The Effect of Using Drama in English Language Learning among Young Learners: A Case Study of 6th Grade Female Pupils in Sakaka City

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ABSTRACT

English is now the most frequently used language worldwide. In academia, English has become "a hyper central language" millions of students are learning for various reasons. As such, pedagogists, academicians, and language teachers seek new tools and teaching methods to help English language learners reach high proficiency levels. The use of drama as a teaching/learning tool in English language classrooms is one proposed method, justifying this study to investigate the effects of teaching English language through drama, thus deciphering the advantages of this experience and possible challenges it may pose. Data was gathered via an English language test and classroom observations. Results showed that the use of drama develops participants' language skills, especially the communicative ones such as interactions and conversations, and yields higher proficiency levels as it motivates them to become more engaged in the learning process. These participants also displayed more responsibility and self-reliance; thus, much learning took place. These results confirmed the general claim that introducing drama activities in language classrooms positively supports language acquisition. However, introduction of such a tool presented a few challenges as well, such as the learners' problems of L1 interference, embarrassment, and inhibition, as well as issues related to the unpredictable and open-ended nature of drama. This paper presents more implications of the findings that necessitate further research to gain a more comprehensive account of drama use in language classrooms and thus overcome the challenges presented.

Key words: Teaching Tools, Drama Integration, English Language Learning, Challenges

INTRODUCTION

English is now the most frequently used language worldwide. It serves as "the window to the world" and has become "a hyper central language" millions of students are learning to support various goals. Within EFL educational settings, English language proficiency has become a key factor for academic success and subsequent employability, especially proficiency in English language communication skills, which has become an indispensable prerequisite that language learners must satisfy. Indeed, *"low proficiency in English or lack of English language skills has been considered a barrier to academic success, entry of employment and workforce accomplishment"* (Rao, 2016, p. 3). To help learners overcome academic barriers and reach expected proficiency levels, educationalists and language researchers are developing and testing updated teaching/learning approaches, methods, and tools. As reported by Er et al. (2012), traditional lecturing, which had been a standard in teaching/learning methods for decades, has proven to be inadequate in meeting the rapidly changing requirements of new generations of learners and in facilitating learning. Educational institutions are, therefore, implementing active learning methods, in which teachers involve students in the learning process more directly than in any other type of method. Felder and Brent (2009) defined active learning as *"anything course-related that all students in a class session are called upon to do other than simply watching, listening and taking notes"* (p. 2).

Bonwell and Eison (1991) elaborated on the definition, reporting that in such a context the students become engaged in more than passive listening; they are more involved in other language constructs, namely, reading, speaking, and writing. This form of learning is practiced through many forums, such as drama, which constitutes the focus of this paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Drama: Historical and Conceptual Framework

Drama was defined by Courtney (1980) as *"the human process whereby imaginative thought becomes action, drama is based on internal empathy and identification, and leads to external impersonation"* (p. 7). He added that drama reflects

real life, as people are always improvising and acting. More recently, Moore (2004) identified active learning as the act of using imagination to take the role of someone other than oneself. Slade (1958) shared the same idea, claiming that drama is the art of doing in life, whereby people play several roles until they discover who and what they really are.

In education, drama is also called "dramatic playing," characterized by a high level of spontaneity when both teachers and learners use fiction to examine issues important to them. Drama is also featured by movement and characterization (Moore, 2004). Similarly, Koyluoglu (2010) described drama in education as a play-based art process that helps learners explore, discover, discuss, deal with, recognize, and accept or reject the multifaceted world around them.

Koste (1995) brought the importance of dramatic play for young learners to the foreground when asserting that

> playing is one of the most powerful ways for a child to learn. He looks at the world around him and plays what he sees—going to the office, driving a bus, make-believe stores or parties and on and on. He tries different ways of acting, assumes various roles and challenges himself with all sorts of problems (p. 2).

The Relevance of Drama to Learning

Utilizing drama as a teaching tool is not a new strategy. Throughout history, drama and theatre have been used effectively for learning and indoctrination. Eminent philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, defended drama as a means of education and argued that educators should distinguish between performance activities as tools used to enhance learning and those activities that are performed simply for the sake of acting (cited in McCaslin, 2006). A century ago, Tolstoy (1861) predicted that *"the school of the future will, perhaps, not be a school as we understand it—with benches, blackboards, and a teacher's platform—it may be a theatre, a library, a museum, or a conversation"* (cited in Nessel, 1997, p. 145).

More recently, brain-based research indicated that students differ in learning styles and preferences, and that learning is basically individual, which *"implies that standardized materials, instruction, and practices may actually diminish or inhibit learning"* (Lawson, 1994, p. 2). This rationalizes the call to employ drama as a teaching tool because it appeals to different learning styles and can benefit all types of learners. Moore (2004) added that drama is a teaching tool that stimulates the "whole brain" and activates various types of intelligences. Therefore, it targets students who need a challenge, as well as students who cannot be reached through conventional teaching methods.

Furthermore, as noted by Mehrabian and Wiener (1967), communication is very limitedly verbal in nature. The same authors argued that statistically speaking, 55% of communication is expressed through body language, while tone of voice constitutes 38%. These are crucial components of communication, and therefore language, that English language students must learn. By its very nature, drama provides an ideal environment to facilitate learning of these various components. These are crucial components of how learners communicate with each other; a better way to recognize these aspects is to incorporate drama into language classrooms. Oller and Richard (1983) clearly stated that *"drama, particularly role-play, is a standard classroom technique which has been long recognized as a valuable and valid means of mastering a language"* (p. 207).

The Drama Integration into Classrooms: Advantages and Challenges

The advantages

Many scholars have advocated integrating drama in language classrooms, maintaining this teaching tool would yield valuable academic results if implemented effectively. They explain that arts-integrated teaching brings lessons to life and helps learners realize better language achievements, as it triggers their natural desire for active learning and challenges them to use creativity and critical thinking. It reduces their embarrassment and inhibition because mistakes and revisions become a routine part of the learning process. Through drama, young learners experience creativity and enjoy being artists while unintentionally acquiring essential language skills (Courtney, 1980; Koste, 1995; McCaslin, 2006; Moore, 2004).

Similarly, scholars such as Vygotsky (1987) and Bakhtin (1981) maintained that learning takes place less consciously when students are reading or adding a certain characterization to a piece of drama; they become deeply involved in the learning process and feel better able to express themselves through the different characters' voices they incarnate. In effect, engaging learners has always been recognized as mandatory to achieve better language proficiency. This concept refers to the deep involvement and participation of learners in the learning process, which are reflected through attention, commitment, and attendance (Schlechty, 2002).

Zakhareuski (2018) strongly defended the incorporation of drama in English language classrooms and argued that acting not only promotes learners' self-confidence and self-esteem but also lowers speaking anxiety. She also added that drama provides learners with an atmosphere of security, trust, and concentration irrespective of their academic abilities. "Being put on a show," learners will not be worried about their accuracy when using dramatic and expressive language. Playing out a story removes language barriers and helps learners feel the authentic meaning of the words they are learning and encounter different language registers and uses which, in turn, allow the learners deeper and more meaningful learning.

A second reason proposed by Zakhareuski for incorporating drama into English language classrooms is that it nurtures collaboration between learners who, while playing different characters, interact to decide such aspects of drama as the characters and the scenario in order to create a successful piece of art. The teacher's role, in this respect, is reduced to eliciting suggestions and helping learners reflect on their performance of the dramatic play in a safe learning environment.

Moreover, according to Maley and Duff (2005), drama assimilates language skills in a natural way. Students are reading text, listening to their peers recite lines, or playing

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roles. The integration of reading, listening, and speaking takes place, thus making the process of language learning natural and effective. Similarly, Smith (2000) pointed out that drama offers young learners opportunities to practice the four skills of language and thus reach a higher proficiency level. Drama also enables learners to tell stories in ways that prepare them to become readers and eloquent speakers. Given the prominent role communicative competence plays in mastering a language, this author asserted that teachers create environments for learners to develop oral fluency by using drama in their classrooms. The goal, in this regard, is to communicate and not to simply repeat the teacher's intended objectives. Effective communication is reflected through the fact of speaking nicely, efficiently, and articulately.

Drama's appeal to all learning styles lends additional strong support to introducing it as a teaching tool in language classrooms. Indeed, drama integrates all learning styles, allowing each student to respond differently to different methods. Kinaesthetic learners, for example, may prefer being acting coaches, while visual learners might like to work on scenery. Auditory learners might enjoy the music and sound, and reading and writing learners can edit the project, provide constructive feedback, and assist their peers in making corrections. Learning styles not only involve the cognitive domain, but also comprise the affective and physiological domains (Reiff, 1992). Moore (2004) strongly believed in the brain-research assumption that if connected affectively to a concept, learners will have better understanding of it, which supports the power of emotions in boosting learning. She argued that drama is a tool that brings emotions and learning together.

Oller and Richard (1983) cited motivation as one of the most important reasons to use drama for teaching. They posited that dramatic activities ignite learners' desire to learn another language. Koyluoglu (2010) confirmed that *"using drama in the classroom is a powerful tool to motivate students and help them to understand materials being taught"* (p. 31). She proclaimed that the dramatization of a text is always motivating and that if learners lack interest in what is being taught, they do not learn. Concomitantly, Zafeiriadou (2009) highlighted the strong relationship between drama and motivation and the effect of the latter variable on language learning. To put it in her words, *"drama fosters and sustains learners' motivation as it is fun and entertaining and because it engages feelings it can provide a rich experience of language for the participants"* (p. 6).

However, this enjoyable learning experience is not without drawbacks, especially because scholars still don't agree on the effectiveness of drama as a teaching tool employment of drama as an effective teaching tool. Many have identified challenges such a tool presents.

The challenges

Traditionalists who advocate the conventional way of teaching might express concern about *"such seemingly unprofessional, unscientific teaching techniques"* (Koyluoglu, 2010, p. 43). They might question the teaching role and whether students are being distracted instead of being taught.

In effect, when embracing drama in teaching, teachers must address certain innate conditions that may impede the teaching/learning process. First, performing a play is always associated with noise and loud voices, as learners are mingling while expressing themselves. This appearance of "chaos" may make classroom management difficult and give the appearance that learners are not totally engaged in the lesson. *"There is the issue of control here. A class of 25 students who are working in groups on a drama activity can be a nightmare for a leader who wants to control the timing, language use and focus of the unit"* (Koyluoglu, 2010, p. 96). The same idea was articulated by Zafeiriadou (2009) who complained that *"with younger learners the enthusiasm and exuberance produced by engaging in drama can turn into problems of discipline"* (p. 5).

Second, drama as a medium of learning brings out deeper pedagogic concerns for second/foreign language teachers, as it requires teachers to move away from familiar structures and routines into approaches that are more open-ended and unpredictable. In fact, many teachers resist using the new teaching method and blindly stick to "comfortable" and "safe" teacher-centred approaches (Zafeiriadou, 2009). These teachers are reluctant to use dramatic activities either because they ignore how to adequately incorporate them in the classroom them or because of time constraints, lack of resources, or lack of confidence. These teachers argued that they are not drama experts (Royka, 2002). Other reluctant teachers may consider drama a trivial teaching method, lacking the rigor to effect language learning.

Corpsing is still another challenge to effectively implementing drama in language classrooms, as learners may start to giggle when they feel they look silly. They may then refuse to participate in dramatic activities because they have low confidence in their English proficiency level or misunderstand the language goal of the drama lesson and, thus, consider it fun and game time. In addition, assigning the same students to the same roles may lead to "stereotyping," where the role remains basic and does not develop over time and, hence, no language enrichment occurs.

A final pedagogical challenge presents itself when results are the criteria for success and the focus is never on the process. This may inhibit learners' motivation and engagement in the dramatic activities, which may fail to inspire them, especially if these learners are suffering fluency problems, which is a likely situation in the context of English as a second/foreign language (Zafeiriadou, 2009).

An overview of different techniques for using drama in language classrooms may help address such concerns and overcome the obstacles.

Ways to Integrate Drama into Classrooms

Wagner and Heathcote (1976) emphasized that drama should be used as an intentional teaching strategy in order to improve students' learning in a subject area. She warned that it is not intended to create professional actors and actresses but to help learners grasp core curricula using drama. Several methods have been suggested for employing drama

in teaching. In this respect, Koyluoglu (2010) asserted that language teachers can provide learners with different experiences by adopting numerous methods that meet the learners' needs, interests, and levels. According to Davies (1990), these methods can include role-playing, mime, simulation, improvisation, and dramatized story-telling.

Role playing

Koyluoglu (2010) claimed that role-play activities allow teachers to create supportive and enjoyable classroom situations where learners are encouraged and motivated to efficiently master the target language. Zafeiriadou (2009), on the other hand, pointed out that a fundamental technique of drama is the requirement for the "actors" to play a person or an object role. This strategy has great potential to help learners experience knowledge in five different aspects, namely, spatial (length, width, and height); psychological (internalization, identification, and empathy); mental (representation, assimilation, and imagination); social (participation, interaction, and acceptance by others); and personal (self-esteem, self-development, and self-actualization). An effective combination of these enables learners to acquire the skills necessary to learn a language. *"All of these dimensions are useful in language acquisition because they can provide a multi-dimensional base for stimulating and developing language"* (p. 6).

Mime

As a non-verbal form of articulating a story or idea, mime foregrounds the paralinguistic traits of communication. It fosters interactions among learners which, in turn, grows their confidence. The funny and enjoyable features of miming increase learners' enthusiasm and motivation for learning by doing. Linguistically, mime plays an important role in fixing the language in the students' minds, even though it might seem contradictory as it does not actually involve the verbal aspect of the language. Mime generates language acquisition through teacher feedback and learner discussions (Dougill, 1987).

Simulation

This technique, according to Davies (1990), refers to interactional activities where learners discuss a given problem in order to solve it within an instructional setting. It involves such categories of dialogue as greetings, partings, introductions, compliments, and complaints. It particularly develops learners' social skills and their communicative abilities in general terms.

Improvisation

Improvisation is acting without a script. This requires more effort from learners to produce language in order to act out a situation that reflects their feelings and thoughts without dependence on a text. About the attributes of this technique, Dundar (2013) stated that *"improvisational exercises*

provide three main goals: student pronunciation improves, proper use of a grammatical structure is reinforced, and vocabulary practice is enhanced" (p. 1423).

There are two main types of improvisation. The first is spontaneous and open-ended. It is initiated by the teacher who presents a situation to the students and instructs them to solve it.

The second type is prepared improvisation, where the learners are instructed to make a whole play starting from a basic situation or theme. The group-preparation nature of this kind of improvisation creates an atmosphere of togetherness wherein learners select, develop, shape, and share ideas and organize them into a communicative structure (Davies, 1990).

Dramatized story telling

As the name suggests, dramatized story-telling, also called scripted play, is based on the learners' own words or actions to dramatize. The students can write dialogue or even a whole play. While its primary goal is to reinforce students' writing abilities, scriptwriting also helps integrate other language skills. It also involves the whole class and is informative and entertaining (Porcaro, 2001 as cited in Dundar, 2013). To quote Dundar (2013) *"scriptwriting helps students focus on register, adjacency pairs, vocabulary in context, and fluency"* (p. 1428).

Given the scholarly recognized educational enrichments accomplished by using drama in language classrooms, the primary school in Sakaka city in Saudi Arabia initiated an English program where English language teachers implemented drama as a medium of learning. This justifies this research which proceeds with the hypothesis that children's language learning is enhanced through use of drama as a learning tool. It seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does the employment of drama in the classroom affect participants' language development?
2. What are the particular language aspects in which learners excel when using drama in classrooms?
3. *What drama techniques are used most frequently in language classrooms?*
4. *What obstacles hinder the application of drama in language classrooms?*

METHODOLOGY

The Subjects

Forty sixth graders from two primary school classes (each with twenty students) in the city of Sakaka participated in this study, which was carried out over an eight-week period in the second term of the 2018-2019 academic year. In Saudi Arabia, English is taught as an official subject beginning in fourth grade in primary schools. Therefore, it can be said that these participants had been learning English for just three years. The two groups were selected from all students of English at the University of Jeddah by random sampling and designated as **(a)** an experimental group in which English was taught using drama, and **(b)** a control group in which

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English was taught using conventional methods. The group of the participants is homogenous as they all belong to the middle-class society and have similar educational backgrounds and age (ranging from 10-12 years old). All participants were female, a choice made deliberately for cultural and religious considerations.

Instruments

Two instruments for data collection were used to carry out this research, namely, a language test (Appendix A) and a classroom observation (Appendix B). Both instruments aimed to study the effect of using drama as a medium for eliciting data on the English language proficiency levels of the participants in this research.

A multiple-choice was selected because it one of the most appropriate instruments for testing language knowledge, particularly grammar and vocabulary (Koyluoglu, 2010). The 20-question test was used as pre-test and post-test and assessed learning on all points of the target grammar and vocabulary being taught to the control group via conventional teaching methods. The materials used with the experimental group throughout the teaching process were three sketches (Appendices C-E). These sketches were developed by the researchers. They were short and in simple English in the form of dialogues and were extracted from the learners' schoolbook units so as to fit their proficiency level.

The second data collection tool was a classroom observation checklist that aimed to observe the situation of the students learning through the use of drama as a whole. The checklist was created by Deci and Ryan (1985) but adapted and abridged by the researchers to suit this study's focus and requirements. The modified version was first piloted to test its feasibility and no further modifications were made. It included four categories: the first two, motivational and communicative dimensions, were marked as rich or poor, while the other two categories were filled in by the observer according to the classroom situation.

Procedure

Both the experimental and control groups were administered the test at the onset of the study (as pre-test) to establish learners' levels of proficiency in English and, particularly, to identify the number of items on the test these students already know. The same test was given to participants at the end of the eighth week to measure the degree of language progress they had made through retention of vocabulary items and grammatical structures.

Only the experimental group was observed at regular intervals of one observation every week throughout the eight weeks of the experiment, where the observer sat at the back of the classroom and took notes.

In order to compare the mean scores of the pre-tests and post-tests of the two groups, a paired sample *t*-test was conducted using the SPSS program (Statistical Package for Social Sciences), version 16. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As indicated in Table 1 above, the mean of the pre-test score for the control group was 7.31, and 6.28 for the experimental group. The t value was 8.71, while p equalled 0.283. Considering these results, it can be said that both groups had almost the same proficiency level at the beginning of the experiment, as no statistically significant difference was found ($p > .05$).

With reference to Table 2, the mean of post-test scores for the control group was 10.13, while it reached 18.47 for the experimental group. Related to the means, t value was determined as 3.354 and *p* as .002.

Comparison of these results illustrates that the two groups had made progress in terms of language achievement. However, a statistically significant difference was found in terms of the post-test scores of both groups. The post-test values of the experimental group were significantly higher than those of the control group. This leads to the conclusion that the incorporation of drama in language classrooms helps improve participants' English proficiency level. The notably significant progress made by the experimental group is attributed to drama employment while learning English, evidenced by the increase in learning scores compared to the control group. This agrees with the conclusion of Wessels (1987) that vocabulary and grammar can be internalized in an integrated and contextualized manner, in this case, drama (cited in Gill, 2007). Additionally, Maley and Duff (2001) mentioned drama as an effective tool to learn vocabulary and structure and presented it as utile for revision and reinforcement. The findings of the current research confirm these authors' claims.

Simply put, the findings of this data analysis indicate that the experimental group, which was taught English using drama, was more successful on the post-test than the control group. The former displayed significant improvements attributable to dramatic activities. This strongly supports the assumption that drama has an important role in developing young learners' language skills.

Classroom observations, as Table 3 above demonstrates, indicate that oral fluency was another variable that was evolving. A dynamic production of the English language was noticeably evident when the experimental group was rehearsing and performing the play. It is worth noting that the learners were not focusing on correct grammar but on the communicative aspect of language. Furthermore, it was

Table 1. Comparison of pre-test results of control and experimental groups

Pre- test	Group	n	M	SD	t	p
	Control group	20	7.31	6.40	8.71	0.238
	Experimental group	20	6.28	6.32		

Table 2. Comparison of post-test results of control and experimental groups

Post- test	Group	n	M	SD	t	p
	Control group	20	10.13	9.38	3.354	0.002
	Experimental group	20	18.47	7.15		

Table 3. Observation checklist

Week	Average	Motivational dimensions (involvement/ interest/enthusiasm)	Communicative dimensions (speaking initiatives/turn taking/ social interaction)	Drama techniques used in classroom	Challenges
1	Rich			Role play	Noise
	Poor	√	√		Use of L1
					No classroom management
					Embarrassment
2	Rich			Role play	Noise
	Poor	√	√		Use of L1
					Lack of commitment
					No classroom management
3	Rich	√		Role play	Use of L1
	Poor		√	Simulation	Little noise
					Students' dominance
4	Rich	√		Role play	Use of L1
	Poor			Simulation	Little noise
					Students' dominance
5	Rich	√	√	Role play	Use of L1
	Poor			Simulation	Little noise
					Students' dominance
6	Rich	√	√	Role play	Use of L1
	Poor			Simulation	Little noise
					Students' dominance
7	Rich	√	√	Role play	Few members non-involvement
	Poor				Use of L1
					Little noise
8	Rich	√	√	Role play	Few members non-involvement
	Poor				Use of L1
					Little noise

the learners who were dominating the talk in the classroom (more than 80%, a highly required condition in communicative language teaching), in contrast to the traditional methods employed, which were basically teacher-centred, where teachers do most of the talking. The same idea was articulated by Gill (2007), who concluded that learners' involvement in the drama process enhances their speaking fluency as it offers them the opportunity to communicate within real settings and discuss meaning as they proceed.

The same instrument also showed a more frequent interactive relationship between the teacher and students. Much T-S (teacher-student) interaction was recorded during the drama activities. In fact, teacher and learners were sharing knowledge, listening to each other, discussing ideas, exchanging dialogues, and making decisions together. This result is consistent with the findings of Moovendhan and Baskaran (2012), which highlighted the crucial role of drama in developing the interactive dimension of learning. Drama not only significantly affects T-S interaction but also S-S (student-student) interaction, as it increases cooperation and collaboration among them. The same authors defined this as "student bonding," which took place when learners were assigned to work in pairs or form small groups in order to play different roles or go through several tasks.

In another respect, many demonstrations of motivation, which were vital to create an enjoyable learning environment, were observed. Active participation, enthusiasm, dynamism, and increased social interaction were progressively observed and mirrored the learners' motivation when instructed to perform a play or enact a dialogue. The learners' motivation was also displayed through their involvement in the drama process, where few disengagement instances were detected. As a matter of fact, the learners' self-esteem, spontaneity, and empathy increased, while their sensitivity to rejection decreased. Such behaviours were observed through the learners' taking initiative to talk without hesitation. These results are in line with those of Gill (2007) and confirm the claim of Bulut and Akyus (2017) that *"one of the best ways to achieve continuous interest in English language classes especially for young learners is to do drama"* (p. 49).

More interestingly, even though several language aspects and skills improved when incorporating drama in English classrooms, some other aspects were set aside and there was not any noticeable application of them. Writing, for example, was not noticeably dealt with in drama activities; thus, no progress could be made on those skills.

One challenge to using drama to teach language was noted in classroom observations: participants consistently resorted to their native language (Arabic) when communicating with each other, explaining issues or discussing ideas. Even though the use of L1 is tolerated to an extent, the deep reliance on it would distort the English language learning process. Godfrey (2010) found a similar problem when investigating the challenges of using drama activities in classrooms.

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Noise is another challenge the observer noticed. In fact, each time the teacher announced the beginning of the drama scene, the students started to mingle, making a lot of noise, thus making classroom management difficult. This may be explained by the teacher's lack of expertise in the use of the newly introduced tool and the learners' perception of drama activity as a time for fun and games. These findings are in strong agreement with those of Royka (2002) and Zafeiriadou (2009).

Another issue noted by the observer was disengagement and non-involvement in the learning process on the part of some learners. The drama activities did not allow for all class members to play roles; consequently, some students were assigned no tasks and felt alienated. This again may be due primarily to the teacher's lack of classroom control and also to learners' perceptions of this kind of activity, especially in cases where it did not appeal to their own preferences and needs. It may also be attributable to some students taking a dominant role over most of the responsibilities, leaving no room for less dominant peers to get involved.

Throughout the experiment timeframe, role play was extensively used, and to a lesser extent, simulation was employed. Only these two drama techniques were observed. This may be because role play is the most commonly used drama technique with which both teachers and students are comfortable. No instances of miming or improvisation were detected, which may be explained by teacher concerns regarding the non-verbal aspect of language and the students' dependence on it to convey meaning. Thus, no production of language takes place and no assessment of language retention would be possible. The students' fear of taking the risk of producing spontaneous language or acting without a ready-made script (improvisation) as well as their short experience with the English language are still other reasons that may have prevented the employment of other forms of drama.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study lend strong support to previous scholars' claims that if implemented effectively, drama promotes learning in language classrooms. Therefore, language teachers should be aware of the importance of drama and are recommended to use this tool as a challenging task in order to increase their learners' motivation and thus their academic achievements. One way to do this is by taking drama courses and including them in their continuous professional trainings. The same call was made by Kaaland-Wells (1994), who asserted that *"teachers who had taken a college drama course were more likely than the others to feel that it should be a part of all teacher training, and they were more likely to view it as effective"* (p. 25). Raising student awareness of the crucial importance of drama and explaining to them the rationale for choosing drama activities are highly recommended in order to overcome problems of discipline and classroom management. Teachers are also advised to give clear instructions and sufficient preparation time. Still, the teacher needs to establish certain classroom rules that learners must follow; only using English, for example, would help reduce the problem of L1 interference.

LIMITATIONS

Despite its findings that would add to the existing literature about drama integration in language classrooms, the current study suffers from several limitations. All participants were female, and as articulated by Rew and Moon (2013), there is a common belief that female students are more likely to participate in dramatic activities enthusiastically and demonstrate a greater motivation towards them as compared to their male counterparts. Had it involved male contributors, this work would have confirmed or rejected this belief by establishing a gender comparison. Another limitation has to do with the relatively small number of participants (20 students). The study could have been widened to include more schools with a more representative mix of learners in order to yield more reliable and generalisable findings.

One last point is related to the time devoted for the conduct of the study, which fits in the most common forms of research practice that lie in the realm of short-term intervention-style experiment in formal educational settings. However, Park and Won (2003) complained that

> at present there is a notable lack of long-term or longitudinal research that interrogates teaching-learning processes, or the long-term impact of drama pedagogy on second language learners. We have found little research that considers the implications of the impact of drama on language acquisition either over time or after a considerable amount of time has passed. (p. 485)

Unfortunately, this paper did not satisfy such condition. Therefore, longitudinal research on drama pedagogic attributes are needed.

CONCLUSION

As has been articulated by Wenden (2002), the introduction of drama into language classrooms is a valuable and useful way to deepen students' active involvement in their own learning process; thus, better language attainment takes place. This is particularly true in the case of young learners who always prefer enjoyable tasks, which would naturally enhance their learning. Similarly, Bulut and Akyus (2017) emphasized the importance of learners' predispositions to adapt to new and different methods and materials employed in classrooms in an understandable and useful way. They asserted that *"their brains are very flexible to learning foreign languages, and their attitude as well as their enthusiasm is high to learn different cultures and languages"* (p. 48). With all of this in mind, teachers will be successfully able to choose the most appropriate activities that suit their learners' abilities, interests, and needs; drama is evidently one of them. In effect, a comparison between traditional ways of teaching and the use of drama would show the relevance of the latter and the different positive aspects associated with it, despite the few challenges it presents. In summary, it can be surmised that drama activities generate a greater output of authentic language through interactive, hands-on activities, which are highly relevant to young learners. With the teacher as a guide, facilitator, and monitor rather than as a controller, target language learners will certainly profit from the incorporation of drama into classrooms.

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APPENDIX A

Language Test

Choose the right alternative

1. _____ is a cheetah.
   a- These   b- This   c- They

2. _____ are the largest animals.
   a- This   b- These   c- Thesis

3. The lion_____ faster than the cheetah.
   a- are   b- am   c- is

4. These animals_____ dangerous.
   a- Is   b- are   c- am

5. The lion is_____ than the cheetah.
   a- slowest   b- fastest   c- slower

6. The elephant is the_____ animal.
   a- bigger   b- biggest   c- big

7. The lion is the_____ animal.
   a- stronger   b- strong   c- strongest

8. The rhino is_____ than the lion.
   a- heavier   b- heaviest   c- heavy

9. The elephant is_____ big animal.
   a- ∅   b- A   c- the

10. The cat and the rabbit are_____ small animals.
    a- ∅   b- A   c- the

11. We find many big animals in the_____.
    a- hospital   b- zoo   c- school

12. The_____ can eat the leaves from the top of the trees.
    a- Lion   b- tiger   c- giraffe

13. The tiger is a _____ animal.
    a- Small   b- slow   c- wild

14. The_____ is a big bird with long legs.
    a- Ostrich   b- tiger   c- giraffe

15. The Kangaroo has the longest_____.
    a- Jump   b- neck   c- head

16. The giraffe has a long_____.
    a- Jump   b- neck   c- head

17. The rhino has a horn on its_____.
    a- eyes   b- nose   c- mouth

18. The_____ can swim in the river.
    a- Lion   b- hippo   c- giraffe

19. The lion and the tiger are_____ animals.
    a- small   b- friendly   c- big

20. The fox eats_____.
    a- grass   b- trees   c- rabbits

APPENDIX B

Classroom observation Checklist

Week	Average	Motivational dimensions (involvement/interest/ enthusiasm)	Communicative dimensions (speaking initiatives/ turn taking/social interaction)	Drama techniques used in classrooms	Challenges
1	Rich				
	Poor				
2	Rich				
	Poor				
3	Rich				
	Poor				
4	Rich				
	Poor				
5	Rich				
	Poor				
6	Rich				
	Poor				
7	Rich				
	Poor				
8	Rich				
	Poor				

APPENDIX C

I am the first

The lion	(The lion looks out of the theatre window and says hello to the animals). Hello my friends the animals.
All the animals	Hello king of the jungle.
The lion	I heard there was a night safari trip in the zoo and I am the first who should know about who visits the zoo day or night.
The tiger	Yes, Leaf came with her family yesterday night but you and the elephant were not here, I was on the tree, there were so many birds and there was also an owl eating an orange.
The bird	During the daytime, the groups of flowers, roses, trees and leaves from the sixth grade came to the zoo with their teacher in an enjoyable trip. The elephant was there during the visit while I was eating fruits.
The lion	Now, I would like you to tell me in order who was the first to see the train car with which the visitors had a tour in the zoo yesterday morning.
The fox	I am the first who saw them in the zoo when their trip started.
The elephant	I am the second who saw them when they were talking about me.
The tiger	I am the third who saw them when I was behind the tree eating birds.
The gazelle	I am the fourth who saw the train car when I was collecting grass.
The zebra	I am the fifth who saw them when their trip ended and I went to eat grass.
The lion	What was the hippo doing during the trip?
The hippo	I was in the river eating grass.
The fox	I would like to say goodbye now because I am hungry so I will go to eat rabbits.
The gazelle	Me too, I am hungry I will go to eat apples.
The lion	Yes, go. Goodbye but don't forget that I am the first and you have to tell me everything.

APPENDIX D

Do you know me?

The supervisor	All the best to you all. I will come back to check the accomplishment and the management of the setting. The teacher- researcher and I will arrange the desk to arbitrate the contest.
The researcher	Dear distinguished students from the groups of flowers, trees, leaves and leaders, thank you for your effort and interest in preparing for the scientific contest.
The supervisor	Welcome. We are honored to have you among us in the jury of this contest. The contest will start shortly between the two groups of trees and leaves and will be managed by the group of flowers.
The researcher	Hello everyone. I am happy to be with you to follow up and arbitrate this contest. Let's start asking questions to the two teams.
The flower	The contest will involve comparative questions of the animals we saw during our exciting trip to the zoo.
The tree	How will the contest mechanism be for our group and that of the leaves?
The leaf	Me too, I would like to ask which team will start answering.
The supervisor	The flower team will start by asking the question about the animals, the first team, that of trees, will be given the opportunity to answer and a mark will be recorded but they lose if they do not answer.
The researcher	And then another question will be given to the second team: the leaves, and again a mark will be recorded in case they give no answer they also lose. At the end of the contest the marks will be calculated to identify the winner.
The flower	The first question to the group of trees: State three of the animals that we saw in the previous play.
The group of trees	The cheetah - the giraffe - the rhinoceros
The flower	The second question to the group of leaves: State three of the animals that we saw in the previous play.
The group of leaves	The lion- the Kangaroo – the elephant
The flower	Let's start the comparison between the animals mentioned by the group of trees (The cheetah - the giraffe - the rhinoceros). The fastest animal is. The tallest animal is. The heaviest animal is .
The group of trees	The cheetah is the fastest….the giraffe is the tallest….the rhinoceros is the heaviest
The flower	And now let's compare the animals selected by the group of leaves (the lion, the kangaroo, and the elephant). The biggest animal is……. The animal that has the longest jump is…. The strongest animal is
The group of leaves	The biggest animal is the elephant. The animal that has the longest jump is the kangaroo and the strongest animal is the lion.
The researcher	Correct answers for both teams go on…
The flower	The group of trees, please fill in the following blanks The animal that has the longest neck is……… the animal that leaves in Australia is……….
The group of trees	The giraffe has the longest neck. The animal that leaves in Australia is the kangaroo.
The flower	The group of leaves, please fill in the following blanks The animal that doesn't wake up at night is………. An animal that is slower than the cheetah…….
The group of leaves	The elephant does not wake up at night. The lion is slower than the cheetah.
The supervisor	Good job. All the answers of the contest are correct.
The flower	The last question is for both groups together. I will mention two names of animals and each of the groups should compare between them. The lion and the tiger: the group of trees. The kangaroo and the elephant: the group of leaves.
The group of trees	The lion is bigger than the tiger The tiger is smaller than the lion
The group of leaves	The elephant is heavier than the kangaroo. The kangaroo is lighter than the elephant.
The flower	Thank you both teams for your interaction and answers to the contest questions and now the jury members will announce the results.
The supervisor	Equal scores with fair and distinguished answers for both teams.
The researcher	I would like to thank the flower group for arranging and organizing the contest as well as the groups of trees and leaves for the valuable information about the comparison between animals and I wish you all success and excellence.

APPENDIX E

This is my project

Flower 1	My colleagues in the flowers group, we would like to make a painting project about the big animals.
Flower 2	But we need more information about these animals to accomplish the project.
Leaf 1	Our project in the leaves group will be a report about your own project in which we compare the animals you chose in your painting.
Leaf 2	This comparison requires enriching information that we need to look for.
Tree 1	My colleagues and I in the group of trees would like to prepare a booklet about the home of some animals.
Tree 2	But we need help to find answers for some questions.
Rose 1	My group's project is to prepare a photo album about wild and tame animals.
Rose 2	And we are looking for information about these animals to complete our album project.
Flower 3	My colleagues in my group and the rest of groups, what do you think of consulting the zoologist in the research center to ask her about the information we need for our projects?
Rose 3	Yes, I heard there is a zoologist called Fatma, she will help us. So let's go to the research center.
All the students	Hello zoologist.
Zoologist	Hello and welcome to the research center.
Tree 3	Our zoologist, we have questions that we are looking for answers to so as to complete our project.
Zoologist	It is my pleasure to answer all your questions. It is so good to meet students who are interested in research and knowledge.
Flower 1	We would like you to provide us with the names of big- sized animals because our project is to make a painting about some of these animals.
Zoologist	The elephant, the rhino, the kangaroo, the cheetah, the tiger, the giraffe, the lion and the ostrich are among the big- sized animals.
Flower 2	That's great, we will collect photos of these animals and put them on our painting.
Flower 3	What is the rhino, zoologist? I haven't seen it or heard of it.
Zoologist	It is a big animal that has one horn on its nose; it is herbivorous and is called rhino as an abbreviation for the word Rhinoceros.
Leaf 3	As for our project, we are preparing a report to compare between the big animals mentioned in the project of the flowers group. We would like you to give us some answers for our questions about these comparisons.
Zoologist	Absolutely, I am ready to answer all your questions.
Leaf 1	Which is faster the cheetah or the tiger?
Zoologist	The cheetah runs so fast, it is faster than the tiger and the lion as well.
Leaf 2	What is the biggest animal you mentioned to the flowers group in their painting project?
Zoologist	The elephant is a very big animal. It is bigger than the hippo and the rhino.
Leaf 3	What is the tallest animal, zoologist?
Zoologist	The giraffe has a long neck. It is taller than the rest of the animals that is why it can eat the leaves from the top of the trees. The ostrich is also a big bird that has long neck and long legs and runs very fast.
Leaf 1	Is the ostrich faster than the cheetah? Which is smaller the cheetah or the lion? And which is heavier the rhino or the lion?
Zoologist	The ostrich is slower than the cheetah but the cheetah is smaller than the lion. The cheetah is known as a big cat.
Leaf 3	Thank you zoologist for all the answers you provided about the features to compare between the big animals. Writing the report will be very easy now.
Tree 3	As for us zoologist, our project is to prepare a booklet about the homes of some animals. We get to know most of them but we still have one animal that we do not know about its home.
Zoologist	Welcome trees group. I am ready to respond to every inquiry.
Tree 2	You mentioned the kangaroo, where does this animal live?
Zoologist	The kangaroo lives in Australia.
Tree 1	Thank you very much. We will complete the booklet project we have already started.
Rose 3	Our project in the roses group is to prepare a photo album about wild and non- wild animals and we have few questions about the animals you mentioned in the meeting.

Zoologist	A great project roses group. What are your questions?
Rose 1	Which of the animals you mentioned are wild and which are not?
Zoologist	The rhino, the lion, the tiger and cheetah are wild animals while the ostrich, the giraffe, the elephant and the kangaroo are not.
Flower 1	Thank you zoologist for the information about the big animals. We will complete our project and make our painting.
Leaf 1	We too thank you zoologist for answering our questions about the comparison between big animals. We will finish our project and make our report.
Tree 1	We appreciate the information you provided about the home of the kangaroo. We will complete our project and prepare the booklet about animals' homes.
Rose 1	Our big thanks from the roses' group zoologist for responding to our enquiries to complete our project and prepare the photo album about the animals that are wild and those that are not.
Zoologist	Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide the information from my experience in the animal world.
All the students	Thank you for welcoming us in the research center and see you soon hopefully.