

5. What is/are your question(s)?

1. Does process drama teaching in higher education improve oral communication skills of international students more effectively than traditional teaching?
2. Do process drama strategies help ESL learners speak in English with greater clarity and flow compared to traditional methodology?
3. Does process drama help them at the segmental (vowels and consonants) and prosodic levels?

6. How will you conduct research?

Two rating instruments for the measurement of pronunciation proficiency (Isaacs, 2008) and self-efficacy in presentation (Adams, 2004) have been identified and permission granted for adaptation and use in this research.

Research will be conducted using a Repeated Measures or ABAB methodology. This entails only one group of students who are taught in the traditional way (no drama) for a period of 3 weeks, then tested/observed (Time 1). The drama method is then introduced for a 3 week period and the students are tested (Time 2). Intervention is removed for another 3 weeks and students tested (Time 3). Finally, the drama method is reintroduced and the students tested at the end of the last 3 weeks (Time 4).

7. What data will you collect?

Using an adapted set of questions, 2 observers will rate their experience of listening to and comprehending the students oral communication on each of the 4 times. Proposed questions/observations and scale is as follows:

Using a Likert Scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being 'Not well at all.' and 7 being 'Extremely well.'

The speaker:

- Speaks clearly/projects.
- Speaks at the right volume.
- Speaks at the right speed.
- Speaks with correct sentence rhythm.
- Speaks at the right pitch/inflection/tone.
- Word stress and syllables are correct.
- Speaks in understandable words and sentences.
- Speaks with adequate grammatical correctness.
- Holds the listener's attention.
- Makes appropriate eye contact with the listener.
- Has appropriate body language/stance.

- Avoids distracting movements and gestures.

8. Who are your subjects or participants?

The participants will be enrolled Bond students, recruited via a Student Desk Announcement and in consultation with Student Learning Services. The subject group of 10-15 students will have IELTS scores of 5.5-6. It is expected that they will comprise more than one nationality, and that they will have had no exposure to drama-based learning strategies.

9. Where will the research be conducted?

Bond University QTL Meeting Room (1_3_67) and adjacent classrooms.

10. When will you collect data?

Semester 1 2011 - 12 weeks.
Weekly 'class' - Tuesdays 5pm to 7pm.

11. How will you analyse the data?

A research-assistant/data-analyst will use ABAB repeated measures to show the relationship between the students' progress and the introduction of the dramaturgical pedagogy over the 4 teaching blocks. We expect results in line with our hypothesis showing spikes in progress, reduction to equal or below when removed, and carry-over effects in the second intervention period.

12. What is your hypothesis?

That the introduction of teaching through process drama advances non-English speaking students' oral communication skills at a greater rate towards proficiency than traditional methods of teaching.

13. What are the implications if your hypothesis is confirmed?

If the hypothesis is confirmed, I will develop a drama methodology and conduct workshops for other teaching academics to incorporate this into their language and development subjects within Bond. My peer-reviewed journal article will aim to reinforce calls for the introduction of dramaturgical pedagogy in the tertiary sector.