
Talleres teatrales para el desarrollo de la narración oral en escolares de la escuela primaria

Theatrical workshops for the development of oral storytelling in primary school pupils

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Resumen: La narración oral a partir de talleres teatrales constituye una necesidad en la escuela primaria para lograr una formación y desarrollo integral en nuestros escolares acorde con los objetivos que se propone esta enseñanza. El artículo muestra el resultado de una investigación cualitativa que aplica métodos y técnicas de este corte, siguiendo una metodología, lo que facilita el tratamiento de talleres de apreciación – creación, logrando el desarrollo de habilidades teatrales. De ahí el objetivo del trabajo, mostrar cómo pueden ser empleados los mismos en la búsqueda de una dinámica del proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje con sugerentes para ellos.

Palabras claves: Teatro; Proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje; Educación artística; Educación integral; Talleres.

Abstract: Oral narration from theatrical workshops is a necessity in primary schools in order to achieve a comprehensive training and development in our schoolchildren in accordance with the objectives proposed by this teaching. The article shows the result of a qualitative research that applies methods and techniques of this type, following a methodology, which facilitates the treatment of appreciation-creation workshops, achieving the development of theatrical skills. Hence the aim of the work, to show how they can be used in the search for a dynamic teaching-learning process with suggestions for them.

Keywords: Theatre; Teaching and learning process; Arts education; Comprehensive education; Workshops.

Introduction

The transformations currently demanded of Cuban elementary school should be aimed at remodeling their functioning so that they can fulfill their role more efficiently, since they have a fundamental mission: to contribute to the integral formation of the schoolchild's personality by promoting, from the early grades, the internalization of knowledge and value orientations that are gradually reflected in their feelings, ways of thinking and behavior, in accordance with the system of values and ideals of the

Revolution, a child who knows how to live in Cuba and who loves his country above all else.

From the point of view of what we want to achieve in schoolchildren, the work should be aimed fundamentally at achieving the formation of a reflective, critical and independent child, who knows how to express himself and who assumes an increasingly leading role in his performance. On this basis, it is important to consider the mastery of the mother tongue from the early grades as an objective to be achieved because of what it represents in the logical process of communication, seeing it as a social phenomenon, which does not occur naturally or spontaneously, but is a product that is achieved and conceived when the indispensable conditions for its development are created.

Since ancient times man has felt the need to communicate to express his ideas, feelings, gestures, opinions, etc. He learned to live in society to help each other, exchanging information to learn about the world around him. They learned to live in society to help each other, exchanging information in order to know the world around them and developed communicative abilities, which are not reduced to linguistic communication, but also to moderate as people to integrate into the sociocultural context.

Communication can be reflected in signs, symbols, paintings, rituals, myths, legends, printing, newspapers, magazines, cinema, books, drawings, advertisements, photos, internet, etc. Every act of communication necessarily takes place between a person or several persons, who act as sender, and a recipient or several persons who act as receiver.

Communication scholars have expressed a certain skepticism as to whether it should be considered a science or an art. When considering its communicative processes, Roméu (2007, p. 52) qualifies it as a multiple and dispersed science of recent incorporation in the scientific field, although it has a long history, dating back to the moment when man felt the need to communicate.

Garzón (2010) pays significant attention to communication as a process open to interaction between interlocutors based on a common code, a level of

understanding, a frame of reference, specific circumstances and a given context. In this sense and more specifically, when referring to oral narration as a communication process, he expresses the following:

Oral narration is an act of communication, where the human being, when narrating in a loud voice and with his whole body, with the audience (considered an interlocutor) and not for the audience, initiates a process of interaction in which he emits a message and receives a response, so that he not only informs but also communicates, since he influences and is influenced immediately, at the very moment of narrating, so that the oral story grows with everyone and from everyone, among everyone. Garzón (2010).

According to this author, oral narration, before becoming an artistic oral narration, is an expressive communicative behavior (verbal, vocal and corporal or nonverbal), which manifests itself in the form of interpersonal conversation in children, adolescents and young people, in community storytellers, and in the family.

Referring to this aspect, and as a policy of the Ministry of Education, in the Primary School Model, Rico (2008), and its Adaptations as part of the Third Improvement of Primary Education (Central Institute of Pedagogical Sciences, ICCP, 2016), it is stated within the objectives for fifth grade; to evidence skills in the use of the mother tongue, by listening and expressing oneself orally and in writing in a clear and coherent way...To read correctly, fluently and expressively and adequately interpret the ideas that the texts contain.

This objective reaffirms the importance of delving deeper into the real causes of why schoolchildren have needs when it comes to expressing themselves coherently on certain topics that are addressed, both within and outside the curriculum.

In order to achieve this work satisfactorily, it is necessary to resort to more effective methods, and in this study it must be recognized that theater offers multiple alternatives, and for schoolchildren it acquires a special significance because it helps them to lose their usual shyness. It also helps to channel children's ideas and experiences, develops children's confidence in their own power of expression and broadens their knowledge of the world, as well as enriching their capacity for

imagination.

Theater was born in Athens, Greece, between the 5th and 6th centuries BC. The Athenians celebrated rites in honor of Dionysus, god of wine and vegetation. These primitive ritual ceremonies eventually evolved into theater, constituting one of the main cultural achievements of the Greeks. In Cuba, theater did not arrive with the Spanish conquistadors, as many people tend to believe. As it happens in all cultures in their most primitive stages of development, certain theatrical expressions can already be identified among the Cuban aborigines, belonging to the aruaco groups of the Antilles.

The Primary Education Curriculum, (ICCP 2016), has, dedicated to the work with artistic manifestations, an objective where it specifies the need that schoolchildren have in terms of appreciation, from the experience and analysis, of their representative works with their corresponding authors, Cuban and from other regions of the world that provoke their emotional identification with these, active participation and the achievement of a pleasant environment in their school, home and community.

In this crucial path towards artistic education, the work developed by art instructors through appreciation-creation workshops, with suggestive themes, without stereotypes and addressing the tangible and intangible heritage of the nation, seeing this as an essential scenario where culture and nation merge, is inscribed as a recurrent aspect that allows the formation and development of moral values towards identity.

Several researchers have referred to the topic under study, González (2013), proposes workshops to promote knowledge in pre-university students about the history of Cuban theater. Referred to the theater also, Rodríguez (2013) applies a system of playful activities for working with Puppet Theater with special school children with retarded psychic development, and Artiles (2013), also presents a system of activities that facilitate the promotion of Peasant Theater from elementary school.

For his part Galindo (2017), promotes the development of theatrical skills from activities dedicated to shadow work, while López (2017), conceives workshops for environmental training in schoolchildren in Technical and Professional education.

Notwithstanding what has been investigated, it is important to highlight that what has been written by the previous authors does not offer, from their conception, how to contribute to the oral narration of schoolchildren in fifth grade of elementary school from the implementation of theatrical workshops to be developed by art instructors of this specialty.

From the experience and the interchange sustained by the authors in the research process carried out, it was possible to determine the existence of certain insufficiencies that cause the demotivation towards the theatrical art on the part of the schoolchildren, within them we can mention, scarce communicative abilities, poor active vocabulary in terms of the use of adjectives and other grammatical categories, insufficiencies in terms of clarity and coherence of ideas in correspondence with their age and the use of simple and isolated sentences, which is why they need stimulation and support from the instructor or teacher. The approach to topics dedicated to heritage and tastes and preferences is minimal.

The work presented in this article aims to unveil some aspects of this problem and how to contribute, from pedagogical science and scientific research, to the development of oral narration in elementary school students where theater appreciation-creation workshops are used, thus achieving progress in communication skills as well as a taste for theater as part of the performing arts.

Development

The article is derived from the results of a Diploma Work of one of the authors as part of the culmination exercise of studies of the Bachelor's Degree in Education, Art Instructor, where the qualitative methodological path was essentially used, and in which participatory action research as a method prevails, based on the criteria given by Rodríguez, Gil and García (2004).

In the process that was developed, different methods and techniques of pedagogical research were applied, which contributed among other elements, the background and evolution of theater, not only worldwide, as well as its incidence in Cuba, the findings in the order of potentials and needs of the teaching of theater in elementary school, the current state of oral narration as a problem to be solved in this teaching, which

facilitated the elaboration and implementation of a system of workshops of appreciation - theater creation aimed at enhancing these skills in schoolchildren.

Within the methodological strategy used, in-depth interviews were conducted with certain key informants who, due to their characteristics and performance, are involved in the work with schoolchildren. In this process, the use of other methods and techniques that give reliability to the research based on the evidence that remains cannot be ignored, in this case photos and videos were used. In the interpretation of the data obtained from the different sources with which we worked, it was necessary to use data triangulation.

As part of the access to the field, the Jesús Gilberto Durán elementary school in the municipality of Quemado de Güines in the province of Villa Clara was selected because it is the teaching center where one of the researchers works. This moment of the research was propitious to establish all the organizational coordination with the school regarding the opening of the workshops, frequencies of execution, better schedules and the selection of the study group, which was intentional and which was formed by 22 fifth grade students, all of them with motivations for the development of the activities and with little knowledge about theater within the world of performing arts, as well as in the narrative field.

The information obtained about theater and its characteristics allowed for the planning of theater appreciation-creation workshops aimed at the development of oral storytelling among schoolchildren. For the implementation of these workshops, we worked in coordination with the school, the local cultural center and the parents of the students, since some of them took place outside the school context.

From this perspective, it is worth noting that the workshop has been present simultaneously in the scientific, teaching, cultural and community areas. The broad theoretical basis in this regard has facilitated changes in the ways of dealing with the pedagogical relationship that nowadays takes place in the teaching environment.

Due to its organizational possibilities, this modality is recommended as a priority in the Cultural Centers system, as established in its guidelines, since it establishes a more creative and flexible work dynamic than a traditional class. The workshop is a form of practical and creative organization of the learning process, an interactive space where

knowledge is built and skills and abilities are developed in an open climate of trust and freedom, which stimulates the individual and collective realization of the participants.

It allows the participants to contribute ideas, criteria and evaluations, and to express through verbal and non-verbal language, their interests and spiritual needs. In other words, knowledge does not arise only from the information and guidance provided by the facilitator (the instructor in this case) on the topic, but also from the active participation of the group members. On the other hand, the workshop also enhances the skills of listening, relating and communicating ideas, reflecting, discussing, cooperating in the search for solutions and valuing the contribution of each of its members. These are important elements for the treatment of the oral narration of schoolchildren as a problem.

The workshop modality is used for both creation and appreciation. However, there are characteristics and regularities that particularize and differentiate both processes, even though whenever a creative workshop is developed, tools for appreciation should and can be offered. From the methodological point of view and respecting the logic of the different manifestations, four basic ways to develop the workshops are recognized. It was of significance for the research to work on the appreciation-creation workshops that are developed with the children's sectors where theory, practice, intellectual knowledge and creation itself are intertwined.

It is currently difficult to differentiate between perception and creation because cognitive psychology and studies on artistic production and visual appreciation are reluctant to dissociate perceptual processes from those of creative elaboration. It is impossible to speak of the existence of a creation that originates from nothing, maintained only by the talent of the one who proceeds in an artistic way without taking into account, in the aesthetic elaboration, the personal baggage of each one, his experience and the environment where he develops.

To develop a workshop requires not only technical and methodological mastery, the instructor must have communication skills that allow him/her to be easily understood and enable the participation of everyone in a climate of trust. Conducting a workshop is not like giving a class or a lecture in the traditional way, but rather a dynamic way of working among all the members, which is why it is necessary to leave room for

dialogue rather than discourse. The most important thing in the development of a workshop is the process itself and not the artistic result that can be achieved, that is to say, to take into account the purpose for which the workshop is developed or executed.

As essential characteristics of the workshops elaborated in the research process developed, it was taken into account that they should be varied and entertaining, taking into account, of course, the psycho-pedagogical characteristics of the students of the study group, that they should contain suggestive elements about the theater from the use of television media that help the appreciative element on the part of these and that allow the work for the development of the oral narration of the same.

It is important to emphasize that the work carried out facilitates and acts in a consistent way in the preparation of schoolchildren for the artistic cycle, since, on the basis of its conception, they are directed towards the reaffirmation of the local, the autochthonous, the distinctive in the current Cuban school, in the search of educating and promoting feelings of identity and Cuban citizenship.

The workshops implemented are as follows:

Workshops N° 1 and 2: Theater and me.

The objective is to identify the main elements that gave rise to theater, as well as what it facilitates in the treatment of oral narration, where a video is used to encourage the development of appreciative skills in the workshop participants, to express them in the product of their activity (narrating stories, legends and tales in a simple way).

Methodological procedure: start the workshops with a traditional word guessing game, where they have to discover the words of the oral narration. After this moment, we should diagnose what they know about the subject under study and listen to the opinions of the students where they show in which moments of their lives they can use it and what importance they give to it in the development of their daily teaching and extracurricular activities.

In addition, a fragment of the video Storyteller will be shown and the preparation for this activity will be emphasized, where the emphasis will be on the characteristics and particularities that a storyteller should have. After watching the video, the workshop participants will work with the main elements addressed and that were of interest in

the preparation, reflecting in written memory the main characteristics that every storyteller should have.

In a second moment, we will work with the students on the possibility that they narrate a simple story known to them and, if possible, that they deal with stories of their locality, their neighborhood, of some character of their town, in such a way that allows them to develop skills in this sense and familiarize them, at the same time, with the authentic, that is, with the place where they live and coexist daily with their peers.

Closing of the workshops: there will be a group evaluation of the results obtained by the students during the development of the workshop, which will allow appreciating the knowledge reached up to that moment about oral narration, the qualities of a good storyteller as well as their own skills to narrate simple stories. The behavior of each and every one during the viewing of the video and during the development of the storytelling will also be taken into account.

Analysis of the results obtained with the application of the workshops.

Once the first two workshops were applied, it could be seen that the schoolchildren showed little knowledge about the origin of theater, as well as the main elements to develop a good oral narration and the characteristics that a storyteller should have. They also showed little knowledge about legends and stories of their locality.

They were capable of making simple narrations, although the lack of techniques and resources to do so was evident; there was a lack of value judgments by the students based on the interpersonal relationships established among them. A moderately positive result was obtained in the group on the basis of the proposed objective, although not all the students were fully motivated and there were fears when acting.

Workshops N° 3 and 4. When I act, I feel...

The objective is to demonstrate the development of emotions and feelings through theatrical actions that favor the mastery of oral storytelling techniques in the workshop participants so that they can express themselves through the reproduction and narration of stories and tales.

Methodological procedure: the workshops will begin with the reproduction by the art instructor of a fragment of the Storyteller, seeking the total attention of the students during the development of the workshop. To specify with them that it is important when narrating a story the functioning of the voice, as well as the emotions and

feelings according to the part to be narrated, which would attract the attention of the audience. Explain that it is an important technique of oral narration as it allows leaving a permanent impression on the viewer. Also work on other techniques such as movement on stage, the use of costumes and gestures to express what is wanted.

For this treatment, other stories and poems known to schoolchildren can be used, such as the poem by José Martí, contained in the book *Martí's Notebooks I*, *El rayo surca sangriento*. Also stories from the children's repertoire such as *Pollito Pito*, from the book *Había una vez*.

To emphasize in both stories the function that the voices must develop when reading them, which allows to appreciate the constant expression of emotions and feelings of the author so that the schoolchildren can reproduce it in a later way, always having a good pattern in this sense.

In a second moment, once the mentioned works have been worked, the schoolchildren will be able to reproduce the stories, placing the voices of the characters themselves, taking into account the techniques learned and that allow to express the emotions and feelings of the author or authors and that can be appreciated by the public in a correct and simple way. Other ludic actions can also be developed where the students can narrate simple stories by changing the tone of the voice from the clapping of the art instructor.

Closing the workshops: proceed to an evaluation of the main actions carried out by the students where they have had to apply the oral narration techniques learned during the workshop. It is important to highlight the possibilities and needs of each one based on how they see themselves and how the group sees them in this sense, hence the importance of constant evaluation. Emphasis should be placed on the emotional communicative aspect of each student in the process of formation and development of values.

Analysis of the results obtained with the application of the workshops

The application of these workshops, which are part of the system of the previous ones, achieved a greater security in the execution and theatrical narration by the students based on the emotions reflected, as well as a link to the subjects that make up the cycle and the grade as well as to stories of the locality.

Another element achieved is based on the verification of the theatrical activity as a means that generates knowledge, emotions and feelings. All of the above shows that there is the possibility of implementing the rest of the workshops that facilitate the integration of the knowledge learned by the students with the help of the art instructor.

Workshops N° 5 and 6. I tell a story.

The objective is to demonstrate the skills acquired for the development of oral narration during the implementation of the workshops and to enable schoolchildren to tell tales and stories from their locality and from the children's repertoire.

Methodological procedure: prior to the development of the workshops, the students should be oriented in the search and analysis of different stories from the children's repertoire as well as stories from the locality that reflect the most significant elements in this sense. The art instructor, based on a work guide, will try to find the most significant elements that they can contribute and develop when narrating the stories, emphasizing the different techniques and skills already learned during the previous workshops. In this sense, the schoolchildren should be encouraged to rely on their parents, relatives and friends from the neighborhood in their preparation for the festival.

This work gives the students the opportunity to remember essential aspects based on what they have already worked on, to clarify their doubts and to develop their creation and imagination that will enrich the narration that they will later have the opportunity to put into practice.

In a second moment, the students, starting from a selected narration, will make their own, putting into practice everything they have learned in previous workshops, as well as in the different subjects of the curriculum that have contributed to make their storytelling imaginative, creative and at the same time pleasing to the audience that listens to it.

This moment of the workshops will be developed as part of the central activities that the art instructor carries out in the school, with the participation of all the students, teachers and where the family and the community will be invited. This exhibition should be recorded as a recurring element of the evidence of the development of the workshops.

Closing of the workshops: an evaluation will be made by the workshop participants about the skills acquired, what they learned and how they felt during the narration of their stories. The other students of the center as well as the teachers and the family can also contribute with their criteria. A selection will be made of the best stories told by the students, which will be presented at other festivals.

Analysis of the results obtained with the application of the workshop.

Once the last workshops were applied, which were linked to activities about storytelling as part of a festival at school, it was possible to observe a greater protagonism of the students when they narrated and executed their actions based on stories and legends, showing a greater aesthetics in them. In this sense, it was also achieved the emission of concrete judgments and valuations of the reality that surrounds them, as well as the abandonment of foreign themes in their narrations.

On the other hand, better results were obtained in morning classes and other activities both at school and in the community. As for the development of the theatrical skills of the schoolchildren, satisfactory results were observed and also a better communication of the same was observed, achieving with it, in turn, a better oral expression, fluency, emotionality and capacity of ideas.

Closing of the validation of the workshops of appreciation - dance creation

The closing stage of the implementation of the theatrical workshops for the development of oral narration in fifth grade students of the Jesús Gilberto Durán elementary school of the Panchito community in the municipality of Quemado de Güines, allowed socializing the results obtained through the exhibition of the most relevant works of each student of the study group during the period in which the research was developed, as well as in the theater festival presented in the school itself and with the participation of the family and the community.

As part of the process followed in the research, in the final stage, observations were made in several activities where the students had to put into practice the knowledge and skills acquired during the development of the workshops for the treatment of oral narration, such as in matinees, staging of plays and in the theater festival at the level of the people's council where the school is located. This process allowed obtaining the following results:

The schoolchildren showed less stage fright when acting and demonstrated better communicative and narrative skills when expressing the texts, a better group work is appreciated from the interpersonal relationships that were shown in the group. In the same way, there is evidence of a taste for theater on the part of the schoolchildren who were the subjects of the research.

In general, the students were happy and motivated to learn about theater, its origin and evolution, and how to learn to act in different scenarios based on suggestive plays.

Something relevant was the use of different learning scenarios, not only the school context, which generated greater motivation in the students. From the methodological and educational point of view, the art instructor paid special attention to the needs shown by the students during the implementation and development of the workshops.

From the educational point of view, the research showed the correct use of themes that demonstrate the Cuban identity and autochthony through the use of theatrical workshops, where it was also possible to appreciate the potential of artistic education in the integral formation of schoolchildren of these ages, as well as the relationships and mediations that can be established between the school, the family and the community as socializing agents of the teaching-learning process.

Conclusions

The implementation of the theatrical workshops resulted in greater motivation of the students to narrate, greater knowledge about the existence of stories and legends of the locality, the development of communication skills, better interpersonal relationships among them, and a close communication between the school, the family and the environment where they develop.

The verification of the results achieved, shows its effectiveness in the transformation of the study group, in relation to the teaching of theater and its impact on the development of oral narration of schoolchildren, in the scenery and movements used in a presentation of a play, in the use of the costumes that identify it, as well as in the sense of belonging and identity towards the Cuban, which in turn constitutes a novel way of involving schoolchildren in the development of activities with good artistic and aesthetic quality.

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