
CREATIVE DRAMATICS IN DEVELOPING STUDENTS' ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

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Abstract

This descriptive study determined the ability of Grade 7 students at Miagao National High School to recognize idiomatic expressions during the academic year 2023-2024. The respondents consisted of thirty (30) students from one section. Furthermore, an intervention using Creative Dramatics was developed and validated to enhance the students' abilities. A descriptive method was employed to assess the students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions. A test developed by the researchers was subjected to validation to ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments used. Mean, standard deviation, and t-test were utilized in the data analysis. The study revealed that overall, students had a moderate ability to recognize idiom expressions before the implementation of Creative Dramatics. However, after the intervention, the students achieved excellent performance in recognizing idiomatic expressions. There was a significant difference between the students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions before and after the intervention.

Keywords: Creative dramas, Idiomatic expressions, Recognition, Skill development.

INTRODUCTION

An idiomatic expression can be considered artistic if its execution begins with proper structuring and imaginative use of language. Meanwhile, an expression can be called creative if its execution is based on the part that begins with a well-structured and imaginative use of language. It involves specific emotions to appeal to the senses of those concerned, thereby evoking possible models of human experiences in their minds (Arrogante, 2009). Therefore, it is important for students to develop their ability to recognize idiomatic expressions because they can share their thoughts and knowledge using indirect or more appropriate meanings. This fosters intellectual thinking and stimulates students' interest and it also enhances and beautifies each statement.

However, many studies indicate that students have a low ability to identify idiomatic expressions. A study at Hasanuddin University shows that students only have moderate ability in recognizing idiomatic expressions (Aris, 2022). Hence, researchers assessed students' ability to identify idiomatic expressions by giving them tests. Additionally, they developed Creative Dramatics as an intervention to help improve students' ability to identify idiomatic expressions.

Iddon (2023) mentioned that the activities used in Creative Dramatics were developed by the teacher, although there were specific reasons for the selection of the 11 creative drama activities. The activities that involve role-playing allow children to develop an understanding of others. They learn about society and how others experience events. Another important aspect of role-playing activities is the problem-solving skills required of the students. When playing, they need to look at problems from different perspectives, find alternative solutions, and make decisions for themselves. Creative drama activities foster self-discipline, self-esteem, and relationships among children. They

do this by exploring their imagination and finding ways to improve concentration while engaging in fun, engaging, and unique activities.

Thus, this study determined the students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions. Furthermore, an intervention using *Creative Dramatics* was developed and validated to enhance the students' abilities. In this regard, the study will answer the following questions about the level of ability to recognize idiomatic expressions before the intervention; the level of ability to recognize idiomatic expressions after the intervention; Is there a significant difference in the level of ability to recognize idiomatic expressions of the students before and after the intervention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In summary, researchers believe that Creative dramatics has a significant impact on developing students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions. It was shown from the study by Batdi (2015), "Effect of Creative Drama on Academic Achievement: A Meta-analytic and Thematic Analysis", which found that creative dramatics had influential results in the social, cognitive, and affective domains, creativity and critical thinking, skills and attitudes, learning environment/process. There is a positive impact on students' achievement as a way of recognizing idiomatic expressions that aims to demonstrate the importance of using dramatic performance in understanding and using idioms in the language. By using creative dramatics, students are given the opportunity to more easily understand and express the meaning of idioms in the real context of everyday communication. By creating and acting out scenes or situations in which idioms are used, it becomes easier for students to understand their correct usage and meaning.

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this study was to assess the ability of seventh-grade students at Miagao High School to recognize idiomatic expressions during the 2023-2024 school year. Additionally, an intervention using Creative Dramatics was developed and validated to enhance the students' skills. Further, the study employed a descriptive research design. As Aquino and Espanola (2018) state, the descriptive method is an effective approach for providing information or knowledge that serves as a basis for scientific judgments.

The primary instrument used in the study was a test developed by the researchers, consisting of 30 items aimed at measuring the students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions. For validating the Creative Dramatics intervention, a survey checklist was utilized. To ensure the validity of both the test and the Creative Dramatics intervention, they were reviewed and evaluated by five expert Filipino teachers.

The respondents of this study were 30 seventh-grade students from Miagao High School, selected through purposive sampling. Their section was chosen based on observations by their adviser, who identified these students as having difficulties in recognizing idiomatic expressions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Level of Students' Ability to Recognize Idiomatic Expressions before the intervention.

Students' Ability to Recognize Idiomatic Expressions	N	Mean	Description
Pre-test	30	13.60	Moderate

Scale: Excellent 24.00-30 Very Good 19.00-23.99 Moderate 13.00-18.99 Low 6.00-12.99 Very Low 1.00-5.99

Table 1 shows the results of the pre-test of students who participated in the ability to recognize idiomatic expressions before using Creative Dramatics. According to the results, the ability of grade 7 students to recognize idiomatic expressions before the intervention was (M=13.60) (sd= 3.997) and described as moderate. It only means that the students has an average understanding about idioms, especially since there is a meaning that is not directly derived from the words that make it up, so it was difficult for the students to understand it correctly. Many students also don't have outstanding knowledge about it because they are not exposed to idioms in their daily language, especially since they are not often used in their homes or communities. The teaching of idioms is also not emphasized in the curriculum and the teaching methods are not sufficient to develop students' understanding of it.

In this regard, this result conformed to the study conducted by Ta'amneh (2021) about the Strategies and Difficulties of Learning English Idioms among University Students. Which states that the participants faced some difficulties in learning idioms. These difficulties forced instructors to use various educational strategies to help students overcome such difficulties. This revealed various reasons why participants struggled with idioms such as lack of practice in idioms and lack of understanding of idiomatic expressions.

Table 2. Level of ability in recognizing idiomatic expressions after the intervention

Ability to Recognize Idiomatic Expressions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Description
Post-test	30	25.37	4.038	Excellent

Scale: Excellent 24.00-30 Very Good 19.00-23.99 Moderate 13.00-18.99 Low 6.00-12.99 Very Low 1.00-5.99

Table 2 shows the results of the post-test of students who participated in the ability to use idiomatic expressions after using creative dramatics. According to the results, the ability of students to recognize idiomatic expressions after the intervention was (M= 25.37) (sd= 4.038) and described as excellent. It shows that the results of the 7th grade students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions after the intervention were the best. It simply means that the students got the excellent results because of the intervention used. It was effective because it allowed students to see the idioms in the context of actual communication. By acting out situations where the idioms were used, it resulted in the idioms being remembered longer and they understood their meaning and correct usage better. Because the intervention used was an effective way to teach idioms, the students' test results were the best. The results of the study conformed with the study conducted by Yunus (2021) which explained that lecturers using several strategies to teach such expressions can be effective and beneficial for students. These strategies can raise awareness among students and help them understand the nature of these figurative expressions in general.

Table 3. Relationship between the Level of Ability in Recognizing Idiomatic Expressions of Students Before and After the Intervention

Ability to Recognize Idiomatic Expression	Mean	df	t	Sig.	Description
Pre-Test	13.60	29	-11.560	0.000	Sig. Difference
Post-Test	25.37				

P= ≤ .05

Table 3 shows the results of the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of students in the ability to recognize idiomatic expressions. According to the results, the ability of seventh grade students in recognizing idiomatic expressions has a Sig.= 0.000 which is less than the set .05 level of significance. This means that there is a significant relationship between the results of the pre-test and post-test in the ability to recognize idiomatic expressions. Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the pre-test and post-test of participating students in the use of Creative Dramatics in recognizing idiomatic expressions is not accepted.

This conformed the same results conducted by Khonbi's (2017) that Creative Dramatics is an effective tool that can be used in teaching and learning. Further, the researcher also found that role-playing idioms can be used to convey the uses and meanings of sentences with a positive impact on students' knowledge. Role-playing appears to increase students' attention and interest, and in direct ways, further stimulate students' ability to understand and interpret idioms accurately. As shown, aesthetically appealing visual materials combined with words engage students in verbal and nonverbal ways of noticing new information in the learning process, which can result in more effective idiom learning.

CONCLUSIONS

The results only prove that students learned more or increased their knowledge and skills after showing creative dramatics. Furthermore, having positive results can help teachers to facilitate their teaching methods and develop students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions.

On the other hand, it can be seen that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test in the results of students using Creative dramatics. It shows that the results of the post-test is higher than the pre-test. This only means that the use of Creative dramatics is an effective way to develop students' ability to recognize idiomatic expressions.

Furthermore, the use of creative dramatics not only developing the ability to recognize idiomatic expressions but to further expand students' knowledge and vocabulary. It also helps to make lessons easier to understand and make students' learning skills interactive. Especially in today's modern era, new technologies are widespread that can be used to make the communication of information easier and more effective. Perhaps it is not easy to make Creative dramatics because it requires enough time, but it will also help students who can use it at any time and place. Overall, Creative dramatics is an effective way to expand students' knowledge and understanding of idiomatic expressions.

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