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# DEVELOPING ORAL PROFICIENCY AND MOTIVATION THROUGH SCRIPT-BASED AND IMPROVISATIONAL DRAMA

Muhammet Çağrı Güzel
*California State University - San Bernardino*

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DEVELOPING ORAL PROFICIENCY AND MOTIVATION THROUGH

SCRIPT-BASED AND IMPROVISATIONAL DRAMA

_____

A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts

in

Education:

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

_____

by

Muhammet Çağrı Güzel

December 2017

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Approved by:

Dr. Kathryn Howard, Committee Chair, Education

Dr. Bonnie Piller, Committee Member

ABSTRACT

Utilizing drama has long been an innovative and dynamic concept as a part of a communicative approach in English classrooms around the world. Teaching languages through drama offers many beneficial opportunities for learners. Nevertheless, traditional methods are still the widely held teaching structures across the globe, which results in an increase in the number of demotivated learners who often hate and fear to practice one of the challenging skills when learning a foreign language- speaking- as it is a productive language skill. Not only do the traditional methods bring negative emotional and psychological outcomes, but it also causes a gradual slowdown in the language acquisition process. The aim of this study was to exclude these problems and to provide a learner–centered atmosphere. This study is intended to gain insights, analyze and better understand the use of script-based and improvisational drama to develop oral proficiency by taking student motivation and attitudes into consideration. The study addressed the following questions: 1) What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention and after the intervention?; 2) What unique roles do the script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering learners' development of oral proficiency?; 3) What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention?; and 4) How do they make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity? In order to

investigate these questions, 2 sessions of script-based and 2 sessions of improvisational drama, total of 4 sessions of drama intervention were offered to learners, and the researcher conducted interviews, video recordings, and field observations and notes throughout the intervention. Findings indicated that script-based and improvisational drama helped learners improve their oral proficiencies, decrease their negative motivations, reduce their stress, anxiety and shyness levels, and increase their positive motivations. This study contributes to our understanding of the role of script-based and improvisational drama in language learning process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my beloved father,

Muhiddin Güzel,

and my lovely, deeply missed mother

Hatice Güzel.

Thank you so much for always being there for me

when I needed you the most.


Your spirits remain in my soul.

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INTRODUCTION


Background of the Project

As English has become the language of the world, the urgent need of learning the language becomes the ultimate goal for many individuals in this century. In this respect, English has become an intercultural and international language that many different people speak all over the world. English is a central language, as it is used in the teaching-learning process. For people who go to study from non-English speaking countries to other countries, the only mode of instruction they have is English. For the people who use the Internet, English is the main language of communication, as there is a wealth of information available. Many inventions and innovations are in English. Therefore, the English language is bound to grow and develop at every stage. From educational settings to economic developments, from international relations to scientific community, English is the sole language of communication. It is a well-secured and widely spoken language in the world. As it is a vital means of international communication to every country, so is it to Turkey.

The Role of English Language in Turkey

One of the main reasons for English being used as an important language in Turkey is that it is now the language of the world, and therefore it is essential for international relations, which makes it a basic part of regular life. Increasing

commercial, cultural and touristic relations between Turkey and the world have shaped English as a primary language means which attaches Turkey to the rest of the world. The outcomes of the modern world's demands have increased the popularity and prestige of English in Turkey such that it is the second most used language after Turkish. However, it is certainly a foreign language, and not becoming a second language in Turkey. English is the language of trade between different countries, and widely used in universities and educational institutions. Most jobs and business organizations require a certain level of English proficiency from candidates. (Konig, 1990)

English has also become easy to learn thanks to the availability of books, websites, resources, and teachers. English is a necessity of time and society, and has been a key that opens many doors in this globalizing world. Hence, English has an indisputable value and importance in Turkey today.

History of English Teaching and Methodologies in Turkey

Large numbers of Turks emigrated to Europe —especially to Germany and France—because of socioeconomic reasons in Turkey in 1950s. Based on this emigration, the German and French languages gained much importance within Turkey; emigrants with German and French proficiency could find better jobs and raise their standard of living. These languages started to be taught as second languages in high schools and universities. Employers as well were seeking these language capabilities in job candidates.

However, in consideration of improvements in science and technology after the 1990s, English has replaced these languages as a priority and has become much more powerful compared to the others. German and French are still taught in some institutions in light of the relationships that Turkey has had with these countries dating back to 1950s, but this time they are third or fourth languages.

English is taught as a foreign language through text books and student work books at schools in Turkey. There is a predominant focus on grammar subjects as traditional methods are widely practiced across the country. Therefore, most of the teachers do not follow the most recent methods in foreign language teaching. They mostly use "English by formula" method. They teach the grammar formulas and expect students to transfer those formulas through high-stakes tests which demotivate students. A majority of the students aim at just passing these classes rather than learning, whereas some wants to learn and use it in social life.

Few teachers give the equal amount of attention to each language skill areas. Most of the teachers do not focus on the skills equally which affects students' language development. And students are subjected to oral tests, performance assignments, written exams and tests which do not accurately portray their language proficiency.  The main thing teachers seek in their measurement means is how well students are able to recall the information taught. Traditional methods are preferred instead of more modern strategies and

methods. In addition to this, teachers often overlook the use of social-emotional teaching methods by means of making associations between the target language and the mother language. All these factors affect learners' motivations in a negative way, and it is a known fact that motivation is identified as a fundamental aspect of language development process.

Social Context of English Learning in Turkey

Linking Asia and Europe continents like a bridge and in proximity to the Middle East and Africa, Turkey is one of the most significant international centers of tourism, economy and international business, and this proximity has engendered many different responsibilities regarding English.

Owing to the fact that Turkey is one of the members of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and is still negotiating with the European Union (EU) for full membership, Turkey has adopted language policies to spread and enhance learning and teaching of English. Based upon this perspective, English is now the most prestigious foreign language in Turkey. Hence, to obtain a well-paid job in Turkey, having abilities and skills in communicating in English is one of the most crucial requirements that employees need to meet.

Target Teaching Level

While English was gaining this much importance in Turkey, universities, high schools and many different kinds of educational institutions changed their language policies as well. Universities began to teach English to their students beginning even before students started their freshmen year. Regardless of which

department students were enrolled in, they had to study English for a whole year. If they failed, they would have to take the courses again. Furthermore, there are many universities in Turkey that give opportunities to their students to study English abroad.

Today, there are basically two different kinds of high schools in Turkey: state-run public high schools and private high schools. State-run public high schools also consist of two different schools- general high schools and Anatolian high schools. General high schools have general English teaching curricula without any special focus, English is taught just as the other courses in students' schedule. On the other hand, Anatolian high schools have intensive first-year English courses. There have been many changes made to these schools over the last few years. Although The Ministry of National Education has been working on a different model to change the current system, these schools are still keys that open doors for many different high-quality universities.

English has begun to be taught not only at universities and high schools, but also at primary schools. If families want their children to be taught earlier, they can have their children start learning English in preschool and kindergarten as well.

In the meantime, some universally accepted language exams such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) have become influential ways for students, employees, and

academicians to be able to prove their English skills not only for private companies or institutions but also for state-owned institutions. In addition to these globally acknowledged exams, there is also a common domestic exam which is called Foreign Language Exam (in Turkish Yabancı Dil Sınavı, and abbreviated as YDS). Due to the fact that English has been taught using a rote-learning-based education system in Turkey, this exam does not assess students' language skills fairly. Fortunately, as a consequence of decisions made by the state, there will soon be some changes in this exam.

Although speaking is one of the most important skills in English or any other language, people have very few opportunities to improve this skill in Turkey. There are some good institutions and English only-zones where people can find proficient English speakers with whom to practice their English, but it is always hard to find opportunities to practice and improve this skill outside of these limited domains. There is a common idea in Turkey that Turkish and English languages are very different from each other in terms of grammar, pronunciation, spelling, etc., and that is why Turkish people have problems and difficulties learning English. These are the main ideas causing lack of motivation in learners. Yet, drawbacks in English teaching systems, methodologies, and techniques are always ignored. In other words, the dominant rote learning-based education system in Turkey focuses on grammar to the detriment of other skills.

<u>Current State of Teaching at Target Level</u>

Teaching a foreign language is based on standard stereotypes in Turkey. The method has been used in English classrooms, which is supposed to meet the needs and challenges of English language learners for the world we live in today, is a completely memorization-based approach. Turkish students try to memorize words and phrases for months or even years; and after that they are subjected to tests with questionable validity. Having been taught a foreign language under this system for years, they leave the system without learning anything of value. Therefore, Turkish students often hate and fear learning a foreign language.

The grammar-translation method, in which students learn grammatical rules, and then apply those rules by translating sentences between the target language and the native language, has been the most popular and common method so far in Turkey. Yet recent research has shown that because this method has very limited scope, students often fail at some skills such as speaking and even writing a simple letter. This, in turn, causes a lack of motivation and confidence. This method has been used in Turkey for many years, and this is one of the substantial problems that Turkish students face throughout their language education.

The well-known applied linguists and educators Richards and Rodgers question the validity of the Grammar Translation Method in their textbook "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching": "Though it may be true to say

that the Grammar-Translation Method is still widely practiced, it has no advocates. It is a method for which there is no theory. There is no literature that offers a rationale or justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory" (2014, p. 7).

In recent years, The Ministry of National Education has taken some new steps on English curriculum regarding the methods being used in the English Language Teaching field. They have been trying to educate new teachers by applying the communicative approach, which has more focus on communicative and creative skills in this field. Under the auspices of the studies carried out by the Ministry, many young and well-educated teachers have been trained. In the hope of these studies and works, the Ministry aims to increase the number of these teachers.

## Purpose of the Project

As it has been pointed out that the traditional methods not only slow down language acquisition, but they also bring several problematic outcomes to language acquisition process. To minimize all those problems and to provide a learner–centered atmosphere to educational settings, this research project aims to analyze and better understand the use of script-based and improvisational drama, which is an advanced and student-centered teaching methodology in which participants work collaboratively to develop oral proficiency by taking their motivation and reactions into consideration. In view of the fact that teaching

languages based on a learn-by-rote system lacks meaning, the proposed research aims to show that drama can provide meaning to the language acquisition process. "Drama is to be about meaning: meaning indicating, meaning seeking, meaning making, and meaning finding" (Bolton, 1999, p. 177).

Goals of the Research and Research Questions

In this study, the main focus was on developing learners' oral communication skills through script-based and improvisational drama. The goal of the research was to investigate students' motivations and attitudes toward participating in creative dramatic performances, their understandings of its benefits, and the specific aspects of speaking proficiency that benefit from this approach. In other words, what aspect of the performative activity gives the learners a sense of their own oral proficiency gain? The research investigated benefits of integrating script-based and improvisational dramatics in speaking classrooms as a supplement to traditional teaching methods. The research revolved around the following questions.

1) What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention and after the intervention?

2) What unique roles do the script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering learners' development of oral proficiency?

3) What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention?

4) How do they make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity?

## Significance of the Project

This proposed project highlights the substance of utilizing drama in English classrooms. It is expected that the research results will show many benefits of using dramatic activities and techniques in teaching and learning in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) classrooms as well. This approach can considerably help learners increase their confidence, self-esteem and motivation. Furthermore, improvisational drama, which promotes a free and learner-centered atmosphere in educational settings, can advance students' language skills, especially speaking by providing a creative and stimulating context.

## Limitations of the Project

The main limitation to this research was the duration of the sessions. The whole program had to be kept as short as possible due to the learners' different and unstable schedules. Although the program was limited to 4 sessions in a month, there were significant improvements observed and data collected. Another limitation of the study was the small number of participants: It is not possible to generalize to larger student populations based on a small set of

students. However, this study aims to provide an in-depth snapshot of these learners.

Content of the Project

This research project consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the background of the project and the education system in Turkey along with the purpose, content, significance and the limitations of the research. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature which includes the process of creative dramatics, drama in EFL/ESL learning, drama at the center of the text, drama at the edges of the text, and oral fluency through improvisational drama. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework and research design of the project. Chapter 4 analyzes the findings and results. Finally, chapter 5 summarizes the project and gives recommendations for possible future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Using drama methods in English classrooms has long been an advanced and dynamic concept. There are many benefits of using dramatic activities and techniques in teaching and learning in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms as well. Using drama in the second language (L2) classroom can significantly increase students' confidence, self-esteem and motivation (Chauhan, 2004). Teaching English through drama, a powerful language teaching tool that involves students interactively, can foster students' language skills including reading, writing, listening- especially speaking- by providing a creative and stimulating context (Zyoud, 2010).

Motivation

Motivation is one of the corner stones of language learning process. It is so important to understand the relationship between motivation and its effects on language acquisition. As Dörnyei states (2005) "It is easy to see why motivation is of great importance in second language acquisition (SLA). It provides the primary impetus to initiate second language (L2) learning and later the driving force needed to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved with SLA presuppose motivation to some extent" (p.

65). Motivation is directly affected by self-confidence, and it affects the language learning process as well. There are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to the type which is originated by internal factors which means there is no reward at the end of the activity. In other words, the motivation is generated inside of a person. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to the expectation of a reward at the end of the activity, so the person is motivated by the reward which means the motivation is generated from outside sources.

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), in the language learning process there are two primary learning motivations: these are called 'integrative' and 'instrumental' motivation. If the purpose of learning a language is a job, or qualifying for an academic, official requirement, career path, or any type of goal, this motivation is instrumental. Whereas, if someone wants to learn a language to integrate oneself within a culture, or shows interest in learning about its society and people, this motivation is called integrative motivation.

As to the relationships between these types of motivations, just as there is a connection in between extrinsic and instrumental motivations due to the fact that both have outside effects, so is there a link between intrinsic and integrative motivations: both have internal elements. Some studies, such as Muchnick and Wolfe (1982), underline the fact that both motivation types are important and needed for second language learners. On the other side, some research has claimed that if learners had integrative motivation, the language learning process

would be more successful (Gardner, 2010; Ellis, 2008; Dornyei, 1994). Therefore, integrative motivation was considered more important than instrumental motivation.

Krashen and Terrel (1983) remarked that confidence was another crucial element in connection with motivation for language learning process. According to them, confident learners who have a positive self-image, defined as a person's beliefs about himself, will be better motivated for second language learning. And if a learner is both confident and motivated, it is a great deal of help and expected that the learning process occurs more quickly.

To be able to communicate competently, the key component is motivation. McCroskey (1992, 2005) studied how to measure motivation. Motivation has two sides, positive and negative. The experience of anxiety, shyness or apprehension about communication is a negative motivation. Willingness or tendency to initiate a communication is a positive motivation.  McCroskey formed two types of assessment instruments: Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) to measure communication apprehension, or negative motivation, and Willingness to Communicate (WTC) to measure positive motivation. These assessment instruments help educators to measure learners' motivation in an easily accessible format so that they can adjust their teaching strategies and methods to better address learners' needs.

As stated previously, educational drama in second language classrooms may increase learners' confidence, self-esteem and motivation. With the help of

script-based and improvisational drama methods, this research aims to stimulate intrinsic, integrative motivation to benefit the learning process, so that learners can develop their oral proficiency gains.

## Drama in EFL/ESL Learning

There are many clear advantages of using creative and dynamic dramatic activities in EFL/ESL classrooms. Drama gives participants the chance to communicate in real-life contexts even in their limited second language, by using non-verbal communication such as facial expressions and body movements. Drama is an ultimate and practical way to encourage participants to guess the meaning of language in a real context, and promote language learning in an active, motivating, and creative experience. This rich pedagogy helps learners gain confidence and self-esteem by taking different real or fictional roles in drama, through which they could use language naturally and spontaneously. (Carkin, 2007)

Drama supports participants as they develop their problem-solving skills. The new identities help them speak in English and make errors without shame as participants take roles and enact. The freedom of taking risks permits them to reduce their self-criticism, and helps participants protect and increase their self-esteem. Drama activities in classrooms have the power to transform the social structure of the classroom, engaging participants and facilitators in projects, creating new face-to-face interactions (Kao & O'Neill, 1998).

Furthermore, using drama in EFL/ESL learning brings the real world into classrooms. By using cross-curricular content, teachers and facilitators can choose topics from a variety of other subjects, and participants can enact scenes from literature or history in which they can work on the issues and ideas that power the curriculum. Moreover, the culture, stories and customs of the new language can be also introduced through drama (Desiatova, 2009).

Through dramatizing, participants capitalize on all five senses, each of them draw to the one that fits best. In this way, they can stimulate their intellect and imagination in order to better communicate and empathize with other participants. Besides, participants find themselves in such a risk-free environment that they are more motivated to speak and increase their participation through expanded opportunities arising from the materials and student-centeredness in drama (Gill, 2008).

As mentioned above, drama can noticeably foster all four receptive and productive skills of a language--reading, writing, listening and speaking. Teaching English as a foreign language predictably involves a balance between receptive and productive skills. These skills can be stimulated effectively in a classroom where creative drama is utilized. Also, reading aloud with expression and writing with expression and clarity are the foundational skills in reading and writing. These momentous forms of expression are integrated with oral communication skills. Therefore, it is suitable to integrate the dynamic dramatics to the development of reading and writing as well (Zyoud, 2010).

Drama activities are useful in the development of oral communication skills, and reading and writing as well (Aldavero, 2008). In Miccoli's (2003) research, the effects of drama both on the teaching and the learning were investigated. The author asserts that language comes alive through drama in an oral skills development class. Because drama helps participants confront their fears and take risks, they are able to improve their oral skills. This is related to an understanding that speaking is not only about pronunciation, words and structure but also about meanings, feelings and motivations. In other words, using drama in English teaching brings those issues to the fore, and dramatic enactment improves oral communication skills. Miccoli explicates at the end of her study that participants in dramatics worked toward the development of their oral skills. They learned how to deliver lines on time, with a satisfactory intonation and appropriate body language, presenting characters' feelings and motivations.

Noor, Rahayu and Rosnija (2012) argue that there are seven ways to build speaking fluency activities: 1. incorporating repetition, in which teachers or facilitators always give information about the lesson with short phrases; 2. Provide more time for conversational practice; 3. providing participants some time in advance so that they can plan before speaking to overcome affective barriers to speaking about the topic given; 4. using the topics in which the students are interested, familiar and motivated to practice their fluency in English; 5.  confirming a suitable language level for students; 6. requiring students to practice speaking with other participants for a set time every day so as to reduce

the pauses and improve fluency and natural speaking; 7. teaching formulaic sequences by using common English phrases in order to develop participants' fluency in an efficient manner. Based on these important ways to develop fluency in English, the writer introduces the drama technique because through drama, fluency can provide opportunities for all seven ways.

By the virtue of drama, students are permitted and encouraged to go through the educational dialogue and to express their opinions in a free and authentic voice. Styslinger (2000) mentions teachers' responsibilities, and warns them about these hidden power relations: that to meet the advantages that drama offers, teachers should reduce the power in their classrooms and assist students to resist oppressive discourse. Referring to Freire's (1983) argument in relation to literacy education, that "divide-and-rule" and "manipulation" can be noted in teachers' actions, she claims that drama might be recognized as a political force because it could provide multiple opportunities for problem solving. However, students are shown that they have the same power to understand conditions, to make choices, and to take actions through drama.

Initial traces of preliminary drama in education theory can be seen in Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Paolo Freire, a prominent Brazilian educator and philosopher, in his critical pedagogy approach to education could be considered as a pioneer in teaching language through drama because of the fact that he integrated social interactions with the work of language development. Freire's approach is more on teachers' strategies and behaviors. He suggests

that teachers should not be authoritarians, rather be libertarians. He advises that students should be taken out of the old-fashioned passive receiver roles into active learners' roles. In his well-known reproach to the "banking concept" of education, what he implies is the opposite of what he describes as "the banking concept" of education. In the banking concept:

(a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;

(b) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;

(c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;

(d) the teacher talks and the students listen – meekly;

(e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;

(f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;

(g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;

(h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who are not consulted) adapt to it;

(i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;

(j) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the students are mere objects. (Freire, 1970, p. 73)

Freire means that approaches based on the banking concept establish a division between a teacher and students, resulting in the clear failure of their true consciousness, because the individuals can only realize the past or former experiences through the relationships and connections that they portray within their lives. From this point of view, Freire claims teachers' roles are depositors and students are receptors within the banking model. By this means, the banking concept transforms participants into objects. Participants, taking their roles as objects, show no independence and correlatively no capability to rationalize and conceptualize any understanding at a personal level. On the grounds of this primary misapprehension, the method promotes a formation of oppression and power (Micheletti, 2010).

> To alleviate this "dehumanization" produced by the banking concept,
> Freire introduces what is deemed as "problem-posing education". In
> this approach the roles of students and teachers become less
> structured, and both engage in acts of dialogic enrichment to
> effectively ascertain knowledge from each other
> (Micheletti, 2010, p. 2).

What Freire advocates is an effective and creative education method in which teachers and students cooperatively learn and share their experiences and knowledge with each other. Freire says, "Apart from inquiry, apart from praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, hopeful inquiry human beings

pursue in the world, with the world, and each other" (Freire, 1970, p. 53). He asserts in this model that teachers should act more as guides than authorities; and students should be considered as subjects and active participants rather than being objects (Freire, 1970).

One of the most significant British leading pioneers in classroom drama, Dorothy Heathcote, claims that the key way for a student to engage in drama is through an intense personal relationship with the material in order to overcome any inability to draw upon the experiences of the participants. According to her, having participants engage in creative dramatics would challenge them to regenerate not only their understanding of the issues presented, but also it is the best way to communicate understanding of these issues (Heathcote, 1995).

Another important pioneer and leading practitioner who paved the way for process drama is Gavin Bolton. He asserts that participants should intentionally analyze the deep ideas and opinions set within a text. Otherwise, in the performance of that text, they may simply reproduce the outline of the playwright. He underlines the participants' needs for intense personal discovery and suggests that participants and teachers should continually revisit their purposes and goals throughout the dramatic performance to explore more deeply the theme or issue embedded within the drama. (Bolton, 1999)

The pioneers of a new and fundamental form of drama in classroom in education were Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton, yet Cecily O'Neill (1995) a leading advocate of "process drama" was the one who made it practical and

available to educators and learners all around the world. She developed the imaginative, creative, and dynamic teaching model called process drama, a model characterized by work powered by transformatory outcomes that expand the worlds of drama education and theatre practice (Schneider, Crumpler, & Rogers, 2006).

The Process of Creative Dramatics

As opposed to the traditional idea of drama (reading and analyzing plays), the process of creative dramatics is an advanced and student-centered teaching methodology in which participants work collaboratively to create dramatic production to explore a specific theme or series of related themes, not for the benefit of an audience, but rather for the benefit of the participants themselves. Participants improvise a variety of imagined roles and situations in which they engage their experiences and knowledge to expand self-awareness and multiple considerations beyond their own points of view.

The process drama engages participants in multiliteracies expressed through a range of creative dramatics and various forms of dynamic representations by increasing their motivation and self-esteem. Process drama focuses on the fundamental elements of communication in these practices; many other art media are involved in this process as well. Alternative sign systems support varied methods of making meaning, and elicit an inspiring variety of

participant responses that are exercised in visual, literary, and dramatic imagination.

Imagination provides a prevailing catalyst for learning, and is central to this kind of pedagogy. Imagination is a kind of power through which learners can develop problem solving and critical thinking skills through formation of old and new images. Through using imagination in classrooms, a variety of learning opportunities arises for both teacher and students, and stimulates many challenging cognitive activities such as interpretation, evaluation and reflection. Process drama is essentially social owing to the fact that it is acquired in the company of other participants, and involves collaboration and negotiation of meaning as participants understand and interpret their own opinions with other participants in drama (Wilner, 1975).

To put it in a different way, process drama uses the real to enlighten the fictional, and the fictional to inform the real, and correlates both to provide cognitive and affective learning. As a consequence, process drama is an influential tool for learning, providing a way to facilitate and emphasize the multiple sign systems that inform literacy development (Schneider, et al., 2006).

Styslinger draws upon the dual classification system for drama that was first suggested by Wolf, Edminston and Enciso (1997): 'drama at the center of the text' and 'drama at the edges of the text'. She notes that it can be applied more than one way under these two titles, such as script based dramatic play, creative drama and improvisational drama.

<u>Drama at the Center of the Text</u>

It is assumed that drama brings emancipatory content into education; however, it should be offered in a liberatory way, through drama at the center of the text. Because drama in this form places a written piece of literature or exposition center stage, participants and activities are positioned about the actual text. In this form, spoken lines of text are usually distributed or paraphrased during this process, and participants must remain true to the text.

According to Styslinger (2000), the role of teachers stereotypically remains exterior. Teachers are facilitators, yet they may participate in drama activity if they want to. However, she continues that educators who prefer to practice drama at the center of the text in their classrooms are infrequent. According to Styslinger, most of the educators prefer not to enter the drama because they want to place themselves in a greater position of power.

<u>Script-based Drama.</u> As previously mentioned, participants are subjected to actual texts, and limited to the scripts provided by educators in script-based drama in EFL classrooms. However, scripts are often employed in EFL instruction owing to the fact that they allow participants to actively engage in the activities, and help them acquire necessary aspects of English, such as vocabulary, idioms, grammar and syntax of English speech.

As they develop in all aspects of language, students can benefit from a dynamic encounter with language that comes closest to real communication through provided scripts that are rehearsed in class. Even though the script-

based drama form does not provide emancipatory activities and ways for

students to acquire the language, it is very useful for literature classes to perform

the plays that are required by the curricula to better understand the details in the

plays.

<u>Drama at the Edges of the Text</u>

Contrary to drama at the center of the text, drama at the edges of the text

does not entail text or scripts for participants to retell. Drama at the edges of the

text provides more liberatory, dynamic and creative activities. This form of drama

can be enacted in a variety of ways, including three specified by Styslinger :

Dramatic play, creative drama and improvisational drama.

<u>Dramatic Play.</u> Styslinger defines dramatic play as the spontaneous and

imaginative play of young children. In other words, by acting, either with each

other or with toys and props, children can use dramatic play to understand or

interpret a play, a story or a book. Dramatic play allows participants to transform

their own knowledge, imaginations and interests into real life. It helps participants

to develop their self-esteem and intellectual knowledge.

<u>Creative Drama.</u> Creative practice of drama is a structured form of

dramatic learning guided by a leader, and more complex in subject matter than

dramatic play. Creative drama highlights the imagination and experience, either

real or fictional of participants in great detail. Using creative drama in EFL/ESL

classrooms combines interpersonal relations, group dynamics and language

instruction. Creative drama in EFL provides the authentic material and motivation

necessary for participants to acquire English, and build oral communication skills.

Improvisational Drama. The third practice of drama that Styslinger outlines

is improvisational drama. This form is slightly more structured than dramatic play.

Two main forms of improvisation are the most common in education, story drama

and theme-oriented drama. In story drama, participants enact a particular story,

developing plot and character elements through improvising. On the other hand,

in theme-oriented drama, participants are given a theme and asked to

spontaneously enact it using improvisation. In theme-oriented drama participants

are slightly more independent than in story drama.


Oral Proficiency through Improvisational Drama

Improvisation is one of the primary elements in English language teaching.

The significance of improvisation was such that Maurer (1997) states:

"Improvisation can be considered the fifth skill, the skill which follows

reading, listening, speaking, and writing. In many ways, it is the most

important because it is the real test of whether students can use what

they have learned without being told exactly what to do or say."

(Maurer, 1997, p. 6)

Improvisation entails using pertinent linguistic and non-linguistic resources

that participants possess; they need to create spontaneous, natural and

unrehearsed responses in this form of drama. There is little or no time for

26

participants to prepare or practice what they are about to say. Participants need to think and produce language on their own.

> …For ESL learners, this can be quite a challenge, given their limitations in English. Oftentimes, their affective filters go up and the shutters come down. However, if they are encouraged to speak in an unrestrained manner without fear of public attention being brought to bear on their speech errors, there is a higher likelihood of successful communication, which in turn makes it easier for them to take further risks and speak even more (Gill, 20013, p. 35).

The same situation can be a challenge for EFL learners as well. Another advantage of utilizing improvisational drama to develop oral fluency in classrooms is that it allows the teacher to observe and take notes about participants' speech. In this way, teachers will have enough time to observe the learners, focus on errors and develop an appropriate or perhaps personalized strategy for specific needs of each learner later.

In improvisational drama, scripts help participants to get started. Scripts or themes are there to begin the discussion or decide the skeletal framework of the drama. Participants are free to create new speech or lines; they do not have to stick to the outlines provided. The unrestricted scenery of their collective dialogue gives participants the chance to reformulate, extend, or reduce one another's attempts at expressing a shared meaning (Gill, 2013). Gill sums up the improvisation in his research as follows:

Improvisations can briefly be summed up as whole-person

experiences, their holistic nature arising from a simultaneous

activation of learners' cognition, physicality and feelings as they

deliver unrehearsed, interactive speech spontaneously. Compared

to traditional language-teaching methodology, such experiences

result in greater oral output (Gill, 2013, p. 36).

## Conclusion

Drama has a momentous role in the EFL/ESL classrooms, specifically in

improving oral speaking skills. One substantial element of the social

characteristic of oral communication skills is the capability to make a speech at

ease, with motivation and self-esteem. Improvisational drama is the ultimate

technique for participants to develop this self-confidence (Ulas, 2008).

Drama activities can offer participants with a chance to use language to

state a range of emotions, to solve problems, to make decisions, and to socialize.

Participants take advantage of all five senses through creative dramatics; they

can increase their motivation and improve their mental power and imagination in

a risk-free environment that they are more motivated to speak so as to better

communicate and understand other participants.

Besides, as has been mentioned and emphasized in the research

reported above, improvisational drama is an effective way to develop oral fluency

in the EFL classroom. One of the most noticeable outcomes of improvisational

drama activities in EFL classroom is the development in the oral productivity of participants. The participant-centered nature of drama creates a stress-free, enjoyable and pleasant learning environment. Many participants find creative improvisational drama activities energizing and motivating (Gill, 2013).

Drama through improvisation creates situations that entail students to say what comes to mind in English, without constraining from their speech creation. The more they get pleasure from the drama activities, the larger the volume of spoken English delivered. Hence, if one can diligently utilize improvisational, creative and dynamic drama activities in teaching EFL/ESL environments, it will play a crucial role in the development of participants' motivation, oral fluency and communicative competence.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY


Theoretical Framework

Due to the fact that the traditional teaching techniques such as the grammar translation approach and the direct method do not satisfy the needs of language learners, finding new teaching methods has been the focal point of applied linguistics scholars. After much research, the communicative approach, learning language by communicating real meaning in real communication, has been one of the most successful approaches in language teaching so far. Drama methods are some of the best ways to promote and practice real communication, and this in turn averts the downsides of traditional methods that are principally based on memorization and repetition by providing authentic contexts for communication.

Developing language proficiency, especially oral language skills, through involving learners in a realistic context helps them better understand and use the language in an authentic way. The goal of this study is to discover what roles script-based versus improvisational drama play, and to analyze and better understand the use of script-based and improvisational drama in this sense by considering learners motivations and reactions to drama. This research will take a dynamic, dramatic approach to oral language development.

Research Design

This research examined how script-based and improvisational drama method impacted the participants' oral language proficiency, motivations, and their reflections on their language learning experiences. Following scheduled meetings spread over four sessions of creative drama intervention- two sessions of script-based and two sessions of improvisational drama- 12 participants of diverse backgrounds, including 6 male and 6 female learners participated in these sessions. The role of the researcher was participant-observation in the role of facilitator. The data collection included interviews, video recordings, observation and field notes, and findings reported accordingly.

Research Hypotheses and Questions

The project was guided by the following three research questions:

1) What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention and after the intervention?

2) What unique roles do script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering learners' development of oral proficiency?

3) What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention?

4) How do participants make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity?

<u>Setting and Participants</u>

The proposed study took place at a public university in Southern California. Participants included international students at the university who voluntarily sign up for an extra-curricular class to improve their speaking skills. The findings were reported from the participation of 6 male and 6 female students, a total of 12 students from 11 different countries (Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Japan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam) who were enrolled as graduate or undergraduate in different majors; all participants were over 18 years of age and of diverse backgrounds. There was one session per week and in total, there were 4 sessions in a month. The length of the sessions was around one and a half hours, maximum was two hours. Sessions took place at a designated classroom provided by the university. See Table 3 on the next page.

<u>Instruments of Data Collection</u>

Throughout the research, data were obtained through interviews, video recordings, observation, and field notes. There were 24 interviews recorded, each is about 6 minutes long. Interviews were centered upon 5 fundamental questions along with some sub-questions raised based on their replies to these questions to be able to collect more possible data. 2 sessions of script-based, 2 sessions of improvisational drama, total of 4 sessions of drama intervention was applied. Also, 2 video recordings of the acts were taken in total of 45 minutes long, to better analyze the developments of participants' speaking skills, and find

out the their motivations during the sessions. Observation and field notes were

taken by the researcher while the sessions took place as complimentary data.

Table 1 Interviewee Demographics

| | Country | Sex | Age | Major | Years studied English | Years in the US |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Brazil | M | 23 | Information system | 7 | 2 |
| 2 | China | F | 27 | MBA | 10 | 4 |
| 3 | China | F | 24 | MBA | 12 | 3 |
| 4 | Egypt | M | 24 | Information system | 10 | 4 |
| 5 | India | F | 26 | MBA | 10 | 4 |
| 6 | Indonesia | M | 23 | Kinesiology | 8 | 2 |
| 7 | Japan | F | 21 | Political Science | 5 | 2 |
| 8 | Libya | F | 21 | Biology | 5 | 3 |
| 9 | Saudi Arabia | M | 25 | TESOL | 5 | 2 |
| 10 | South Korea | M | 23 | Psychology | 6 | 3 |
| 11 | Taiwan | F | 26 | MBA | 7 | 4 |
| 12 | Vietnam | M | 24 | Art | 6 | 2 |

In the first phase, the participants were invited to be interviewed. The interview questions were as follows: What do you think about drama in general? Have you ever been a part of any type of drama activities before? What do you think about drama in educational settings? Do you think that drama can help oral language development? Which one do you prefer to practice, script-based or improvisational drama? The goal of the interview was to explore their reactions were toward drama, and to discover whether they were involved any type of dramatic activities prior to the instruction. Furthermore, these interviews were aimed at collecting samples of students' oral language to assess their oral proficiency. Finally, these interviews were used to assess their motivation and attitudes.

Having explored their current speaking proficiency and motivation, the gradual release of responsibility model was applied to introduce the script-based and improvisational drama. Script-based drama activities were applied in different formats for instance plays, sketches, skits and role plays for the first two weeks. In the first session, they were provided with themes and scripts to act out. They read the scripts and memorized their lines, and then they were asked to perform the play at their best. The following session, they were given different situations and expected to create their own scripts accordingly. At the end of the second week, participants were given short interviews to identify what they think of the method, what changed as to their reactions toward drama and to observe their speaking improvements.

During the third and the fourth weeks, participants were taken to the next stage in which improvisational drama activities were applied. In this format, they were only given themes and situations, and they were expected to act out without having any script ready for them. Video recordings, observation and field notes were taken during these sessions. After this month period of instruction involving the performance script-based and improvisational dramatic skills, each participant was invited to a final interview to better answer the first research question, and understand the effects and outcomes of utilizing script-based and improvisational drama to activate oral proficiency from learners' perspective as well. Student's oral production in these interviews was used to assess their oral proficiency. Finally, participants' interview responses and observed interactions in the instructional context were analyzed for features of motivation and attitudes toward speaking and drama.

Data Analysis

The main data sources for this research were interview and video recordings, and secondary sources were observation and field notes. Pre- and post- interview recordings were analyzed to determine their oral language proficiency by utilizing the Speaking Proficiency Assessment Scale to measure and analyze their speaking skills (Appendix D) before and after the drama intervention. These interviews were analyzed to determine participants' speaking motivations and attitudes toward drama.

Video recordings were analyzed to observe what roles the script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering participants' development of oral proficiency. Interviews and video recordings were also used to identify their motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before and after the intervention. Observations and field notes were used as complementary and strengthening data.

## Conclusion

Because of the fact that the traditional methods failed to satisfy the needs of language learners as to their developing oral language proficiency, the method used in this research aimed to provide a substantial difference in speaking skills by using script-based and improvisational drama along with including the participants motivations and reactions toward the methods. Total of 12 participants, all over 18 years old and from 11 different countries, voluntarily attended the sessions.

The research took place at a public university in Southern California. There were 4 sessions throughout the research, and interviews, video recordings, observations and field notes were used as means of collecting data. The data collected were analyzed to determine the participants' oral proficiency developments, their motivations and reactions toward drama before and after the intervention, and also reflections on their gained experiences throughout the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND RESULTS


Introduction

One of the chief reasons which brought these research questions into view was the weakness of the traditional approaches in oral language development, thereby increasing a lack of motivation in learning languages. This research evolved around the following questions:

1) What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention and after the intervention?

2) What unique roles do the script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering learners' development of oral proficiency?

3) What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention?

4) How do they make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity?

In the light of these four main questions, the data collected through interviews, video recordings, questionnaires, and field notes throughout the research such as pre- and post-intervention interviews, oral proficiency levels, and positive and negative motivation assessment results is analyzed below.

Analysis of the Interviews

To answer the first question, "What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention and after the intervention?", the third question, "What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention?" and the fourth question, "How do they make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity?", participants were invited to the pre-intervention interviews. The interviews were centered upon five fundamental questions along with some follow-up questions raised based on their replies to these questions to be able to collect more possible data. These interviews were face-to-face, and recorded digitally to allow detailed analysis of the data.

<u>Pre-intervention Interview Analysis</u>

The first question, "what do you think about drama in general?" and its follow-ups were to identify their opinions about drama in general, and to classify their attitudes toward it. Eight out of twelve participants gave considerably positive ideas about drama. They gave specific examples from their personal lives such as how they enjoy the art of drama in their everyday lives, and how they benefit from it. Two participants abstained from giving detailed answers, they neither think that drama is an essential element nor is it perfect nonsense in their lives. Drama is not in the center of their everyday lives nor completely out of it. However, two participants clarified in detail that they were not fans of drama,

and they do not enjoy it most of the time. When asked for the reasons behind the attitude, some critical points were obtained. These included bad previous experiences, lack of experiences, cultural issues, and instructor based problems.

Participant 2: "I attended a drama project once when I was in high school. It was Romeo and Juliet, I couldn't pronounce the words properly and everybody was laughing and making fun of me, I had to finish it till the end but I have never attended any other drama project after that."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Participants 4: "I have never attended an acting play before. We never did such a thing in high school or before."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Participant 9: "It was my English class, and we had a small sketch in our book, we wanted to do that exercise but our teacher moved on to the next page right away."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Failed previous experiences are big downsides for this method. It took relatively more time to have these learners adapt to the approach than those who do not have negative experiences. Participants 2 and 3 were more welcoming and warm to the drama method compared to Participant 1 even though they all had insecurities and big questions in their heads. Therefore, unsuccessful previous experiences, resulted in humiliation and underestimation, make leaners' adaptation to the drama process slow down as well as the learning process.

The second question, "Have you ever been a part of any type of drama activities before?" was to find out if the participants were part of any drama play, project or anything related to drama before, and if so, how the projects helped them in general or not. Only three out of twelve participants had been involved some type of drama activities. These three participants reported that their experiences were very fruitful for them in many ways such as reducing stress, making new friends, learning new things and so on. The previous experiences of these participants were related to literature plays only. Five of the participants had never really had a chance to be a part of any drama activities before, and four participants had chances before but intentionally did not attend due to lack of time at that moment, shyness or lack of curiosity.

The third question, "what do you think about drama in educational settings?" was to discover their attitudes and perspectives about drama in schools, whether they thought it could be a supportive and encouraging feature to students in conjunction with the regular classroom curriculum or just the opposite. Half of the participants voiced the perspective that drama could be very productive and helpful for the students because of the fact that it would allow students to be more involved in the learning process which is vital in teaching.

Participant 1: "It is so good. Drama is so much fun. It should be in classrooms, teachers should use it because students learn quickly because everybody come together and enjoy it."

(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Four participants stated that they were not sure whether it could be helpful or inconvenient in the educational settings. Two participants thought that because the content of lessons cannot be taught through drama, it should not be used as a part of classroom activity, but rather it may be utilized as after-class activity. They also stated that drama could be boring and time-consuming. Therefore, in general, participants were opposed the idea of utilizing drama in educational settings.

The fourth question, "do you think that drama can help oral language development?" was to find out if they thought drama could help their speaking abilities. Five participants declared that drama could be the best way of developing oral proficiency owing to the fact that learners are at the center of this teaching strategy. Some of them also mentioned that it could help them improve their self-confidence which is a vital aspect of improving speaking skills, whereas four participants stated that they were not sure if drama could be helpful for their speaking skills due to some critical reasons such as shyness, being afraid of making mistakes, and lack of self-confidence.

Participant 5: "I think it is a great way to learn English. I think it will help me and others to improve our speaking abilities because it sounds so much fun and I will be free, you say I will be able to say anything I want. It makes me feel powerful, yes confidence."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Two participants said that they had no idea whether it could be useful, advantageous or disadvantageous. They abstained from giving any idea for this question, and remained neutral. One participant, on the other hand, stated that it would not help, just the opposite, it would actually be discouraging for learners. The interviewee thought that the pressure that participants had to go through in dramatic approach would lead learners lose their interests in learning language, even worse, they may quit it.

Participant 9: "I really don't know, I just wanna enjoy this and see how it works as I come to the sessions."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Participant 12: "I am not sure if this will help or not but it sure will be fun."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

Participant 4: "I don't think it will help, because what if I don't know what to say at that moment? What if it takes so long for me to say something? People think that I don't know English but I know. I don't know but it can be depressing and maybe that person will stop learning it."
(Field note, Date: 5/25/2016)

The last question, "which one do you prefer to practice? Script-based or improvisational drama?" was to see if they prefer to follow script-based drama rather than improvisational drama or vice versa, and to find out why. Nine participants confirmed that they would prefer script-based drama over improvisational drama for several different reasons. For instance, many told the

researcher that they did not have to think before they spoke, that they would feel comfortable, and also some thought they could learn more vocabulary by actually seeing scripts.

Two out of these nine participants stated that they were actually aware that improvisational drama would help them better improve their speaking skills, yet they would still prefer script-based drama as they could make mistakes if it was totally up to them. Three out of twelve participants stated that they preferred improvisational drama, for it could offer more freedom in their learning environment, and one of the interviewees mentioned that they, in fact, could help each other through improvisational drama compared to script-based, and they may also discover new selves through this strategy. The replies to the interview questions can be briefly summarized in Figure 1 below.
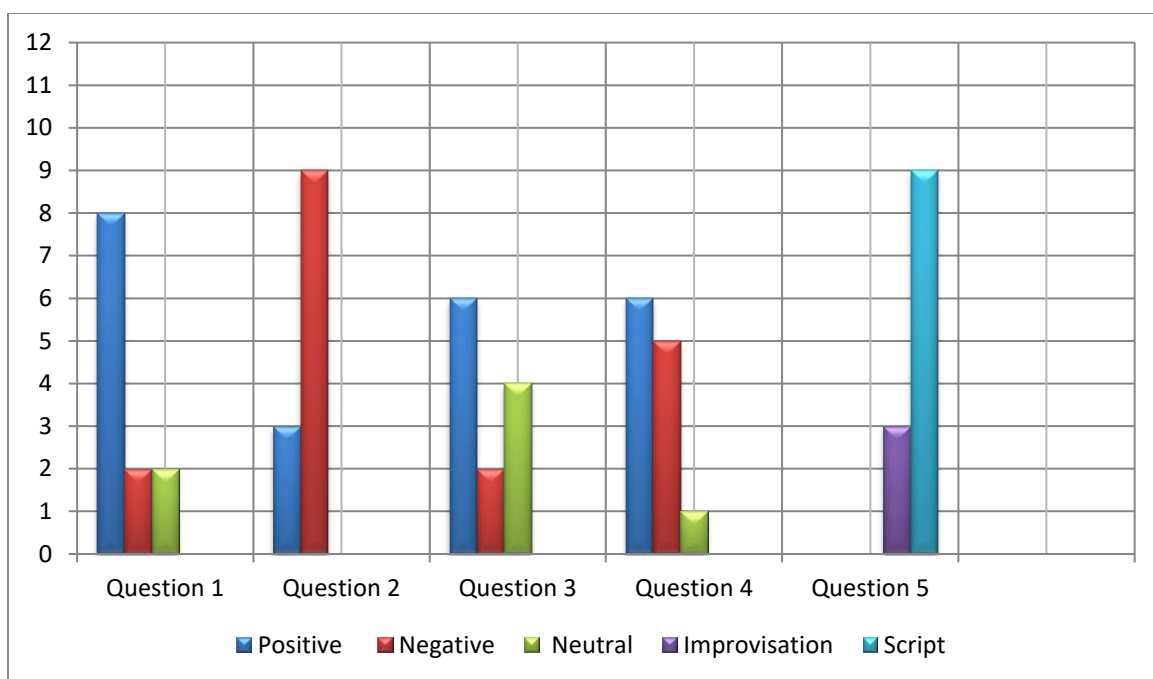
Figure 1. Pre-intervention Interview Results

Post-intervention Interview Analysis

After two sessions of script-based and two sessions of improvisational

drama- a total of four sessions of drama intervention- participants were invited for

post-intervention interviews. The purpose of the post-intervention interview was

to observe and analyze if there were any considerable changes in learners'

replies to the interview questions. They were asked to reply to the same

questions that they were asked during the pre-intervention interview to see how

their thoughts changed throughout the intervention. There were significant

changes in their opinions, especially the ones who gave negative comments

during the pre-intervention interview.

Participant 1: "I believe the most important thing I have learned from this project is how to communicate better with others. Because we needed to act all together so we needed to be on the same page, that means we needed to talk and understand each other to act better."

(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

Participant 8: "I have learned many different words throughout the program, and I started to use these words in my everyday life, just like I did now. The word "throughout", I learned it here. This made my life easier."

(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

Participant 2: "I don't know how to say this but I wanna say that I feel really good here. I wish there were more sessions. As you remember, I never attended a drama project before, this is my first experience, and I enjoy this a lot, and I learned a lot, not only English but other cultures because we had people from everywhere."

(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

Participant 11: "I thought I would feel shy at the beginning so I thought wouldn't act or learn but just the opposite, as I get to know the people, I feel more comfortable and free with them. I always feel shy at the beginning whenever I start doing something with people and later I get used to it, but this time I think drama made it in shorter time and this made me to come to the sessions, thank you so much, I enjoyed it."

(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

Participant 6: "I learned a lot but I don't think I learned as much I wanted. Maybe because it was a short program I don't know but I had fun. I enjoyed it, I met great people from different places here, thank you so much, I know I said that drama wouldn't help learning English, but it really did. I learned things about Japanese culture, I learned about Turkish culture, Arabic culture and more, my English is improved too, I learned new vocabulary, new phrases etc. I can even count in Japanese."

Participant 7: "I was thinking I may not be able to actually act or improvise. I just told myself that I can just meet new people and have fun, but just after the first session, I started to think that actually I can do it."
(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

There were two remarkable changes in participants' replies to the post-intervention interview questions. One was the changes in the replies to the question number 1. Two participants remained neutral, and two participants who had given negative comments to the question number 1 during the pre-intervention interviews replied positively to the question number 1. Secondly, responses to question number 5 changed significantly. These changes can be better analyzed through Figure 2 below.
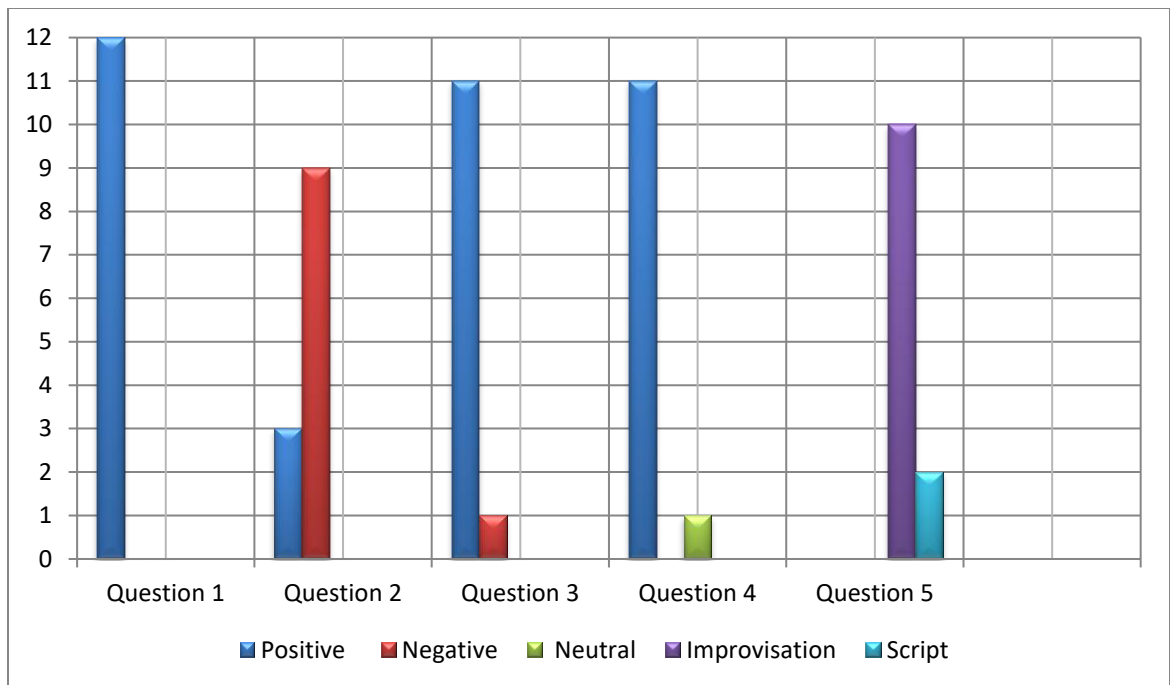
Figure 2. Post-intervention Interview Results

At the end of the research, all the participants left the last session with positive comments on drama in general. Most of them stated that drama brought freedom to learning environment, and they enjoyed it. On the third question, except for one participant, all stated that drama should take place in educational settings. They thought that it was so much fun, and they learned many things by having fun. Some of them stated that they felt that they were fully involved in the learning process, and that made it easier for them to learn, and also because they were active during the whole process, they were encouraged and motivated.

Participant 12: "I think this was the first time ever I was fully involved in learning and had fun at the same time. Normally, we would wait for the class to end as soon as possible, but with drama, I really did not want this research to end so we could keep doing this. I had a lot of fun, met amazing people and learned many things."

(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

One participant did not think that it is suitable for all learners to adapt this type of learning style. The participant thought that one could be too shy or introverted to be involved in these types of activities. According to this participant, these types of activities could actually lead those shy ones to be more uninterested, that is why drama should stay as an elective option.

Participant 4: "Drama is fun to some, and boredom to some. I think because of this, it should stay as an optional course but not like in every course. Because not every person likes it, some people are shy and would not want to learn through drama. They can be more distanced to it.

(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

When asked the fourth question a second time, 11 participants agreed that drama can significantly help oral language development because of the fact that it provides a stress-free, active and fun learning environment. They all stated that they found themselves talking, laughing and asking questions to each other after they started to the sessions. They mentioned they were afraid to speak at

first due to the fear of making mistakes. However, drama helped them get rid of this obstacle and helped their oral language developments.

One of the noteworthy changes in the replies to the interview questions after the intervention was the big change to improvisational drama from script-based drama on the fifth question "which one do you prefer to practice, script-based or improvisational drama?" There were only three participants who preferred to practice improvisational drama before the intervention. However, after the intervention, ten participants told that they would prefer to practice improvisational drama. Even the ones who had introduced themselves as shy, switched to improvisational drama. These changes are shown in Figure 3 below. This change was an important proof that improvisational drama helps learners gain self-esteem, and self-confidence. A quote from post-intervention interview of a participant who was identified as a shy person before the intervention as follows:

Participant 3: "I didn't think that I could do that (improvisational drama) but I actually enjoyed it. And now, I believe and know that I can do it, I never pictured myself at the beginning that I could act or create things (scripts) at that moment. I know that I can learn, and do it now."
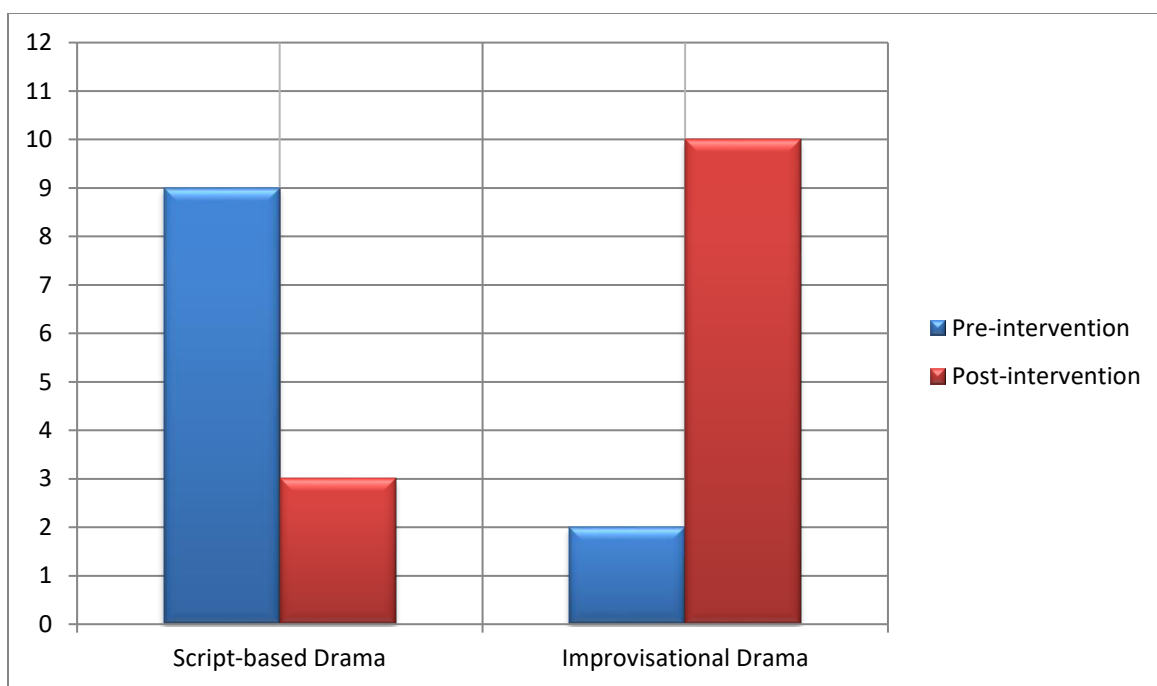
(Field note, Date: 07/06/2016)

Figure 3. Pre- and Post-intervention Replies to the Question Number 5

Analysis of the Oral Proficiency Assessment

To find an answer to research question number 2, "What unique roles do the script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering learners' development of oral proficiency?", twelve participants from eleven different countries were invited to be individually interviewed on the scheduled days. As the participants replied to the interview questions, the researcher scored their oral proficiency levels by using the rubric "Oral Proficiency Assessment Scale" to measure their current speaking skills before the intervention took place. (see the rubric in Appendix D). Comprehensibility/pronunciation/clarity of speech (CPCoS)

vocabulary, grammar, content, and fluency were the five central components

taking into consideration when assessing their oral language abilities. Each

component was assigned on a certain point scoring system. Having completed

the pre-intervention interviews, the oral proficiency levels of the participants were

determined as shown in Figure 4 below.
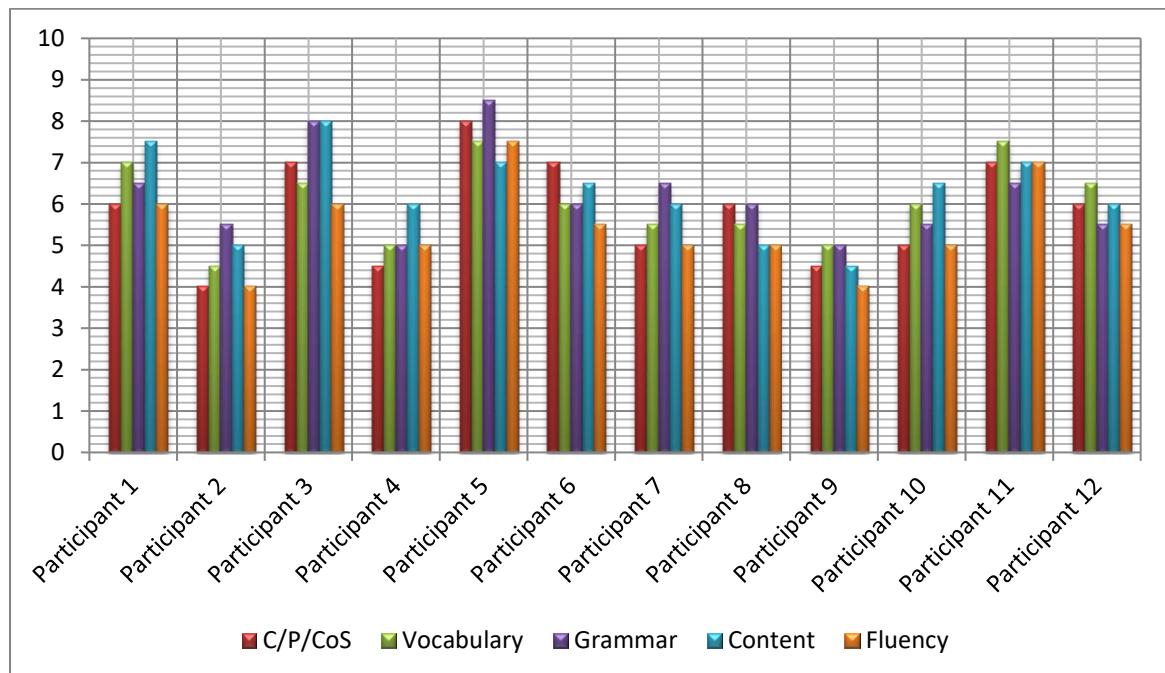
Pre-intervention Oral Proficiency Analysis



Figure 4. Pre-intervention Oral Proficiency Scores

Figure 4 shows that the gap in between ranged from a score of 5 to 9 on

the proficiency scale. Most of the participants were at somewhat around the

same level of English proficiency for all 5 components, with slight variations. As can be expected from the diversity of learners' backgrounds, there is a wide range of language proficiencies depending on the skills being addressed. Figure 4 indicates that with a possible range of scores from 0 to 10 for each component, with a total of 50, mean scores of CPCoS, vocabulary, grammar, content, and fluency were as follows 5.83, 6.04, 6.20, 6.25, and 5.45. When closely examined, fluency levels were perceived as the lowest followed by CPCoS and Vocabulary.

Post-intervention Oral Proficiency Analysis

After two sessions of script-based, and two sessions of improvisational acting performances, for a total of four sessions of drama intervention, the participants were invited to their final interviews. To determine whether there were any oral proficiency gains made or not, participants were interviewed with the same questions used in pre-intervention interview, and the oral proficiency rubric. And, the results are shown in Figure 5.
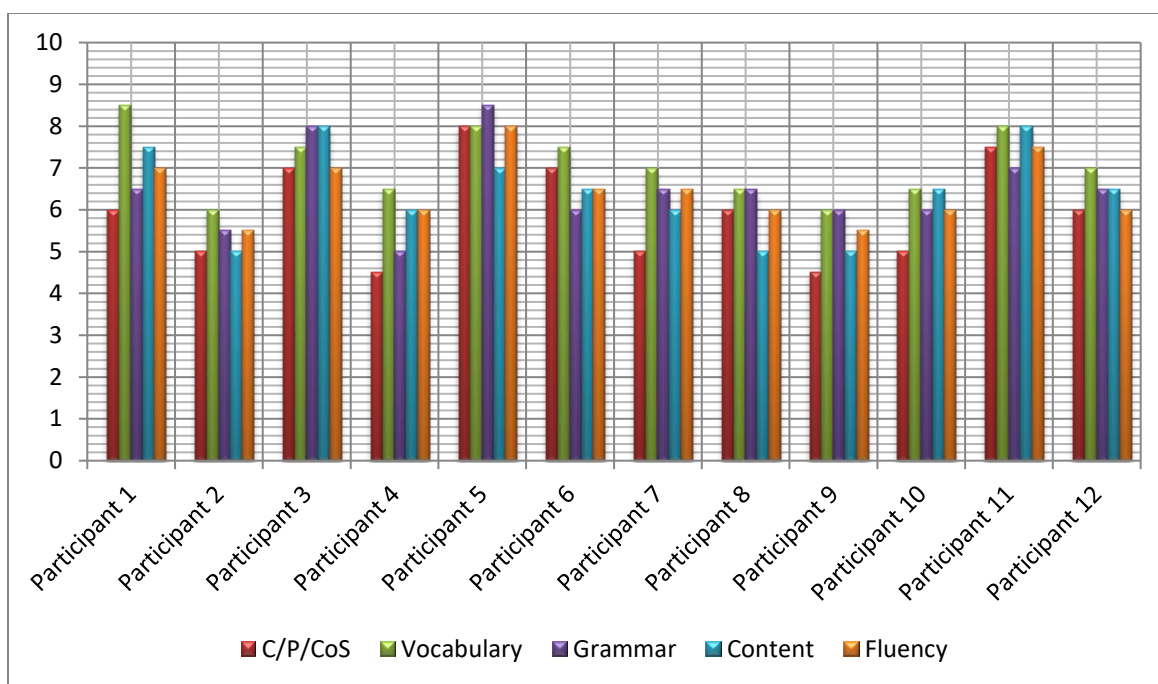
Figure 5. Post-intervention Oral Proficiency Scores

When compared the pre- and post-intervention interview results, Figure 5 shows that the mean scores of CPCoS, vocabulary, grammar, content, and fluency were as follows 5.95, 7.08, 6.5, 6.41, and 6.45. Although it is not possible to make any definitive conclusions based on these data with a small sample size, learners seemed to have made progress in their speaking skills through this intervention, based on the scores they received on the oral proficiency rubric. It can also be observed that not every participant improved their scores on skills at the same rate, yet each participant seemed to improve their English speaking skills at least to some extent. However, the oral proficiency level scores for

certain participants- 2, 9, and 11- had dramatically increased as seen in the figure above in such a short period of time.  Even those who did not have great enthusiasm toward drama such as participant 3, 4, and 7 remarkably improved their oral proficiency levels.

Analyzing the pre- and post- intervention scores thoroughly, besides the improvement in participants' overall oral language proficiency level scores, it was noticed that there were significant increases particularly in the area of vocabulary and fluency. Figure 6 given below visibly demonstrates the changes made in specifically vocabulary and fluency scores.
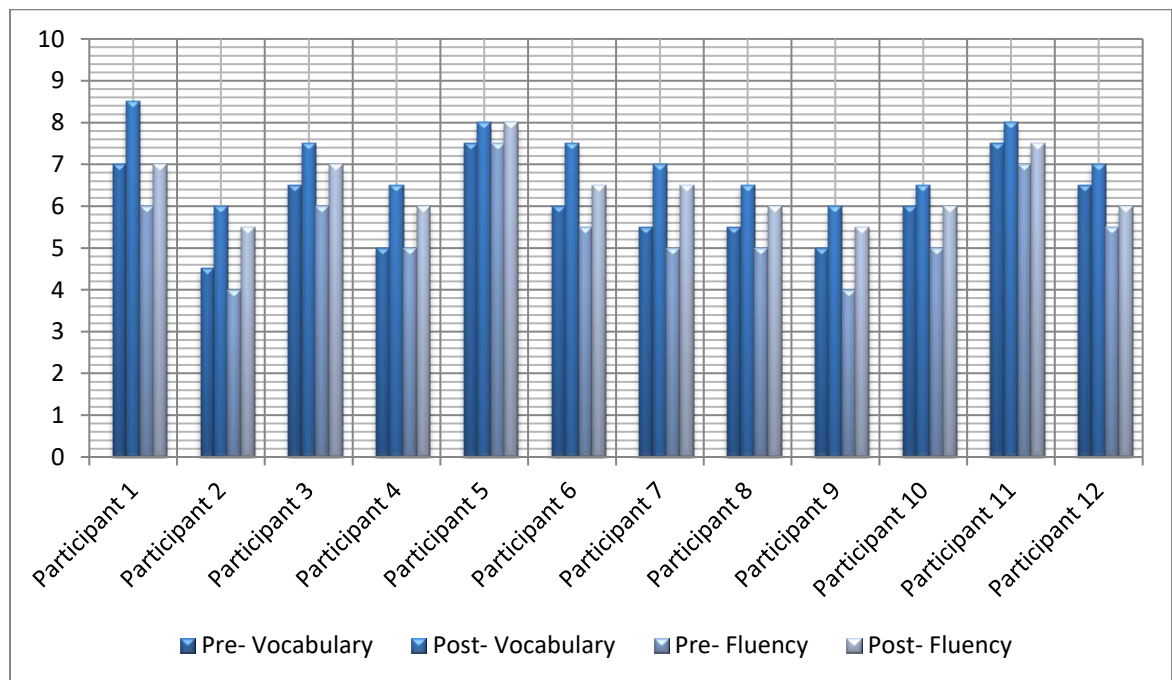


Figure 6. Pre- and Post-intervention Vocabulary-Fluency Scores

Most of the participants improved their vocabulary and fluency scores to some extent; however, participant 1, 2, 4, 7 and 9 had quite important increases compared to other participants in such a quite short period of time. Figure 6 also shows that participants' vocabulary levels were the most improved compared to the other aspects language proficiency. Moreover, some of these participants were actually found to be shy, or having negative attitudes toward drama, so these improvements are noteworthy. Not only was drama fruitful to those who had positive attitudes toward it, but also it was also beneficial to those who had some sort of negativity at the beginning of the intervention.



Figure 7. Pre- and Post-intervention Oral Proficiency Total Scores

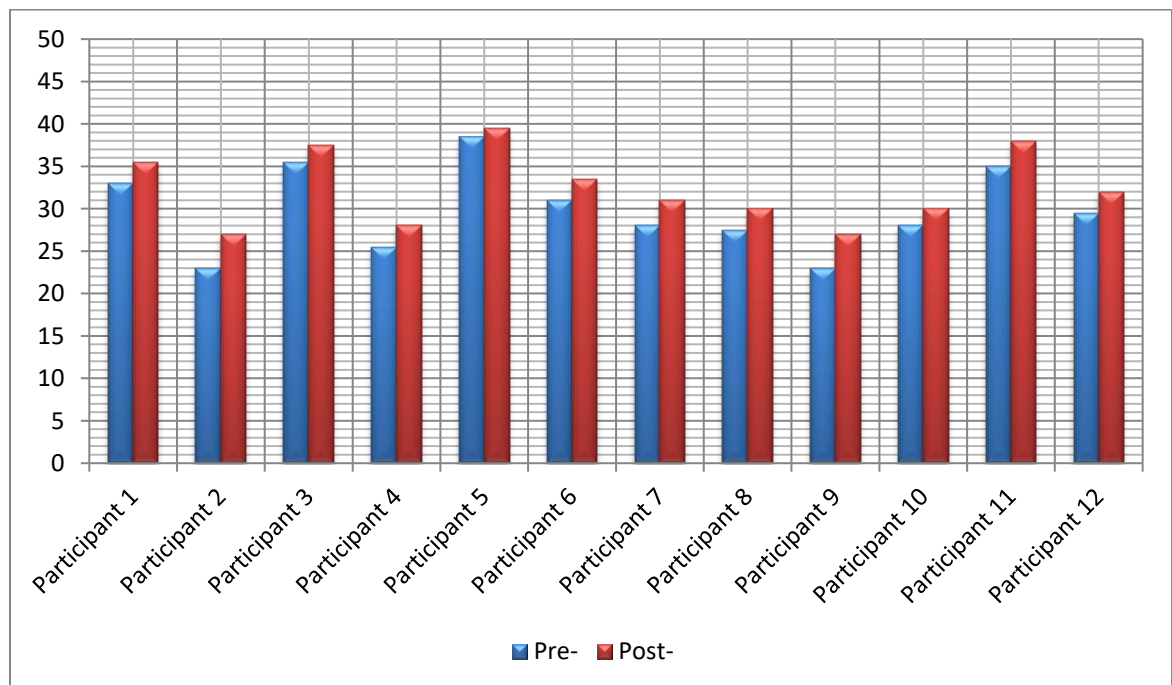Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Overall Oral Proficiency Scores

|  | Mean | Std.Deviation | Mode | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pre- | 61.03 | 9.85 | - | 47.14 | 74.28 |
| Post | 66.47 | 8.36 | - | 54.42 | 78 |

As seen in the Figure 7, although the major improvement was on fluency and vocabulary, all of the participants improved their oral proficiency levels. Participants' pre-intervention mean score was improved from 61.03 to 66.47. Maximum and minimum scores increased to 78, and 54.42 respectively, which is an impressive progress in such short time. When the data-pre- and post-intervention oral assessment results- compared, it seems that this drama-based instructional approach had a crucial role in improving oral proficiency especially in fluency and vocabulary.

As learners involved in dynamic and interactive process of language learning through drama in which they were exposed to active interaction and meaningful contexts, they were able to build up oral proficiency to some extent. Based on observations and interviews, those participants who had enthusiasm, motivation toward drama, and great desire to practice it had increased their oral proficiency much more than those who had less. Nevertheless, the research

showed that the learners had great potential in practicing the target language for their oral language development.

Observations and Field Notes

Having completed the first interviews, participants were requested to attend the scheduled meeting for the first phase of the research. Script-based drama themed as airport scene was applied for the first two weeks as follow-up scenes. Scripts were provided to participants, and they were given some time to memorize their parts. After everyone felt ready to play, the first rehearsal was performed. It was quite hard and time-consuming for many of them as expected. However, it took less time when script-based drama was applied first, even for those who identified as shy and less motivated to drama, rather than improvisational drama applied first. This was one of the significant potential outcomes from the research based on the previous experiences, and that was why the sequence of the research was formed as applied.

Even from the first meeting, increasing motivation and decreasing shyness of the participants were clearly observed. The second week, as participants got to know each other better, it was observed that even those, who stated that they had no interest in drama during the interviews, were enjoying and learning new grammar rules, vocabulary and pronunciation as they develop learner autonomy. At the end of the second week, participants were feeling ready to move on to improvisational drama. Some, who formerly stated during the interviews that they

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would be shy, commented to the researcher and the instructor that they felt more comfortable and freer during the performances.

Instructor note: "The participants who stated that they would feel shy during the first interview, started to feel more comfortable as the acting goes along and everyone gets to know each other. Especially participant 2 and 6, as they stated shyness and depression would be major problems. Everybody enjoys the script writing and acting now, and they all are looking for new words to better explain what they want to say and act" (Date: 06/15/2016).

At the beginning of the research, the third week was expected by many to be the toughest due to the fact that they would have difficulty creating their own sentences according to the situations, but all were feeling relatively ready to improvise. Students commented to the instructor that they were excited about this stage of the instructions, and specifically requested more improvisational forms of drama.

Participant 8: "Teacher! When are we gonna start acting freely?" (Improvisational drama)
(Field note, Date: 06/15/2016)

Participant 5: "I think we will laugh more when we start improvising, I just can't wait!"
(Field note, Date: 06/15/2016)

Participant 3: "Can we start doing that for a bit just to see how good we are?"

(Field note, Date: 06/15/2016)

Throughout the fourth week, participants improved their improvising skills as they increased interaction skills, self-esteem, and self-efficacy in a stress-free learning setting, which in nature led to build up motivation in them. Notably, it was observed that motivated learners were better able to improve their critical thinking, creative thinking and problem solving abilities, through which learners developed a sense of language understanding, as they were given situations bound by themes to improvise, and were expected to come up with their own words, solutions and reactions. They were able to undertake activities in this lack of pressure learning environment, and subsequently they took on the aforementioned crucial cognitive benefits that help learners move through stages of language acquisition.

Many different, real, meaningful themes such as airport, restaurant and hospital scenes were successfully improvised, and gradual improvements observed in many participants in terms of speaking skills, motivation and confidence. The group cohesiveness-social and task relations, unity and emotions, arose, and group norms were established through this communicative, cooperative and collaborative learning style. For example, during the sessions, if a participant forgot his line when performing script-based, another participant was there to remind him/her. Or, if a participant could not come up with any sentence when performing improvisational drama, the co-actor was there to take the turn and help her/him to buy some time to think. In addition to this, it was also

noticed that participants practically enhanced language retention through direct experiences, and became noticeably better communicators by the end of the third week than they were at the beginning of the research.

Participant 12: "I think participant 3 should play this role, because she/he did great job last session, I think it is a similar role so she/he will do it perfectly." (Field note, Date: 06/22/2016)

Participant 4: "I will blink at you when it is your turn so you can remember that it is your turn."
(Field note, Date: 06/22/2016)

Participant 7: "Can I rehearse this with participant 1 before we start?"
(Field note, Date: 06/29/2016)

Furthermore, it helps learners to establish some significant learning benefits, abilities and skills which they can also utilize in their everyday lives. It is observed throughout the research that learners increased confidence, self-esteem and motivation, and decreased anxiety. It was also observed that drama can help learners' affective filters to go down which is a big challenge for language learners. By creating a stress-free, safe and welcoming environment through drama, it was noted that learners' affective filters were lowered; their anxiety levels were stabilized such that learning process was accelerated. They were encouraged to speak with no fear of making mistakes, so eventually they would be better communicators. Participants were speaking considerably free,

with no fear of making mistakes, and when asked what made them feel free, one of the participants replied as follows.

Participant 2: "I know that I will make mistakes, just like I do when I speak my own language. (laughs) Seriously, we all make mistakes when we speak our own language, so here drama gave me the same chance, if I make a mistake, first I know that I will correct myself if I notice before anyone else, if not, then someone will." (Field note, Date: 06/29/2016)

Conclusion

This research aimed to decrease the negative outcomes that the traditional methods frequently engender, such as learners' demotivation, hate or fear of practicing speaking skills. Through educational drama, the research findings showed that the script-based and improvisational drama helped these learners in many ways. Analysis included an examination of learner attitudes and motivation in the interviews, learners' oral proficiency scores before and after the instruction, and attitudes toward the instruction noted in observations and field notes.

Through the analysis of interviews, it was observed that there were remarkable changes in participants' replies to the interview questions after the intervention. Most of the participants stated positive comments about drama at the end of the intervention. Another significant point was the change on the question number 5, "which one do you prefer to practice, script-based or

improvisational drama?" Before the intervention, only 3 participants preferred to practice improvisational drama, while after the intervention, 10 participants specified that they preferred improvisational drama.

Analysis of learners' scores on the Oral Proficiency Assessment showed that there were improvements in participants' scores after the intervention compared to before the intervention. The data showed that participants' scores on oral proficiency were improved following the script-based and improvisational drama instruction. Pre- and post-intervention oral assessment scores indicated that all of the participants increased their oral language skills to some extent. It was noted that the participants made the most improvement on vocabulary and fluency scores after the intervention.

Throughout the intervention, it was observed and noted that script-based and improvisational drama helped learners increase their confidence and motivation by creating a stress-free, safe and welcoming environment. It also helped learners decrease their anxiety and shyness levels, which lowers their affective filter that is a vital step in language learning process. It was also observed that they felt less fearful to make mistakes when speaking, which also help them be better communicators.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# CONCLUSIONS

## Introduction

The questions and concerns were raised about teaching methods throughout the research as it was pointed out that the traditional methods are no longer effective approaches in the 21st century when the needs of learning a language have changed in time. As the use of traditional language teaching methods negatively impact the language acquisition process by increasing learners' shyness, anxiety and negative motivation, the proposed study aimed to analyze and understand the use of script-based and improvisational drama, and to investigate whether drama- an advanced and student-centered teaching methodology- can improve learners' oral language skills, motivate them and provide meaning to the language acquisition process.

## Analysis of the Results

The main focus was on investigating learners' motivations and attitudes toward drama in the language learning process, and discovering what aspects of the script-based and improvisational drama benefit learners' oral proficiency through this approach. Twelve participants from eleven different countries participated in the research. The research investigated the following questions.

1) What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention and after the intervention?

2) What unique roles do the script-based versus improvisational drama play in fostering learners' development of oral proficiency?

3) What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention?

4) How do they make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity?

The findings were based on the data from interviews, speaking assessments, video recordings, observations, and field notes, and they were analyzed in accordance with the research questions. First, five interview questions were asked to participants before the intervention to find answers to the first question, "What are learners' motivations and attitudes toward developing speaking skills before the intervention, and after the intervention?", and half of the third question, "What are the participants' reactions to script-based and improvisational drama instructional techniques before and after the intervention? How do they make sense of their oral proficiency gains as they reflect on the experience of participating in the creative dramatic activity? Out of twelve participants responding to the question, "What do you think about drama in general?", eight gave positive comments, two gave negative comments and three gave impartial comments. On the second question, "Have you ever been a part of any type of drama activities before?", three participants had respectable

drama experience, yet the rest of the participants had no drama-related experience.

Responses to the third question, "What do you think about drama in educational settings?" six participants stated that drama would bring fun to educational settings so it would be a positive approach, while four participants stayed neutral, and two thought it would have negative effects on learners.

When asked, "do you think that drama can help oral language development?" to find out whether they think drama has a positive effect on language development, six participants said that drama would be helpful to improve their language skills, five participants stayed impartial, and one participant stated that it would have a negative effect, due to a negative prior experience.

Finally, nine participants indicated that they preferred script-based drama over improvisational drama, most indicating that they felt they would not have enough time to think, and make mistakes. Three participants stated that they would prefer improvisational drama because they would have more freedom. Interview results after the intervention.

The results of post-intervention interviews revealed that there were the intervention changed learners' opinions, motivation and attitudes toward drama in a positive way. Almost all of the participants left with positive results. Furthermore, it was observed and also concluded from the results of the post-interviews that drama reshapes the boring, old-fashioned conventional classroom

atmosphere into an enjoyable, fun place by providing authentic communicative contexts such that participants enjoyed the learning process.

The critical change on the fifth question, "which one do you prefer to practice? Script-based or improvisational drama?" was one of the considerable research outcomes. Nine out of twelve participants stated that they would prefer to practice script-based drama during the pre-interviews. When asked why, shyness, lack of grammar and vocabulary knowledge, mainly the motivation and confidence were the problems.  However, after the intervention, learners indicated a preference for improvisational drama, which was the main direction of the method, over script-based drama.

Having completed the intervention, ten out of twelve participants declared that they would prefer to practice improvisational drama. The intervention helped seven participants to change their attitudes, motivations and opinions toward improvisational drama. Only two participants did not change their opinions. The study revealed that the drama intervention has a significant impact on language learners' motivations and confidence.

In the light of the oral language assessment results, it was found that drama helped participants improve their oral language proficiency scores, suggesting an improvement in aspects of their oral proficiency skills. The mean scores for CPCoS, vocabulary, grammar, content, and fluency improved from 5.83, 6.04, 6.20, 6.25, and 5.45 in the pre-intervention oral proficiency levels, to in the post-intervention oral proficiency scores of 5.95, 7.08, 6.5, 6.41, and 6.45.

It is also noted that script-based and improvisational drama helped participants improve their vocabulary and fluency the most. The minimum score 47.14 in the pre-intervention score were increased to 54.42, and the maximum score 74.28 were increased to 78 in the post-intervention results. It is an obvious fact that utilizing script-based and improvisational drama in educational settings, especially in language teaching process, accelerates the learning process, and helps learners improve their oral language development. The pre- and post- oral proficiency assessment results show that learners improved their speaking skills throughout the intervention at different levels.

Throughout the research, it was observed that script-based and improvisational drama provides an environment for learners to improve their oral language proficiencies, to create relationships, and to improve their social relations, as they engage in acting as a group, and at the end, to be able to see the group members as a whole. Creating this unity through the drama intervention, the participants were able to establish positive motivation, and diminish negativity toward it. To have a positive motivation is a vital factor to achieve successful results in language learning process.

## Limitations of the Study

There were three major limitations to this research. First was the number of the participants: There were only 12 participants in this study. A large number

of participants would help to gather more data, and validate statistical findings. Therefore, claims about this information cannot be easily generalized.

Second, and probably the most problematic limitation in the study was the time period. The time period for this study was very limited. The intervention took two weeks of script-based drama, and two weeks of improvisational drama, a total of four weeks. Although the data collected throughout the intervention was valuable and enough to make inferences, and describe the results on the basis of evidence and reasoning, the reliability and the research results would have yielded more valid results if the time of intervention had been extended.

Third, the scheduling for the sessions was also a limitation for the study. Because the participants were from different majors at the university, they had very different class schedules, which made the scheduling hard for everyone for the sessions.

Recommendations for Further Study

There are some essential aspects that this research has highlighted should be taken into consideration for further studies on script-based and improvisational drama, and drama in general. There is little research on this matter; therefore, the amount of research in these areas should be increased. The research showed that the areas where the most improvement occurred through script-based and improvisational drama were fluency and vocabulary in participants' oral proficiencies. Future studies on this matter might reveal more

data and reliable results. Also, increasing the number of the participants, and the sessions would give a high reliability and validity of the data. Furthermore, it is suggested that future research address more specific aspects of motivation, such as learners' willingness to communicate.

## Conclusion

The research results suggested that the use of script-based and improvisational drama technique have substantial impact on leaners' language learning process. The study indicated that a drama-based approach helped learners reduce their negative attitudes, build positive attitudes and motivations, and improve their oral language proficiencies.  Furthermore, although learners may be hesitant to engage in drama-based approaches, particularly improvisational drama, it should be noted that many students' attitudes toward drama are improved by participating in drama-based instructional approaches.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**
**SAN BERNARDINO**

Academic Affairs
*Office of Academic Research • Institutional Review Board*

April 29, 2016

Mr. Muhammet Gazel and Prof Kathryn Howard
Department of Teacher Education and Foundations
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, California 92407

```
CSUSB
INSTITUTIONAL
REVIEW BOARD
Expedited Review
IRB# 15068
Status
APPROVED
```

Dear Mr. Gazel and Prof. Howard:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Developing Oral Proficiency through Script-Based and Imporvisational Drama" has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The attached informed consent document has been stamped and signed by the IRB chairperson. All subsequent copies used must be this officially approved version. A change in your informed consent (no matter how minor the change) requires resubmission of your protocol as amended. **Your application is approved for one year from April 28, 2016 through April 27, 2017. One month prior to the approval end date you need to file for a renewal if you have not completed your research. See additional requirements (Items 1 – 4) of your approval below.**

Your responsibilities as the researcher/investigator reporting to the IRB Committee include the following 4 requirements as mandated by the Code of Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46 listed below. Please note that the protocol change form and renewal form are located on the IRB website under the forms menu. Failure to notify the IRB of the above may result in disciplinary action. You are required to keep copies of the informed consent forms and data for at least three years. Please notify the IRB Research Compliance Officer for any of the following:

1) **Submit a protocol change form if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your research protocol for review and approval of the IRB before implemented in your research,**
2) **If any unanticipated/adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research,**
3) **To apply for renewal and continuing review of your protocol one month prior to the protocols end date,**
4) **When your project has ended by emailing the IRB Research Compliance Officer.**

The CSUSB IRB has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional approvals which may be required.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the IRB Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillesp@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval identification number (listed at the top) in all correspondence.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

*Judy Sylva*

Judy Sylva, Ph.D., Chair
Institutional Review Board

JS/MG

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

College of Education
Department of Language, Literacy and Culture

**INFORMED CONSENT**

**Developing Oral Proficiency through Script-Based and Improvisational Drama**

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate to discover effective speaking strategies using script-based and improvisational drama. This study is being conducted by M. Çağrı Güzel under the supervision of Kathryn M. Howard, Associate Professor, College of Education, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

**PURPOSE**

This research project is conducted to examine the benefits of script-based and improvisational creative dramatics in language classrooms for developing students' oral fluency. In this study, the main focus will be on developing oral communication skills through script-based and improvisation-based dramatics. The goal of the research is to investigate participants' motivations and attitudes toward participating in creative dramatic performances, their understandings of its benefits, and what aspects of speaking proficiency improve over the course of participation in dramatic instruction.

**DESCRIPTION**

In the first phase, the participants will be interviewed to see what their reactions are toward drama, and then, they will be given a pre-instruction speaking assessment to measure their current oral speaking level. Having assessed their current speaking proficiency, instruction using script-based drama activities will be provided in different formats, for instance plays, sketches, skits and role plays for two weeks of May 2016. At the end of the second week, participants will be given a 'during' test to observe their speaking improvements. During the third and the fourth weeks, participants will be instructed using improvisational drama activities will be used. After total of a month of script-based and improvisational dramatic instructional activity, participants will be given post-instruction speaking test to complete the measurement. At the end of the study, each participant will be invited to a final interview to better understand the effects and outcomes of utilizing script-based and improvisational drama to activate oral proficiency from learners' perspective as well.

**PARTICIPATION**

Your participation is completely voluntary: You may skip or not answer any questions, and you can freely withdraw from participation at any time.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your confidentiality will be maintained in this study. Any identifying information in the data will be removed, and changed to a unique code. Any transcripts included in the results will include only

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pseudonyms, and other identifying information will be removed or changed. Your consent forms and anything containing identifying information (video/ audio/ photographs) will be kept in a locked cabinet separate from the study data. Photographs of the course activities may be used in the write-up or presentation of study results. If you do not wish your likeness to appear in study results or write-ups, please indicate this in the "Video/Audio/Photograph" section below.

## DURATION

The expected duration of your participation will be four weeks. Each week our voluntary class will meet twice for 2 hours. In addition, we ask that you participate individually in three assessment and interview sessions of 30 minutes each at the beginning, middle and end of the research. These sessions will be scheduled separately.

## RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this research.

## BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits to participating in this research. Your oral proficiency in English may improve through participation in the study's instructional activities.

## VIDEO/AUDIO/PHOTOGRAPH:

I understand this research will be Video Recorded and Photographed for purposes of documenting the activities. Initials____

Place your initials here if you do *not* wish your photograph to be used in the published or presented results. Initials _____

## CONTACT

If you have any questions about the study or your participation in the study, please contact:

Kathryn M. Howard, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Teacher Education and Foundations Department
California State University, San Bernardino
Office: College of Education, room 275
Email: khoward@csusb.edumailto:khoward@csusb.edu
Phone: 909-537-7626

909.537.7405 • fax: 909.537.5992
5500 UNIVERSITY PARKWAY, SAN BERNARDINO, CA 92407-2393

The California State University • Bakersfield • Channel Islands • Chico • Dominguez Hills • East Bay • Fresno • Fullerton • Humboldt • Long Beach • Los Angeles
Maritime Academy • Monterey Bay • Northridge • Pomona • Sacramento • San Bernardino • San Diego • San Francisco • San Jose • San Luis Obispo • San Marcos • Sonoma • Stanislaus

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**RESULTS**

Study results can be obtained after the study is completed and the results have been published in Mr. Guzel's Master's Thesis.

Teacher Education and Foundations Department
California State University, San Bernardino
Office: College of Education, room 261

**CONFIRMATION STATEMENT**

I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

**SIGNATURE**

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview Questions

1. What do you think about drama in general?

2. Have you ever been a part of any type of drama activities before?

3. What do you think about drama in educational settings?

4. Do you think that drama can help oral language development?

5. Which one do you prefer to practice, script-based or improvisational drama?

APPENDIX D

ORAL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

SPAN 1000/1010

Section # _____  Time: _____

Name: _____

Semester and Year: _____

## GRADING CRITERIA FOR ORAL EXAM

1. **Comprehensibility / pronunciation / clarity of speech**

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

   Very little speech is comprehensible;
   pronunciation is very inaccurate
   and greatly impedes understanding.

   All speech is comprehensible; pro-
   nunciation is accurate for a first-
   year learner and does not impede
   understanding.

2. **Vocabulary**

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

   Very inadequate and/or inaccurate;
   erroneous use of numerous words;
   unable to recall the basic vocabulary
   covered during the semester.

   Very adequate and accurate, given
   the topics of study covered during
   the semester.

3. **Grammar**

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

   Consistently very inaccurate; numerous
   errors in all of the structures covered
   during the semester.

   Consistently accurate use of the
   structures covered during the
   semester.

4. **Content**

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

   Ideas not well developed at all; very little
   content provided; unconnected or disjoint
   ideas; content completely irrelevant to the
   topic at hand.

   Ideas very well developed and con-
   nected; content completely relevant
   to the topic at hand; content fully
   addresses the topic at hand.

5. **Fluency**

   0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

   Numerous, frequent pauses in speech; very
   slow speech.

   Speech flows smoothly for a first-
   year learner; an absence of exces-
   sive pausing.

TOTAL POINTS EARNED = _____ /50 POINTS POSSIBLE

Retrieved from: http://homepages.wmich.edu/~ppastran/1000/1000oral-grading.pdf

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