a practical foundation.

Second, the unique function of drama-based pedagogy are of greater help in promoting students’ learning and mastery of foreign languages and improving their proficiency and communication skills.

Third, the practical activities and methods of using drama-based pedagogy are still in the initial stage of development, especially how to better integrate localization needs to be deepened
Fourth, as a promising teaching mode, drama-based pedagogy has important research significance in enhancing students’ learning interest, improving communication and collaboration ability, improving teachers' professionalism, and promoting education reform.

Chapter III The Important Role of Drama-based Teaching Method in primary School English Instruction

Compared with the traditional teaching method, the impact of drama-based teaching method on primary school English teaching is positive, which contributes to changing the disadvantages of rote memorization in traditional teaching, especially in the English teaching of non-native English-speaking countries.

First of all, the drama-based teaching method can effectively stimulate the interest and initiative of primary school students in learning. As we all know, children are naturally vivacious, generally have strong curiosity and like to try new things. At the same time, children’s attention can be easily distracted, making it challenging for them to concentrate for a long time. The role-playing and situational simulation activities of the drama teaching method make the learning content lively and interesting, thus offering an educational environment replete with fun and creativity for primary school students. This immersive approach can stimulate their interest in learning more effectively than traditional teaching methods. It can also encourage students to participate more actively in English lessons, making the learning process more interesting and meaningful.

Second, the drama-based teaching method can effectively improve and cultivate primary school students’ ability to use English. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are essential
skills for second language acquisition. In the modern society of globalization, lacking proficient language communication skills and the ability to master and use English as a common international communication tool will have a negative impact on our personal development. In China, primary school students often focus more on achieving high scores in English examinations rather than applying the language flexibly in real life, primarily due to their upbringing in an environment devoid of active English communication. As a result, a phenomenon known as “mute English” has emerged, where many students can read and write but struggle to speak English fluently. The use of drama teaching method constructs a similar real-life language scene, which can play a greater role in improving students’ practical use of English. For example, by playing different roles, students use the English they have learned to communicate and express themselves, practicing their oral expression and reaction skills through improvisation, and enhancing their voice intonation and listening comprehension through imitation and games. Drama-based pedagogy offers primary school students a platform to express their personal views. Interaction through roles and dialogue fosters their engagement in daily conversations, speeches, and discussions.

Thirdly, drama-based teaching method can effectively help improve the comprehensive quality of primary school students. The new syllabus emphasizes the importance of improving the overall development of students’ comprehensive quality, and tries to change the past by focusing only on the transmission of knowledge, without paying attention to the cultivation of students’ personality, creative ability, communication ability, organization and coordination ability and other comprehensive qualities. The drama-based teaching method has a better role in helping to improve the comprehensive quality of primary school students. On the one hand, it can cultivate students’ communication skills. By participating in the performance of theater
characters, they will communicate verbally with their classmates, which will help them overcome communication barriers and improve their communication skills. On the other hand, it can cultivate students’ creative ability. Under the guidance of the teacher, students create scripts, conceptualize the storyline, set the character traits of the characters in the play, and experience the cultural characteristics of different backgrounds, which can form a better experiential context and enhance their imagination and imitation. In addition, they can learn about the cultures and living customs of different countries and further broaden their horizons of understanding and observing the world. To sum up, the application of a drama-based teaching method can improve students’ comprehensive quality.

Chapter IV Challenges in Applying Drama-based Teaching Methods in Primary School English Instruction

In recent years, more and more Chinese primary schools have carried out the drama-based teaching method, which has received good results and widespread attention from the educational community. Although drama-based pedagogy has gained faster momentum in China, there is still a long way to go for drama teaching in Chinese elementary school language classrooms. Primary school drama-based education is currently facing some puzzles. These difficulties may come from many aspects, including the teaching method itself, students’ participation, teachers’ professionalism, and the limitation of teaching resources, which to a certain extent now limit the classroom application and popularization of the drama-based teaching method.

First, the emphasis on drama-based pedagogy still needs to be strengthened, and its use in the classroom faces numerous challenges. Teachers can either use textbooks to implement dramatization or adapt movies for drama activities. As far as its importance is concerned, the
adoption of the drama pedagogy helps to realize the core quality development of the English subject. Some schools have already made such attempts in teaching English in primary school by practically exploring the classroom teaching approach and have accumulated certain experience and results. However, for most schools, the importance of introducing drama into the classroom is not widely recognized, and relatively few schools offer drama lessons.

Second, the drama-based pedagogy requires high professionalism of teachers, which makes classroom implementation difficult. Drama-based pedagogy requires teachers to have knowledge and experience in theater theory, performance skills and classroom management. Therefore, teachers may need to receive specialized training and possess rich knowledge of drama, performance skills and teaching experience in order to effectively guide students to participate in drama activities, help them deeply understand the script, portray the characters and express their emotions, so as to more effectively integrate drama activities into classroom teaching. Teachers have long been limited by the traditional framework of teaching and learning, and some teachers find it difficult to change their traditional concepts of education, believing that they lack the confidence and ability to implement new teaching methods (Stephenson, 2023). Currently many teachers may lack these necessary qualities, causing them to feel overwhelmed by the implementation of drama pedagogy.

Third, exam-oriented education leads to high pressure for students and a lack of motivation for drama education among students and parents. In some cultural contexts, drama-based pedagogy may not be seen as a formal way of learning. Unlike other countries, education in China still focuses on cultivating students’ ability to take exams and has always still followed the teaching-oriented education model (Peng, 2021). At the same time, the assessment of drama-based pedagogy may be more subjective and complex than traditional pedagogy. How to
effectively assess students’ performance in drama activities and provide targeted feedback is a problem that needs to be solved, with students’ parents placing more emphasis on test scores than on language use skills. Drama-based pedagogy requires active participation and engagement of students, but some students may lack interest or enthusiasm in drama activities due to their personality, interest or other reasons, which may also lead to their negative performance in the activities.

Fourth, the lack of resources for teaching drama makes it difficult to implement it widely. Drama activities often require more time and resources for preparation and implementation. Within the limited classroom time, teachers have to fulfill the content requirements stipulated in the syllabus as well as fully integrate the teaching content into the drama activities, with little information to draw on for the design of drama lesson plans and no ready-made resources available, thus making it more difficult for the quality and effectiveness of classroom teaching (Gong, 2015). The limitation of teaching resources may also become a difficulty in the implementation of the drama-based pedagogy. For example, the lack of suitable scripts, props and venues may affect the quality and effectiveness of drama teaching. Meanwhile, the schedule of teaching time may also be a problem, as drama pedagogy usually requires a longer period of time for preparation and rehearsal, and the school’s class schedule may not be able to meet this demand.

Although there are some difficulties in the implementation of the drama-based teaching method, its good and rapid development momentum has not changed, and this teaching method is consistent with the original intention and purpose of China’s teaching reform. In view of these difficulties, as long as we take positive measures to solve them, we can give full play to the advantages of the drama teaching method in educational practice, stimulate students’ interest in
learning, and improve their creativity and cooperation ability.

Chapter V Teaching Design Ideas for Using Drama-based Pedagogy in Primary School English Class

The use of drama games in the primary English classroom is an effective teaching method, and incorporating an educational drama approach into teaching can help students learn English in a more natural and fun way. Before implementing these games, teachers must ensure that the game approach is effectively matched to the teaching materials, which means that appropriate drama games need to be carefully selected.

The English Textbook (People’s Education Edition) for the Sixth Grade Unit 6 Topic “How do you feel” is used as a case study for illustration. In this case, an educational drama approach is used, in which the original text is transformed through dramatic activities, seen below, which not only maximizes students’ mastery of the pragmatic functions of the target language, but also deepens their understanding of the emotions and attitudes of the story.

【Teaching Objectives】
1. Students will be able to listen, speak, read and write phrases: angry, see a doctor, take a deep breath, count to ten.
2. Students will be able to recognize and read sentences: What should I do? You should...
3. Students will experience and understand the emotions and thinking of the characters in the process of playing different roles and understand the words corresponding to different emotions.

【Dramatic Analysis】

This is the background of the drama material adapted from the textbook.

1. Drama material: English Textbook (People’s Education Edition) for Sixth Grade Unit 6 Topic
“How do you feel”

2. Conflict: Sam finishes the popcorn while Sarah goes to get the juice, and Sarah is very angry.

3. Central issue: How to relieve angry emotions and how to express different emotions in different situations.

4. Event background:

Who: Sam, Sarah, Mum.

When: Afternoon

Where: Home

Why: Sam finishes the popcorn while Sarah goes to get the juice.

Final result: Mom taught Sarah how to ease her anger.

The background of the drama material adapted from the textbook provides students with a specific learning context, allowing them to better understand the situations in the plot, which in turn deepens their understanding of character behavior and emotional changes.

【Screenplay adaptation】

Scene 1

Sarah: Hey, let's have some popcorn.

Sam: Yum! I'm so happy. I love popcorn!

Sarah: Here you are. I'll go and get some drinks. Wait for me.

Scene 2

Sarah: Hey, where is my popcorn?

Sam: Yum! It was so good.

Sarah: What? How could you eat all the popcorn? we should share!
Scene 3
Sarah: Mum, if I feel angry, what should I do?
Mum: Well, first take a deep breath. Then you should count to ten. After that, you won’t feel so angry.

Scene 4
Sarah: Mum, I feel ill. Should I count to ten too?
Mum: No, dear. You should see a doctor

Warm-up: Before class song
Play the song: If you’re happy, clap your hands. Lead the students to follow the song in the rhythm.

【Design intention】
Through the melody to lead the students in the form of clapping, stomping, fully mobilize the senses to let the students into the learning atmosphere, so that the students can be in a more relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere to master the skills of theatrical performance.

Activity 1: Read aloud in roles
The “Read aloud in roles” activity includes elements of imitation and repetition. When the activity starts, the teacher first plays a recording that contains dialogue, the students are required to listen carefully to the recording, imitate the tone and intonation of the voices, and then repeat the dialogue. Then, roles are assigned to the students for role-playing, to enhance their understanding of the characters. Afterwards, divided students into small groups and practice in pairs.
1. Listen and repeat

Teacher: Now listen and repeat, try to imitate their tones and feel their feelings.

(Students listen to the recording, imitate and read the text again.)

2. Read in roles

Teacher: Now let’s read in roles. Boys, you are Sam now. Girls, you are Sarah now. And I’m Mum. Let’s read it!

(Teacher and students read in roles together, make a good demonstration for the group role reading.)

3. Work in groups

Teacher: It’s your turn now. Work in groups and practice. Then let’s see your work.

(Students will read and rehearse in different groups.)

【Design intention】

By assigning different roles to students, read in roles can help them better understand the content of the text and the emotions and motivations of the characters, thus deepening their understanding of the storyline and characterization.

Activity 2: Impromptu performance

Improvisational activities primarily consist of impromptu scene enactment. First, set the scene by having the instructor simulate an emotion, such as being sick, angry, tired, or cold, and then pose a related question. Each emotion presented by the teacher is accompanied by a possible solution that instructs the student on how to respond. Then divided students into groups, with each member taking turns to act out different emotions and propose their suitable reaction. This not only helps students understand different emotions but also encourages them to think about appropriate responses in these situations.
Teacher: (Acting the appearance of illness) I feel so bad. Oh, what should I do? Lead to the phrase: see a doctor. Teach how to read and practice.

Teacher: (Acting the appearance of angry) I feel angry. What should I do? Lead to the phrase: take a deep breath, count to ten. Teach how to read and practice.

Teacher: (Acting the appearance of tired) I feel tired. What should I do? Lead to the phrase: do more exercise. Teach how to read and practice.

Teacher: (Acting the appearance of cold) I feel cold. What should I do? Lead to the phrase: wear warm clothes. Teach how to read and practice.

Students practice in groups, showing different emotions and giving solutions.

【Design intention】

The intention of this teaching design is to stimulate students’ interest in learning English phrases and vocabulary through short scenarios showing different emotions, and to strengthen students’ ability to memorize and apply these vocabulary words through situational simulation.

Activity 3: Situation card selection

Situation card selection is the activities that provide the role-playing students with cards with several options for resolving the conflict, e.g., Sam apologizes and offers to make a new portion of popcorn together, the two of them find a solution to sharing, etc. Students need to choose a solution and explain their choice in English.

1. Teacher prepares a number of situation cards, each describing a specific conflict scenario with several possible solutions.

For example, the card could write, Sam accidentally broke a friend’s toy. Solution: (A) Sam apologizes and offers to make new popcorn together as a gift of reconciliation. (B) They find an
activity they can share together.

2. Divide the students into groups and distribute character and scenario cards. Allow each group to discuss and select the solution they believe is most appropriate.

3. Next, have the students in each group role-play the scenario to demonstrate how they will implement the solution they have chosen.

4. At the end of the role play, have the other groups provide feedback and discuss different solutions and outcomes.

【Design intention】

This activity can promote students' decision-making skills and enhance verbal expression. Students are free to choose solutions based on their own understanding and inclinations, and this autonomy is key to stimulating interest and improving learning outcomes.

Activity 4: Mini-Skit

Students can work in groups to write or rehearse a short play describing the conflict resolution process and perform it as a group.

【Design intention】

Rehearsing mini-scripts in groups helps to develop teamwork and coordination. Writing scripts requires students to use creativity and imagination, which not only hones their creative abilities but also develops problem-solving skills.

Chapter VI Progressive Strategies for Implementing Drama-based Pedagogy in primary School English Teaching

Promoting the application of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching is a complex matter, which requires efforts from several aspects, cultivating a specialized teacher
team, improving drama teaching resources, and establishing assessment standards, so as to create
good safeguard conditions for the promotion of drama in the classroom and its healthy
development.

To promote the application of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching,
the first step is to develop a specialized drama-based teaching team. Teachers are the core of
drama-based teaching, and their professionalism and teaching ability directly affect the quality of
drama teaching. Drama-based teaching method puts high demands on teachers' teaching design
and innovation, classroom organization and management. To cultivate teachers’ professional
knowledge and skills in drama, it is necessary to organize in-depth study and mastery of
theoretical knowledge in drama, strengthen teachers’ theoretical courses in drama performance,
practical training and teaching observation, and enhance the cultivation of teachers’ theoretical
literacy and skill base in drama. Second, it is to cultivate teachers’ ability to design and organize
the implementation of drama-based method teaching, to organize teachers to make reasonable
teaching plans in accordance with the requirements of the English subject standard and syllabus,
combined with the teaching objectives and the age, interest and characteristics of the students,
and to pay attention to cultivating the teachers’ ability to organize and manage the classroom.

To promote the application of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching,
the second step is to optimize drama-based teaching resources. Rich and complete drama
teaching resources are the basis for drama teaching. Unlike professional art colleges, drama
resources in schools are extremely limited, teachers need to optimize drama resources. First,
teacher should arrange teaching cases and teaching materials, design lesson plans for all kinds of
drama teaching materials, and adapt and re-create some classic short plays or clips suitable for
students’ performances, so as to make them more in line with students’ needs. Encourage
students to participate in the creation of scripts to enrich the materials and sources of inspiration. Second, to guarantee the teaching place and equipment and props, the school should establish a special place for drama teaching and provide stage, lighting, sound and other equipment as well as all kinds of props in order to create a real environment for drama performance.

To promote the application of drama-based pedagogy in primary school English teaching, the third step is strive for support from various parties for drama-based teaching. It cannot be separated from the policy guidance of government agencies and the support of schools. At the government side, the government should play a leading role in increasing investment in drama education and encouraging schools at all levels to carry out drama teaching activities. At the school side, in terms of curriculum, teachers should be encouraged to incorporate drama education into the curriculum system, and in terms of venue arrangements, make full use of existing resources, such as multi-functional classrooms and auditoriums, to provide suitable venues for drama-based teaching.

Chapter VII Conclusions and Recommendations

Drama-based teaching method is a new type of teaching method that integrates drama elements into the classroom, and its teaching concept is consistent with the purpose of China’s quality education. The use of this teaching method in primary school English classroom teaching is conducive to improving students' motivation and cultivating students’ ability to coordinate and cooperate, innovation, communication and expression, thus improving students’ comprehensive quality. With the development of the drama-based teaching method, it has been more and more welcomed by the majority of students and will surely become a new choice for schools to carry out the innovation of teaching mode.
In this paper, the theoretical research on drama-based pedagogy is sorted out and integrated from the perspective of pedagogy, and an overview of domestic and international research on the theory and practice of drama-based pedagogy is introduced, and the relevant concepts and connotations of drama-based pedagogy, the current status of the application of drama-based pedagogy in various countries and in China are described in detail. Through comprehensive and comparative analysis, I see that the use of drama-based teaching method is more common in developed countries in Europe and America, and the related research is also more abundant, while the related research in China started later, especially the application of English teaching in primary school with fewer research and practice results, and the teaching system is not yet mature and perfect.

In this paper, I first sort out the problems that may be involved in the application of drama-based pedagogy in primary school, with the aim of identifying and solving problems. Second, I analyzes the theoretical basis of drama-based pedagogy, identifies its inner connections, and reveals the logic and science of its application. Third, by analyzing and studying the role of the drama-based teaching method in primary school English teaching, and through comparative analysis with traditional methods, it is evident that the impact of the drama-based teaching method on primary school education is positive. It plays a constructive role in addressing the limitations of traditional teaching practices. For elementary school students’ English classroom teaching, it can stimulate students’ interest in learning, improve their language skills and abilities, promote their emotional expression, cultivate their sense of teamwork and assistance, and expand their learning field. Fourth, by analyzing the current development of drama-based pedagogy, it has been found that drama education in primary schools is currently facing some difficulties. These difficulties may come from a number of aspects, including the teaching method itself, students’
participation, teachers’ professionalism, etc., which to a certain extent limits the classroom application and popularization of the drama-based pedagogy. Fifth, it is pointed out that the application of drama-based teaching method in elementary school English teaching is a complex matter, which needs to start from many aspects, cultivate specialized teacher teams, improve drama teaching resources, and create good conditions for promoting drama into the classroom.

This paper studies the drama-based teaching method, aiming to find out a proven method that can help students improve their English communicative ability and practical use. By studying the characteristics and role of drama-based teaching method in English teaching, analyzing and identifying the contradictory problems in classroom practice, trying to design the content of drama-based teaching method in primary school English classroom, exploring the effective teaching methods, by identifying issues in the practical application of the drama-based teaching method, this paper proposes strategies to develop and promote its practical use, making efforts to enhance its implementation and application in primary education.

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