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Research Article Title:

Exploring the use of role play to Develop Verbal Communication Skills in Public Relations Students

Abstract

South Africa is a diverse country, boasting eleven official languages. This poses a challenge for higher education spaces to provide multilingual classes. English is currently the official language at tertiary institutions. As a result, many students are English Second Language (ESL) speakers who have difficulty understanding the language on all levels; speaking, writing and comprehending. Public Relations (PR) students need the ability to speak the language, as it is vital to the profession. This research explores the concept of using role-play as an educational tool by which to develop verbal communication skills among PR students. The students participated in a role-play activity, after which a self-administered questionnaire as the data collection tool was used to obtain feedback on their experience. The questionnaire results have been presented in a graphic analysis. Results proved that the majority of students have accepted role-play enthusiastically and became more confident in the use of verbal communication skills through the application of this teaching method. Students showed signs of improved pronunciation, presentation skills and verbal communication confidence. In this study, role-play has indicated that it can be used as an educational tool in developing verbal communication skills among PR students.

1 Introduction

Public Relations is a career that requires incumbents to build relationships with all stakeholders. Communication is key to building any type of relationship. The definition of PR according to PRISA (2015) is that its' main purpose is communication. Therefore, communication is the very essence of PR, whereby having the ability to communicate to large or small groups is essential for the success of any PR professional.

The CIPR (2010) emphasises the importance of effective communication skills for public relations practitioners. Public Relations practitioners must be confident talking to a wide range of people. For example, their role may involve presenting to clients or dealing with journalists. CIPR (2010) implies that there are certain essential qualities and skills that a person will need to get ahead in Public Relations. These include good verbal and written communication skills.

Usman (2012) states that for a successful graduate to be employed they must develop an integrated communication set of skills, which include verbal, written, listening, non-verbal and speech skills. Due to the nature of public relations, it is vital for students to develop these skills to become a successful practitioner.

However, developing communication skills among tertiary students is a major challenge faced by higher education institutions. Lemmer *et.al* (2012) state that language plays an important role in teaching and learning. If students cannot understand the mode of instruction, they might not be able to decode the language to understand content. According to DoE (1997), the Constitution of South Africa acknowledges the fact that the country is a

multilingual one and to further education, one of tertiary institutions' objectives is to promote multilingualism in the organisations. Unfortunately, there is no national policy framework that exists for these institutions or for them to establish their own language policies (DoE, 1997). DHET (2013) indicates that participation rates in these institutions will increase from 17.3% to 25% by 2030, therefore universities and private institutions must focus their attention on improving student performance.

English is currently the preferred medium of instruction and has become the language of higher education (Lemmer, 2010). As a result of this, many students are English Second Language (ESL) speakers and some have difficulty reading, writing and speaking the language, and may subsequently be excluded from developing their full educational potential (van Rooy, 2015). Institutions of Higher Education have to find other avenues to assist students in developing their communication skills. Special classes or teaching strategies can be explored to develop these skills.

In light of the above, the purpose of this research is to investigate how the teaching strategy of role-playing can be applied with the aim to improve students' communication skills. The research will be conducted at a private institution with the first year students who are enrolled in a PR module. The research will be of an exploratory nature and the scope, sample group and data will be limited, and only aimed at determining whether role-play can be used in a positive way to improve verbal communication skills development of this group of first year students.

2 Problem Statement

Higher education institutions in South Africa attract diverse and multilingual students, this creates a challenge for higher education because the mode of instruction is English and many of the students are ESL speakers which result in students having difficulty understanding, speaking and writing the language (DHET, 2013). The researcher found that this was true in the classroom; the PR students grasped the concepts but had difficulty expressing them-selves. Observations of class presentations and group work indicated the lack of verbal communication skills, which is a prerequisite in the Public Relations profession. According to John (2012) graduates lack basic communication skills, and this is due to these not being developed. Therefore, higher education institutions must take a look at having a special programme to develop graduate skills from first year level so as to ensure that students are equipped with the necessary skills to enter a workplace environment.

To explore the problem in more detail, the following questions are explored:

1. Can role-play as an educational tool assist in verbal skills development?
2. How can role-play as an educational tool assist verbal skills development in Public Relations students?
3. In what way can role-play as an educational tool, be used to boost student verbal communication confidence?

Linked to the above research questions, the objective of this research is to determine the value of exposing students to role-play as a teaching strategy to promote the development of their verbal communication skills. As indicated previously, verbal communication skills are an intricate part of the ability of a public relations practitioner to conduct his/her work in a professional manner. Many students, however, lack the skill to verbally communicate within groups. Exposing them to role-play sessions in order to practice verbal communication skills may boost confidence and strengthen verbal communication skills. By answering the above research questions, the findings will determine in what way the role-play sessions can achieve the aforementioned objectives.

3 Literature Review

Angelfire (2016), state role-play as being improvisation by which one pretends to be something one is not. So, in response to the common question as to why education could use role-play in the classroom, and how it can develop verbal skills. Role-play can be used to motivate students in the classroom (Starting Point, 2016). It can make class more interactive and fun. There is less pressure learning in this way rather than preparing and learning for an exam.

The primary purpose of role-playing exercises is to get students to look at their learning material in a new light, the educator is persuading them to alter their mental maps of the world instead of just filling them in (Blatner, 2002). Lesson plans can include role-play to emphasise the value of feelings and creativity, as well as of knowledge (Dallman 1994).

Role-play can develop real world skills that students need. Many of these skills are self-awareness, problem solving, communication initiative and teamwork, all of which are difficult to teach by merely using traditional methods of instruction (Blatner, 2002). If students were given a role-play activity based on an assignment topic, they would remember the content better because they are acting out the scene. Research shows that Accounting students from the University of Illinois had an easier time finding jobs after completing a curriculum that included role-playing than they did after the traditional curriculum (Cage, 1997).

According to Buelow (2014), the uses and benefits of role-play are to get a person closer to the real life situation; it can offer many experiences to build self confidence in a person, scenarios that may be practiced can be sales meetings, interviews or presentations. Role-play often includes more than one person, therefore encouraging teamwork, which is a skill needed for the working world.

Killen (2007) provides some disadvantages of role-play. It can become too simple and students may over-look major content, it consumes a lot of time to prepare the activity, it could be either a total success or failure depending on students' participation and students may become emotionally involved with the script. The Training and Development World (2016) suggest a few ways to overcome these disadvantages, role-players get expert feedback, there must be debriefing on the role-play session so that major content is not overlooked. Role-play should be done in smaller groups to control an outburst of emotion - if done in larger groups it becomes too difficult to control and the educator or facilitator will not be able to provide expert feedback. There must be sufficient time to prepare for the role-play so it is taken seriously.

It is apparent that role-play can be a successful teaching method to use in the classroom. It motivates students, it's a fun and interactive method of teaching, and it allows for students to practice and develop their verbal communication skills. Role-play is a teaching method that higher education institutions can use as part of their interventions to improve the English

language amongst students.

3.1 Definitions

a. Improvisation:

The Merriam Webster Dictionary (2015) defines improvisation as the act or art of speaking or performing without practicing or preparing ahead of time.

b. Verbal Skills:

The Business Dictionary.com (2015) defines verbal skills as follows. It is the sharing of information between individuals by using speech. Individuals working within a business need to effectively use verbal communication that employs readily understood spoken words, as well as ensuring that the enunciation, stress and tone of voice with which the words are expressed is appropriate.

c. Role-playing:

The Collins Dictionary (2015) defines role-playing as the act of imitating the role of a different person, for example as a training exercise or in language learning.

d. Communication:

The Oxford Dictionary (2015) defines communication as the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium.

4 Research Methodology

4.1 Research Paradigm and Methodology

For this study the critical realism paradigm was used. Critical realism means to critically analyse a result of something and to validate or oppose the objectives of the study, critical realism is a combination of positivism and interpretivism where the researcher gets a result and has to validate the result in an objective manner (du Plooy-Cilliers et.al 2014). For this study the researcher will use a questionnaire to explore in what way role-play can be used to improve the verbal skills of public relations students. The questionnaire responses will be analysed to validate the objectives of the study. It will determine if role-play can be used as an educational tool to assist in verbal skills development, and to boost student verbal communication confidence.

The methodology applicable to this study is quantitative research. Quantitative research collects data and the results are represented statistically with numbers or quantities (Gregory, 2014). The researcher wishes to explore the cause and effect relationship between role-play and its effect on the development of verbal skills. The Marketing Donut (2015) states that quantitative research is about asking people's opinions in a structured manner so that one can produce factual information to answer ones' research questions.

The researcher will be using a questionnaire; this method will be used to describe the problem faced by PR learners in terms of the lack of verbal skills.

4.2 Research Design, Data Collection and Analysis Method

The researcher will be using a cross-sectional survey design. Study.com (2015) states that a cross-sectional survey design is used for once-off research. This design applies to this research, as the researcher will only conduct the research once. The data collected will be the only source of information that will be used to provide recommendations (Explorable.com, 2015). It is to gain insight on how role-play can assist in verbal communication skills amongst PR students.

The data collection tool will be a self-administered questionnaire. Laerd (2012) says, there are three types of quantitative research questions. They are descriptive research questions, comparative research questions and relationship-based questions. The questionnaire will only consist of descriptive research questions and relationship based questions. Descriptive questions start with who, what, when, where and how, giving the respondent the opportunity to describe something. Relationship-based questions are interested in the relationship, association, trend, or interaction between one or more dependent (Laerd, 2012). There will be 12 questions. The questionnaire will be structured so that the respondent is anonymous. The types of questions that will be used are closed-ended questions, open-ended questions, a Likert scale question and a multiple-choice question. A closed ended question is one that has a yes or no answer and a closed ended question is likely to receive a long answer with more detail (Changing minds.org, 2016). A Likert scale question compels the respondent to agree or disagree with the statement related to an attitude or subject (du Plooy-Cilliers, 2014). A multiple-choice question prompts the respondent to select an answer from a predetermined list of answers, which provide structure to the question (Survey Monkey, 2016).

The data analysis of the questionnaire will follow a two-step process. Step one is to collate and analyse questionnaire results and step two is to present the results (Nfer, 2015). Since it is a paper questionnaire, to collate and analyse the researcher will manually enter the information onto a Microsoft excel spreadsheet. To present the results the closed-ended questions would be analysed and represented on a bar graph. The open-ended questions would be categorised according to similar responses and then represented on a diagram. The Likert scale question and the multiple choice question will be analysed, put on the spreadsheet, then represented on a diagram. All the data is transferred onto the spreadsheet and then checked for accuracy. The data will be presented in a form of graphic analysis, which is a type of data that uses diagrams and graphs for a more visual representation (AmosWeb.pedia, 2016).

4.3 Research Population and Sampling

The population used were first year Public Relations students at the same private institution. They are approximately 18 to 25 years of age. They are students that seek a career in Public Relations. Students of today have characteristics such as enquiring minds, problem solving, and visual learning (they like drawing, watching videos, and love social networking). They also love music, have fair intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and can express themselves well. These are just some of the characteristics of a typical millennial student (The marketing site.com 2016).

The convenient sample is a group of first year students; it consists of a class of about 40 students. This method of sampling is part of the category of non-probability sampling methods. Laerd (2012) describes convenience sample as a simply one where the units that are selected for inclusion in the sample are the easiest to access. The disadvantage is that the result of the research could be heavily biased, as the researcher knows the students and they may not be as honest.

4.4 Feasibility of the study

The study will be conducted at the private institution. The researcher has full access to the students. This means that, the time, resources, budget and issues arising from the study will not entail a cost factor. The role-play activity and questionnaire will be conducted during class time. There will not be a budgetary requirement for this study.

4.5 Ethical Considerations, Validity and Reliability

Permission to conduct the study has been granted by the campus principal. Students were asked to answer the questionnaire honestly, without bias. The questionnaire included an introductory section indicating that the respondent can answer anonymously and that confidentiality will be upheld. Participation was completely voluntary and the respondents were not penalised should they have preferred not to part take in the activity.

The reliability of the study was based on the findings of the research. Therefore, if the study were to be conducted by another researcher, he/she should arrive at the same conclusion (Explorable.com, 2015). To test the reliability of this paper, the researcher looked at other papers with the similar topic. The results and recommendations were alike which proved the reliability of this study for example Teaching English (2004) found that roleplay was fun and exciting, it brought students closer to the real world which are similar to the findings of this research. The role-play activity and questionnaire were conducted with the same sample at the same time making it an Inter-rater type of reliability.

The validity of the study was also based on the findings of the research. The validity of the research had to answer one question. Does the findings, reflect the problem stated in the research? (Explorable.com, 2015) In this case, the findings proved there was a need for the development of verbal communication skills because 49% of the respondents had difficulty presenting in front of the class which means students have poor verbal communication skills in the higher education space. The researcher compared the results of the questionnaire to the research objectives. The results answered the objectives, which made the research valid.

4.6 Limitations of the study

The first limitation concerned the respondents, there were a total of 39 respondents, 10 of which did not complete their questionnaires and there were therefore only 29 completed questionnaires analysed. This was a limitation as the results were no longer based on the entire sample group. The second limitation is that the results cannot be generalised, as the research is exploratory in nature.

5 Results

Graphical representation was used to present the results. Each question was analysed individually, then the information converted to a diagram or graph to show better and easier understanding. The question is explained, followed by the statistical information, which is linked, to the figure, then the implication of each finding is described. Thereafter a discussion of the findings will follow linking the results and information in the literature review and then to answer the research questions.

5.1 Verbal Communication Ability

The first question enquired whether respondents experienced difficulty communicating verbally in front of large groups. Figure 1 below provides detail on the findings. As can be seen from the figure, 41% indicated that they do experience difficulty whilst 59% indicated that they do not.

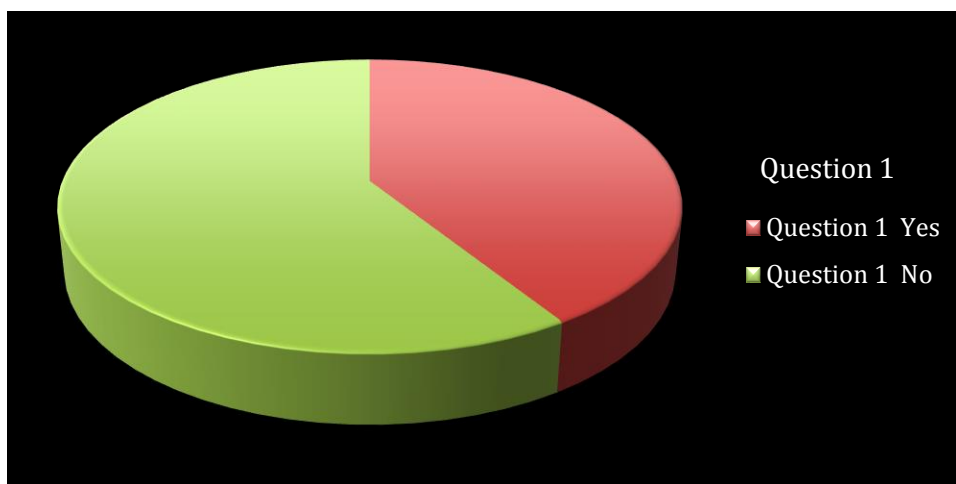


Figure 1: Verbal Communication Ability

The implication of this finding is that almost half of the respondents have difficulty communicating in front of large groups. This is a requirement of a public relations practitioner to display this skill (Johnson, n/d). The reason for this analysis is based on the views of Skinner.*et.al* (2013), who states that students may get the theoretical knowledge but the problem faced with many students is the ability to speak in a group presentation or an individual task. An intervention is needed to develop and/or improve verbal communication skills.

5.2 Definition of Role-play

In question two, students were asked to define the term role-play. This question was to ascertain the knowledge level of students related to the selected teaching strategy. James (2014), state that prior knowledge of how to engage actively in a learning environment is imperative to encourage student engagement. Figure 2 provides details on the understanding of role-play. As can be seen majority 66% of the respondents indicated that role-play was acting, 10% indicated it was a group presentation, 7 % indicated it was used to educate others and 17% indicated it was to remember and understand content.

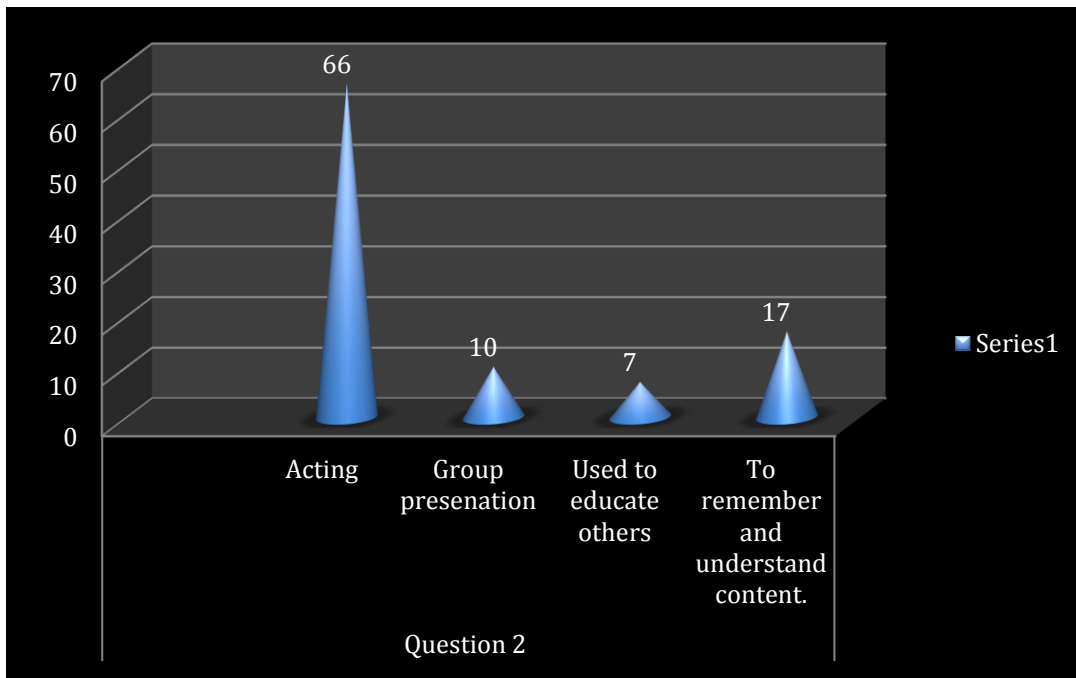


Figure 2: Role-play definition

The implication of this is that respondents have a clear indication of what role-play is and they may be eager to try it as a classroom activity. Angelfire (2016), states that role-play is improvisation where you are pretending to be something you are not. Role-play may work well in the group as they have knowledge of what is entails.

5.3 Role-play enjoyment

In question three students were asked if they enjoyed the role-play activity. According to James (2014), students are more engaged if they enjoy a teaching method, they learn more and they become more interactive.

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Figure 3 below indicates the success of the role-play activity done in the classroom. It indicates that 79% of the respondents enjoyed the role-play activity and 21% did not enjoy the activity.

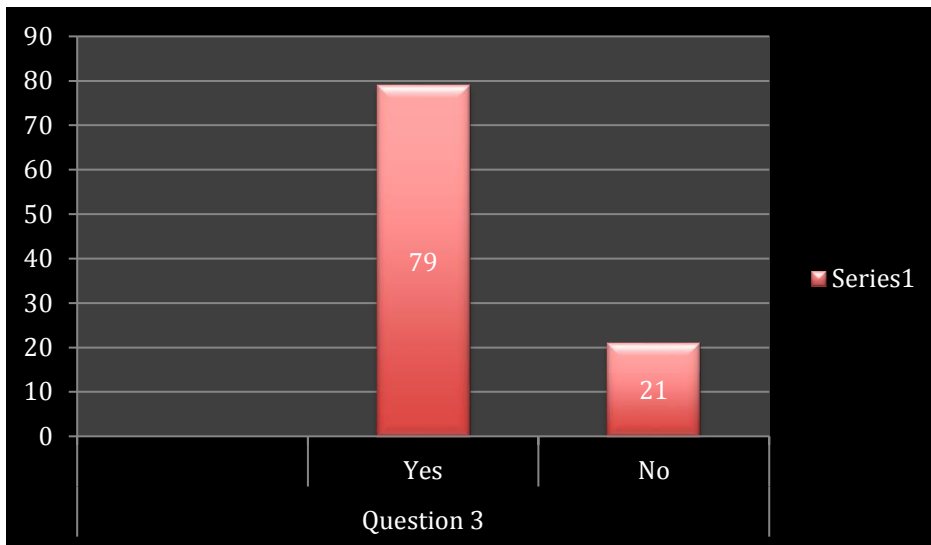


Figure 3: Role-play enjoyment

The implication here is that more than half of the class enjoyed the activity. This analysis is based on Starting Point (2016), which states that role-play can be an interactive, and fun teaching method that students' will enjoy. This suggests that role-play can be used as a successful teaching method.

5.4 Reason for role-play enjoyment

In question 4 students were asked to justify the option they choose in question 3. The aim of this question is to get a better understanding of why the respondents' enjoyed/did not enjoy the role-play activity.

Figure 4 below indicates that majority of the respondents 59% said they enjoyed the role-play activity because they learnt content and it boosted their confidence. 14% said they enjoyed it because it was fun and exciting and 10% said it improved their presentation skills. However 10% said the task was not taken seriously and 7% said they got stage fright while doing the activity. Stage fright is fear or anxiety aroused in an individual before a performance or an appearance on public television (Road Ready 2010).

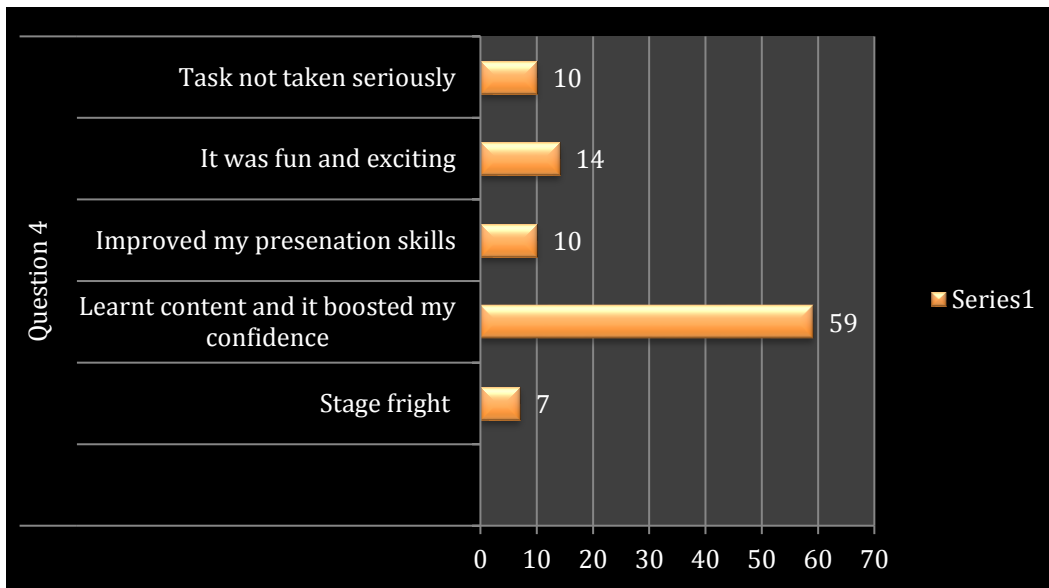


Figure 4: Reason for role-play enjoyment

The implication is that a total of 83% of the respondents had positive feedback on why they enjoyed the teaching method and this proves that students in future will have similar responses to the activity. This analysis was based on Buelow (2014) who states that the benefits of role-play is to boost self-confidence by improving presentation skills as well as its provides a fun and exciting method of teaching content. It also implies that role-play has negative feedback.

According to Limbu (2012), role-play can cause embarrassment for some students and can lack focus if not properly planned or monitored. This echoes the negatives feedback found in this response; therefore role-play can be a success only if careful monitoring and planning is done.

5.5 Role-play rating

In question 5, students were asked to rate the role-play activity using a Likert scale.

Figure 5 indicates that, 48% were extremely satisfied and 35% were satisfied, 14% were neutral, 3% were unsatisfied and 0% were extremely unsatisfied.

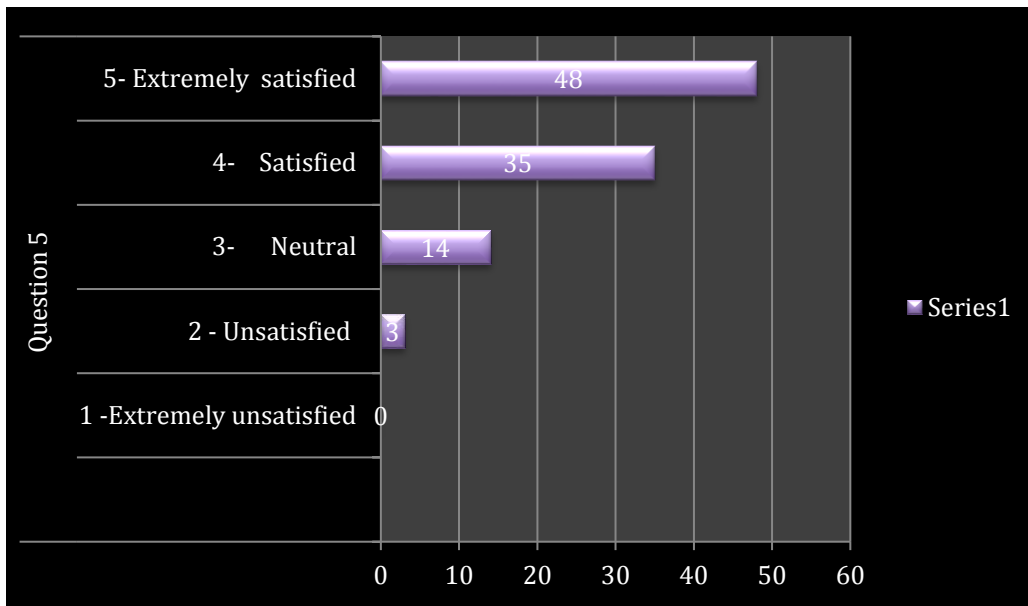


Figure 5: Role-play rating

The implication is that majority of the respondents choose extremely satisfied and satisfied. Once again it proves that role-play can be a successful teaching method to use in class.

5.6 Role-play to improve verbal communication skills

Question 6 was asked to establish if the role-play teaching method helped develop verbal communication skills. Figure 6 below indicates that 97% said it did improve their verbal communication skills and 3% said no.

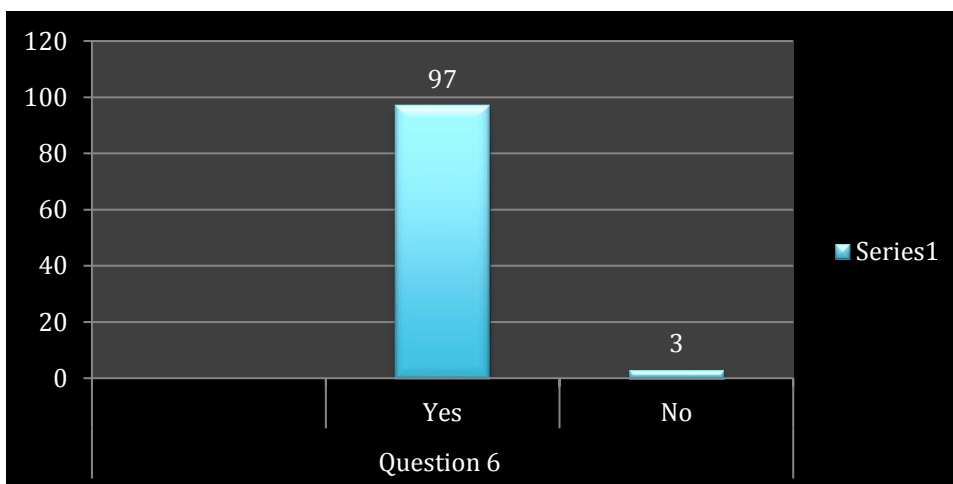


Figure 6: Role-play to improve verbal communication skills

The implication of this is that respondents 97% agreed that role-play improved their verbal communication skills. This is based on the findings of Islam (n.d) who states that role-play has the ability enhance speaking fluency ability. It is evident that role-play can be used to improve verbal communication skills.

5.7 Role-play benefits

In question seven students were asked how the role-play activity helped develop their verbal

communication skills. This was to acquire a better understanding of the benefits of role-play. Figure 7 indicates that 21% of the respondents said it improved their pronunciation, 35% said it improved presentation skills and 44% said it improved their verbal skills by building their confidence.

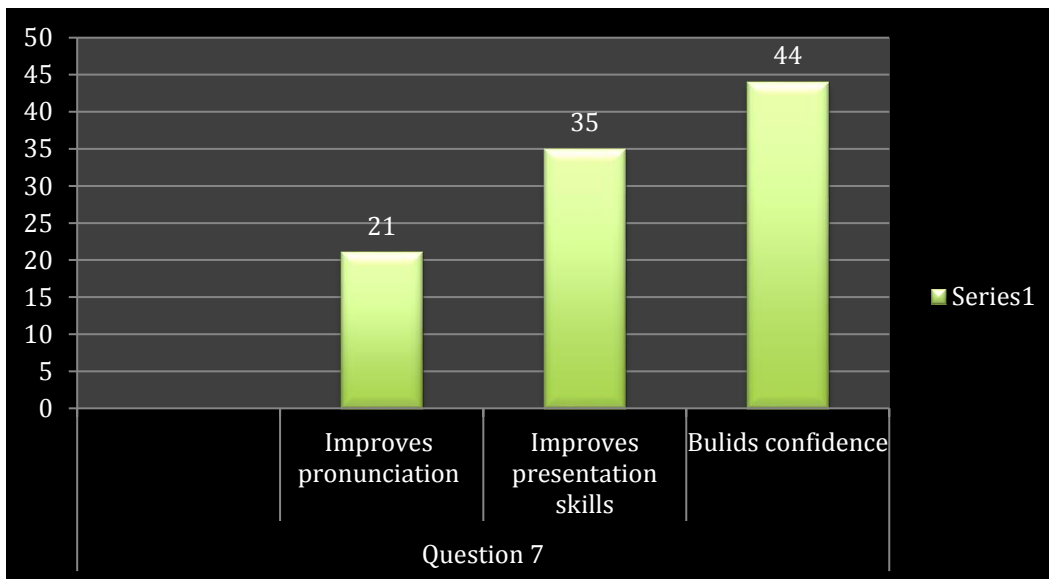


Figure 7: Role-play benefits

The implication is that it is evident that there are benefits of role-play. These findings are based on Cage (1997), Accounting students at the University of Illinois had an easier time finding jobs after completing a curriculum that included role-playing than they did after the traditionally-administered curriculum. Their improvisation in the classroom helped them develop vital verbal communication skills to assist them in finding a job. Once again it is evident that role-play can help develop verbal communication skills.

5.8 Can role-play boost confidence?

In question 8, students were asked if role-play activity boosted their confidence to speak in public. Figure 8 indicates that 83% said it did boost their confidence to speak in public and 17% said it did boost their confidence levels to some degree. No respondents selected no.

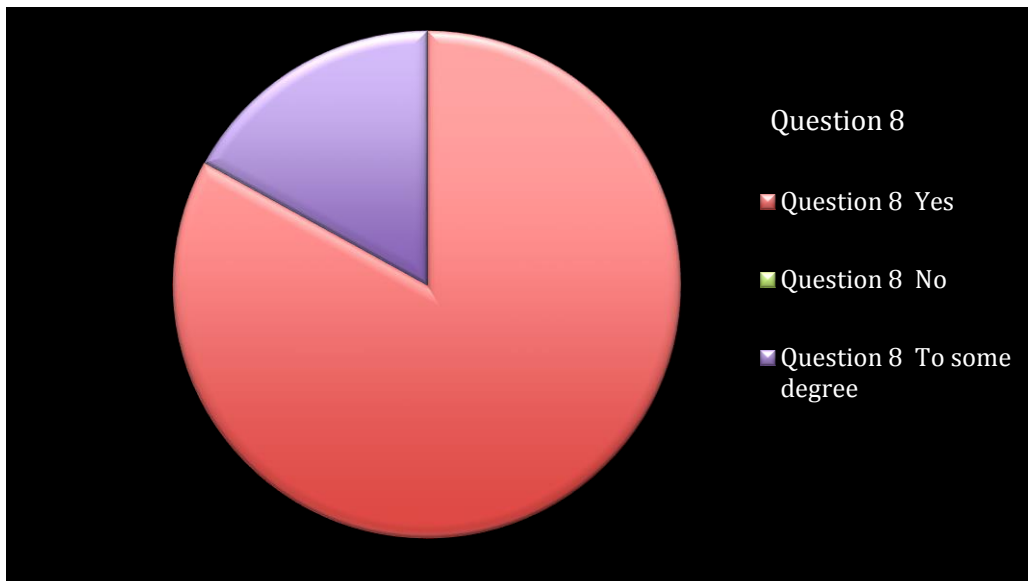


Figure 8: Can role-play boost confidence?

The implication is that role-play can boost confidence to speak in public. This is based on the findings in Tess India (n.d), which states that role-play helps student confidence and motivates them to speak. This finding reiterates that role-play can assist in the development of verbal communication skills by improving confidence to speak in public.

5.9 How did role-play boost confidence

Question nine wanted respondents to explain how role-play boosted their confidence levels to speak in public. Figure 9 below illustrates 31% said role-play helped develop presentation skills to show confidence, 48% said the role-play made it easier to express themselves to show confidence and 21% said being in a role-play group helped boost their confidence.

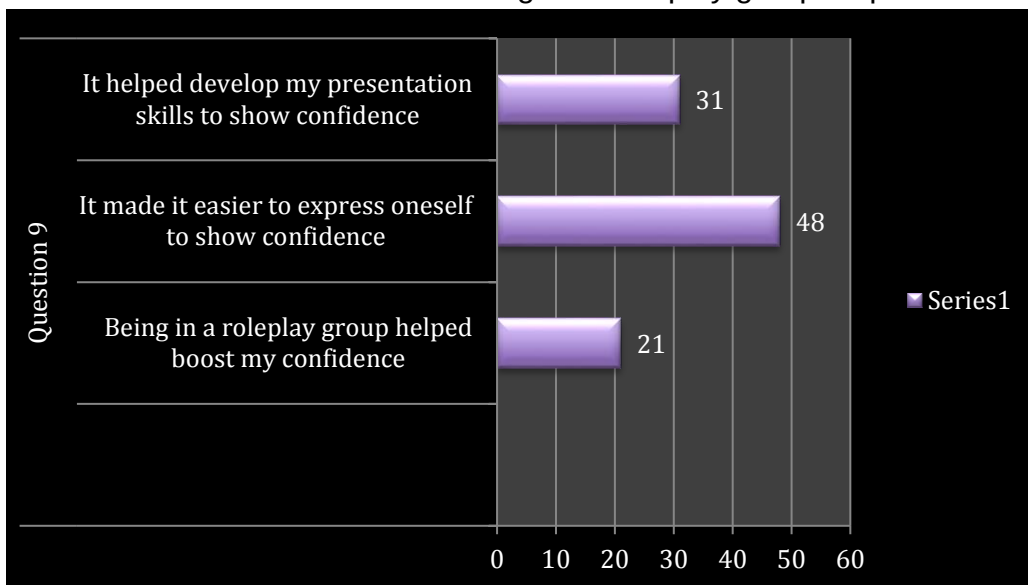


Figure 9: How did role-play boosts confidence

The implication of this is that role-play activities in the classroom can boost confidence to speak in public. According to Limbu (2012), one of the merits of a role-play strategy is to

develop confidence and self-efficacy. It is clear that role-play can be used as a tool to develop verbal communication skills to make students more efficient for the workplace environment.

5.10 Role-play for the future

In question 10 students were asked if they would participate in role-play activities in the future. Figure 10 below indicates that 97% would participate in future activities and 3% said no. Only 3 % said it was a waste of time and that they did not learn anything productive.

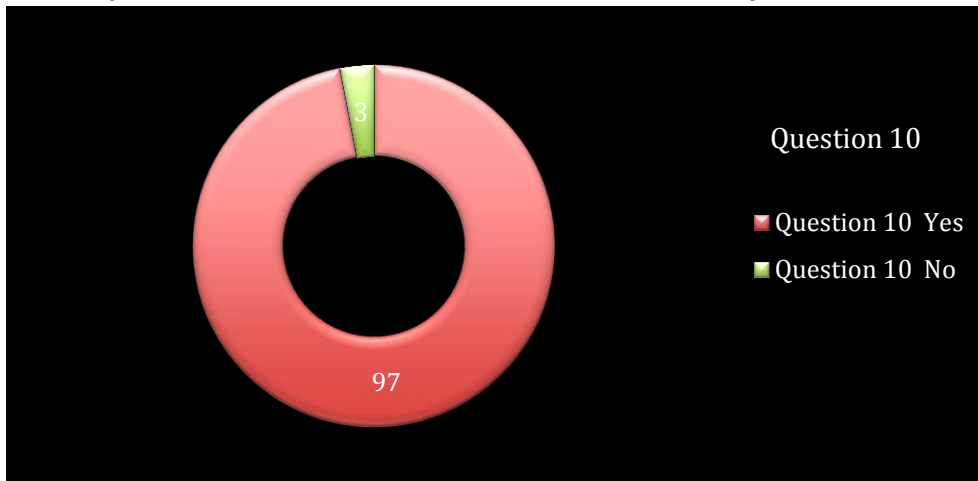


Figure 10: Role-play for the future

The implication is that majority said they would participate in future role-play activities, which indicates that it was a success. As seen in other responses role-play proved to be a fun and exciting activity, it boosted confidence to speak in public. It improved presentation skills and collectively improved verbal communication skills, therefore could be a viable teaching method for the future.

5.11 Role-play enthusiasm

In this question respondents were asked how often they would participate in role-play activities. Figure 11 below illustrates that 41% would like to participate all the time in role-play activities, 59% said they would like to participate sometimes and none of the respondents selected never.

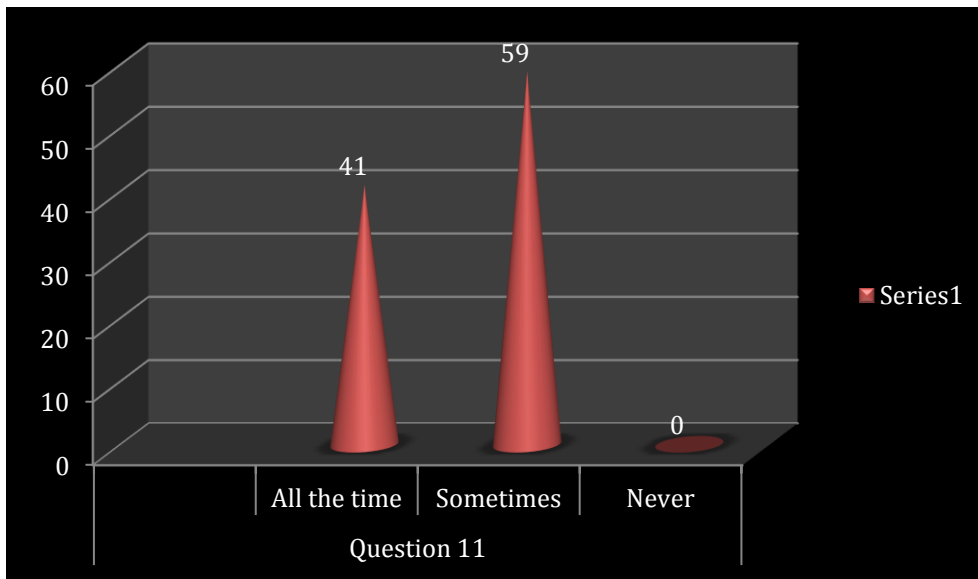


Figure 11: Role-play enthusiasm

The implication is that there is a future for role-play in the classroom. Blatner (2000) says that the primary purpose of role-play is to introduce content to students in a new light. To stimulate students it is always useful to vary your instructional strategies (UNL, 2016). Therefore students may be motivated to participate in role-play.

5.12 Role-play benefits

Respondents where asked, as a Public relations student, how did the role-play activity benefit them. Figure 12 identifies the benefits role-play. As seen below 10% said it promotes class interaction, 38% said it assisted in learning content, 24% said it was a confidence booster and 28% said it improved presentation skills.

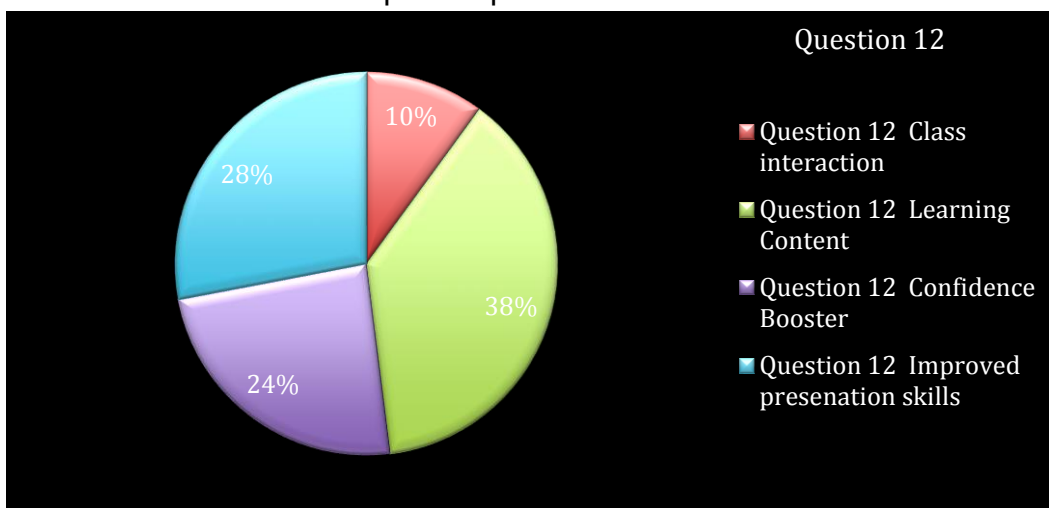


Figure 12: Role-play benefits

The implication of these findings are that role-play can be used in the classroom to prepare students for the working arena. Interactions with others, knowledge development, having confidence and doing presentations are all skills needed in the workplace. This is based on Buelow (2014) who states that uses and benefits of role-play are to get a person closer to the real life situation, it can offer many experiences to build self confidence in a person,

scenarios that may be practiced can be sales meetings, interviews or presentations, which are skills need in the workplace.

6 Findings

The key findings of the research are as follows. The first research question was to establish if role-play could assist in the development of verbal communication skills. In question 6, 97% of the respondents indicated that the role-play activity did improve their verbal communication skill. Blatner (2002) states that role-play can assist in the development of real world skills, one of which is communication initiatives. The second research question was to establish how role-play could assist in the development of verbal communication skills. Question 7 clearly shows that 44% said it improved their verbal communication skills by building their confidence, 35% said it improved their verbal communication skills by enhancing their presentation skills and 21% said it improved their verbal skills by improved pronunciation.

According Buelow (2014) role-play has the ability to build self-confidence and teamwork skills to get closer to real life situations. The last research question was to establish how role-play could be used to boost student verbal communication confidence. In question 9, 31% of the respondents said role-play boosted their confidence because it improved their presentation skills, 48% said role-play boosted their confidence by allowing them the opportunity to express themselves and 21% said being in a role-play group helped them show confidence. Blatner (2002) implies that role-play develops skills such as self-awareness, problem solving, communication ability and teamwork. Due to these key findings it is evident that the research has successfully achieved the research objectives, the data obtained clearly indicates that role-play can be used as a teaching method develop verbal communication skills amongst PR students.

7 Recommendations

The problem stated in this research paper was that they are far too many ESL learners in the higher education space that have difficulty understanding the chosen mode of instruction which is English. They have difficulty reading, writing and speaking the language. This problem can be resolved by using role-play as a teaching method in the classroom to help develop verbal communication skills amongst students. Based on the findings of this research role-play was found to be a fun and exciting way to get students to learn, it boosted verbal communication confidence and developed their verbal communication skills. Islam (n.d) suggests that role-play has a positive impact of improving speaking skills; it also gives the students an opportunity to practice real life situations in the classroom. Role-play can be an extremely useful teaching method if administered properly.

Before the role-play session begins the educator must brief the students so that the task is taken seriously and the objectives are clear. After a role-play activity is completed, there

must be a debriefing session where the educator discussing the objectives of the role-play session making sure that content is not misunderstood or left out. Role-play must be done in small groups to ensure effectiveness, as role-play can cause too much excitement. The educator must monitor the process as it progresses so that time is not wasted. If role-play were executed accurately, it would be an excellent tool to promote learning and improve verbal skills in the higher education space. Educators should enhance the ability of role-play to add life and something new in the classroom.

8 Conclusion

It can be seen that the role-play technique has a positive impact on the development of verbal communication skills. The students are exposed to real life situations to sound more accurate and confident. As PR students it proves to be an ideal way to help them speak in front of large groups, as communication is key in the Public relations field. Role-play can be used in any classroom in any field of study; the benefits will be evident in any subject. As an educator, it is a duty to prepare the student for the working world as well as for the life after campus.

One of the skills needed by any employee is to be able to speak up with an assertive voice. As noted throughout this paper, there is a lack of this skill amongst students in the higher education space. Being able to develop verbal skills makes the individual a more confident one, and one that can express themselves appropriately. It is the duty of the educator to make sure that most of the learners walk away with this skill. It is clear that role-play can be used as a tool to make this possible; role-play can be effective in any industry for example, a study on how role-play can be used in the workplace to enhance customer service or how role-play can be used to improve nursing care in hospitals.

In the words of astronaut Neil Armstrong "The value of research is all about creating new knowledge". Without researching the value of role-play, we would not have known how effective it is as an educational tool, we would not know how effective it is in developing verbal communication skills which is a prerequisite not only in the Public Relations field but in any field for progression.

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Annexure A: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent

You are being asked to participate in completing a questionnaire to determine in what way the use of role-play in class assisted you in improving your verbal communication skills. The benefits of participating are that you will help the lecturer streamline the use of role-playing in future classrooms. Completing the questionnaire will also give you an opportunity to express your opinion on what type of learning you prefer and enjoy.

Participation will remain anonymous; therefore please do not include a name or student number on the questionnaire. All the questionnaires will be kept in a secure location. Your participation is completely voluntary; you may change your mind and stop your participation at any time without being penalised in any way. You are welcome to contact me should you be interested in the final results of this research.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Genola Govindasamy
genolagovindasamy@gmail.com

Instructions:

Please answer all the questions related to this questionnaire.

Question 1: As a public relations student, do you have difficulty communicating verbally in front of large groups? Select the option that applies most often to you.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Question 2: What is your definition of role-play?

Question 3: Did you enjoy the role-play activity that you presented to your class? Tick the most relevant option.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Question 4: Please justify your option selected in Question 3?

Question 5: How would you rate the role-play activity?

Extremely unsatisfied 1	Unsatisfied 2	Neutral 3	Satisfied 4	Extremely satisfied 5
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Question 6: Did the role-play activity improve your verbal communication skills?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Question 7: In what way would you say engaging in role-play helped you develop / strengthen your verbal communication skills?

Question 8: Did the role-play activity boost your confidence to speak to people in public? Tick the applicable box.

Yes	
No	
To some degree	

Question 9: Please explain the way in which the role-play did / did not help you improve your confidence to speak in public?

Question 10: Would you like to participate in future role-play activities to help you further improve your verbal communication skills?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Question 11: How often would you like to participate in role-play activities to enhance your verbal communication skills?

- ☐ All the time
☐ Sometimes
☐ Never

Question 12: As a Public relations student, in what way did the role-play activity benefit you?

Bottom of Form

Thank you for your time.