CREATING ACTING GAMES TO IMPROVE ACTING SKILLS

Kusuma Teppharak

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand.
E-Mail: kusuma.te@ssru.ac.th

ABSTRACT

This research work on creating acting games to improve acting skills is a creative research, the purpose of which is to create acting games to improve acting skills. The target group included thirty 3rd-year students of Performing Arts Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University during the period of 4 months (August-November 2018).

The findings revealed that creating acting games to improve acting skills could be done in 5 forms of activity: 1) physical activity, 2) concentration activity, 3) imagination activity, 4) improvisation and role playing activity and 5) belief activity. The criteria for creating acting games were to 1) improve students' acting skills, 2) create enjoyment during learning, 3) create students' participation, 4) be suitable for a specific group of students and 5) allow students to apply knowledge in the actual performance.

Keywords: games, acting, improvement, skill

INTRODUCTION

Acting activities or games are often applied to acting instructions in order to improve students' acting skills and to allow them to apply the skills in the actual performance. However, since most acting activities were derived from overseas with different contexts and cultures, certain activities substantially fail to improve Thai actors' skills or Thai acting students.

In addition, most of the activities were passed along; in other words, instructors apply what they have done in the past to their students. Thus, the activities lack modernity and cannot fulfil students' needs in the present days. As a result, actors or acting students' skills are not properly developed despite the students' higher potential.

The researcher, thus, became interested in creating activities that would improve acting skills for acting students so that they could apply the skills in their actual performance, in certain academic subjects and in their professional acting occupation.

The purpose of this research work is to create acting games to improve acting skills.

The scope of research is divided into 3 aspects as follows:

1. The scope of content aiming to create acting games to improve acting skills

2. The scope of target group which includes thirty 3rd-year students of Performing Arts Department of Theatre Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

3. The scope of time wich is to create acting games to improve acting skills during August to November 2018 being a period of 4 months

This research work is a creative research to create acting games to improve acting skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this research work, literature related to 2 issues was reviews.

1. Game

1.1 Definition of *Game*

Game was defined as follows:

Duangduen Wangsin (1989) defined *game* as a competition with a fixed period of time and rules that are not very complicated and as playing that promotes the fundamental movement development.

Wimonrat Kongpiromchuen (1997) defined *game* as playing that creates enjoyment and helps improve students' thinking skills. Game can be either competitive or non-competitive and relies on rules of game. In addition, players' achievement results must be assessed.

Sukon Sintapanon (2010) defined *game* as an activity that generates interest and enjoyment for learners, has rules, promotes learning; understanding and memorization of lessons, develops certain skills quickly and encourages teamwork and collaboration.

It is apparent that games generate enjoyment, promote learning, help learners understand and memorize lessons easily, develop certain skills quickly as well as encourage teamwork and rules compliance.

1.2 Value of Learning Games

Atchara Chiwapan (1991) mentioned some benefits of using games as follows:

1. Improve students' thinking
2. Improve listening, speaking, reading and writing skills
3. Improve language skills and review lessons
4. Provide opportunities for students to express their ability
5. Help assess teaching and learning results
6. Help students to have fun and ease tension
7. Motivate and interest students
8. Promote unity, generosity and collaboration
9. Promote responsibility and train students to comply with rules
10. Help teachers to see students' behaviors more clearly
11. Be used as an introduction activity to lead into, supplement and summarize the lesson

Somjai Srisinrungruang (1992) mentioned the values of using learning games as follows:

1. Physical: playing games fulfills the physical needs according to physiology
2. Emotion: improve emotions and teach players self-control
3. Social: improve unity among students
4. Intelligence: integrate knowledge and skills

According to the above statements, it can be concluded that learning by using games has many advantages, e.g. improving learning skills and other skills as well as making lessons more interesting.

1.3 Using Games in Teaching

Instructors must study and understand the process of using games in teaching in order to use games in teaching effectively.

Wilaiporn Thanasuwan (1987) proposed the process of using games in teaching as follows:

1. Selection: choose the game according to the objectives, students' level and classroom size
2. Preparation
   Prepare the materials or place and practice using the game in advance
3. Implementation

Explain the objectives, rules and how to play the game clearly by using concise and comprehensive language. Instructors are to supervise players to play by the rules.

4. Assessment

The objectives of the game must be determined. An evaluation and assessment should be carried out to determine if students acquire knowledge and understanding from playing the game according to the set objectives. If the game is competitive, scores should be given.

Sangvien Sridikul (1987) discussed the use of games in teaching as follows:

1. Games should be played at the end or in the beginning of class if the game is related to the lesson.

2. Games should be played during the lesson to ease tension so that students can continue studying.

3. How to play games should be clearly explained or demonstrated.
4. Use prepared materials to play games.
5. Assign groups to play game or play games with the whole classroom as appropriate and according to the conditions of the classroom.
6. Be careful about the noise which will disturb nearby classrooms.
7. Instructors must study how to play, numbers and rules of each game before playing.
8. Simple language according to students' age and level should be used during the game.

The process of using games provides a guideline for instructors to prepare materials, equipment, how to play, rules and assessment to determine whether using the game fulfills the objectives and to develop and improve the activity to be more effective.

2. Acting

2.1 Definition of Acting

Tridao Apaiwong (2007) compiled 5 definitions of *acting* as follows:

1. Acting is not attempting to express something but doing something (acting is doing). Whenever an actor tries to express something, he/she will appear to be trying rather than being realistic or the acting on the stage becomes too dramatic (not based on reality). Therefore, many actors and acting instructors defined *acting* as doing. Actors should find out the objectives of their character so that they can act according to the character's needs rather than trying to express something.

2. Acting is not acting as a character but being a character, as the saying goes "if you want to be an actor, don't act. Be." So to speak, acting is not trying to act as a character but to believe that one becomes the character. In other words, acting is role playing; one role-plays a character to convey thoughts to the audience.

3. Acting is expressing. Actors often think of the definition of *acting* as pretending because the term "acting" or "แสดง" in Thai connotes an attempt to express something. When one thinks acting is attempting to express, discrepancy of acting ensues. Thus, actors think of acting as expressing. So to speak, acting is manifesting intrinsic feelings to create shared feelings among the actors and between the actors and the audience.

4. Acting is playing pretend which does not refer to only playing pretend by children or role-playing in product presentations but also refers to the fact that an actor in the character's fictional world has been trained to memorize dialogues and created characters in harmony with other actors in order to express the character's story according to the acting directions.

5. Acting is doing what people do on a regular and daily basis on the stage with consciousness. Acting is when an actor presents a character's story created by an author in a certain age and time in the present time. That is to say, the character being presented to the audience is the character created based on a person's life in a certain time, and the actor must find out the truths about that character and present it to the audience.

2.2 Characteristics of Good Actor

Sodsai Pantumakomon (1988) clearly explained the characteristics of good actor as follows:

1. Beauty of mind: it refers to correct realization that an actor possesses for his/her acting career and the public, seeing the value of acting as a profound and delicate art that can make humans understand themselves and others and creating beauty that persuades the audience's mind to favor virtue.

2. Readiness of body and voice: actors must always train their body and voice to be used in acting.

3. Readiness of emotion: memorable actors are those who can express their emotion so intensely and realistically that it catches the audience's attention at all times during the performance. Actors must create profound emotions from the inside without pretending and convey them appropriately.

4. Readiness of senses: good actors must train their senses to be sensitive and delicate so that they can apply their senses to acting well. Readiness of senses will generate genuine reactions leading to profound and lively acting.

5. Concentration: good actors must have high concentration to gather thoughts and create emotions in order to get from one point to another according to their roles in a powerful way.

6. Ability to observe: good actors must be good observers. Everything around an actor is a great teacher, whether it is human expression in different environments and situations or human behavior. Good actors must observe both externally and internally.

7. Memorization: actors must have good memorization. In addition to memorizing the role and everything that has been trained precisely, actors must memorize emotions, feelings and everything they hear for utilization in acting.

8. Understanding: actors must understand about humans broadly, understand themselves and others, understand the role and understand performing arts well. Understanding about these things allows actors to get into the character or to perform very well.

9. Belief: actors must believe in the role they are portraying. If actors do not believe in their own actions and words, the audience is not going to be convinced. Belief in the role allows actors to express thoughts, emotions and feelings to the audience.

10. Discipline, determination and perseverance: good actors must have discipline in rehearsing, memorizing and focusing on their task with high responsibility.

11. Good tastes can be cultivated by studying essential subjects related to acting. Apart from studying theories, actors must try to find experience from watching good plays, studying plays that meet the standards and reading valuable plays to increase knowledge and understanding. In addition, actors must cultivate good tastes and apply their knowledge to improve their performance.

12. Talent in acting refers to imagination and ability to create, esprit and deftness of senses to receive and send emotions quickly and to maintain an appropriate pace of acting.

2.3 Components of Acting

1. Physical and mental relaxation before the performance
2. Concentration of attention
3. Imagination: use imagination to create things on the stage as if they were real
4. Magic if: when an actor believes that he/she is really that character
5. Inner truth
6. Belief
7. Emotional memory
8. Sensational memory
9. Communion
10. Give & take
11. Here & now
12. Tempo & rhythm: speed, slowness, weight, intensity and softness of acting
13. Given circumstance
14. Second nature
15. Adaptation

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

To create acting games to improve acting skills

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is as follows:

1. Data collection

The researcher collected document data from books and textbooks related to games and acting and processed data based on the researcher's experience over the past 20 years to create games to improve acting skills. The research tools were the acting games used in teaching students.

The research steps are as follows:

1) Study documents, books and article related to games and acting
2) Compile acting games from the researcher's experience over the past 20 years to create new games
3) Create acting games
4) Have experts verify the tools and activities for improvement
5) Implement the games in teaching
6) Analyze, summarize and write a report

2. Content Analysis

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings are as follows:

Creating games to improve acting skills can be done in 5 forms of activity:

1. Physical Activity

It is a game that focuses on learners' physical development.

Game Used after Acting

It is a game that encourages learners to use all parts of the body in acting. The instructor assigns a problem according to learners' need, and learners turn their back against the audience and use their back to express their needs to others. Finally, the instructor has other learners in the audience guess what the actor needs and the actor then give answers. Factors related to obstacles and factors contributing to success are also discussed.

2. Concentration Activity

It is a game that focuses on learners' concentration improvement.

Ne-mo Fish Game

Learners get in a group of 6-9 and make movements in the harmonious manner. When the group turns to any direction, the person in front will think of and lead a movement until the next circulation to get a new leader. The instructor can add music that convey different meanings and emotions. When the learners hear the music, in addition to concentrating on watching and doing following the leader, they must also concentrate on the song and interpret the song as well as designing movements according to the emotion of the song.

3. Imagination Activity

It is a game that focuses on learners' imagination improvement.

Creating Story from Objects Game

Learners bring out 1 personal item. Then, the instructor assigns the learners to imagine a story and relationship with that item and to use it to act out the imagined story.

4. Improvisation and Role Playing Activity

It is a game that focuses on learners' improvisation and role playing improvement.

Do You Know Who is the Spy Game

Learners improvise a dialogue and make a question to find the spy hiding among the players. Seven players will receive the same situation card, while the spy will receive a blank card without knowing where the other players are at. The spy must pay attention to listen, analyze and guess where the other players are at and improvise a dialogue and role-play that the spy is also at that place. The other players will help find out who the spy is.

5. Belief Activity

It is a game that focuses on learners' belief improvement.

Where is This Game

A learner enters an empty place and imagines a room, a place, a country, etc., by building clear details. Other players discuss where it is and talk about the details that make others believe or not believe.

The criteria for creating acting games are as follows:

1. Focus on Improving Learners' Acting Skills

It is to focus on learners' acting skills rather than personality or self-confidence. Instead, it is to have learners apply knowledge to improve their acting skills in the actual performance.

2. Create Enjoyment during Learning

Games must create enjoyment for learners and teach them lessons, which is the fundamental requirements for designing games.

3. Create Learners' Participation

Good games must create learners' participation which does not focus solely on a single skill but focuses on group skills or group process during learning.

4. Suitability for Specific Learners

Good games must be suitable for a specific group of learners. The games used with one group may not be suitable for other groups, which is a sensitive issue in creating games.

5. Learners can apply knowledge to their actual performance.

Good games must allow learners to apply knowledge to their actual performance. In this research work, learners should be able to apply knowledge from playing to improve their acting skills and actual performance.

DISCUSSION

According to the findings, creating games to improve acting skills require instructors' experience and expertise in acting instruction and acting knowledge. In addition, instructors need to know learners well in order to create acting games for a specific group.

As a result, learners will bring out their potential or ultimately extend their acting skills.

However, instructors or game makers should listen to learners' opinions to improve and make the game appropriate according to the learners' interests, preferences and needs. Instructors should assign learners to summarize lessons after playing games to check if the learners understand the lessons that the instructors have embedded in the game. Moreover, learners' opinions toward games should be welcomed for the learners' benefits of improving their acting skills.

REFERENCES

[1] Duangduen Wangsin (1989). Games and Playing Games. Bangkok: Textbooks and Academic Documents Center, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University.

[2] Tridao Apaiwong (2007). Acting. Drama Review. Bangkok: Department of Dramatic Arts, Faculty of Education Chulalongkorn University.

[3] Chutima Plengkam (2006). Support Documentation in Drama Subject 1. Bangkok: Faculty of Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.

[4] Wimonrat Kongpiromchuen. (1997). Practice of Scientific Process skills: Life Experiences Enhancement Group of Prathomsuksa 1 Students by Using Games with Skill Training Plans. M.Ed Master Thesis. Bangkok: Graduate School of Srinakharinwirot Prasarnmit University .

[5] Wilaiporn Thanasuwan. (1987). Games for Teaching English for the Secondary Level. Chiang Mai: Department of Secondary Education, Faculty of Education, Chiang Mai University.

[6] Mattani Ratnin (2003). Introduction to Stage Performing Art. Bangkok: Thammasat University Press.

[7] Somjai Srisinrungruang. (1992). Thai Language Teaching Game. Education.

[8] Sukon Sintapanon. (2010). Innovative Teaching and Learning to Improve the Quality of Youths. Bangkok: 1919 Limited Partnership, Technique Printing .

[9] Sangwian Saridikul. (1987). Teaching English Methods in Secondary Schools. Bangkok: Ramkhamhaeng University.

[10] Atchara Chiwapan. (2534). Thai Language Teaching Guide: Teaching Activities. Bangkok: Thai Wattana Panich.