The Use of Drama on Developing Pronunciation of Young Learners

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	This study investigates the effects of drama activities on developing young learners' pronunciation skills in English language teaching. The use of drama techniques such as exploration, role-play, improvisation, and written performances to improve young learners' pronunciation is examined. The research was conducted using a mixed-method approach utilizing quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The study involved 30 young students, one control group, and one experimental group, each consisting of 15 students between the ages of 14 and 15 in the 8th grade studying in the same middle school in Konya. The groups learned the same target topic. The experimental group used a series of drama activities as part of the English curriculum, while the control group used the regular teaching method without drama activities. Data were collected through pre-and post-tests, classroom observations, and student's personal diaries. The information was obtained by recording students' reading-aloud tasks as pretest and posttest pronunciation analysis. The study emphasized the role of drama in creating an engaging and interactive learning environment for young learners. This result demonstrated the value of social interaction, creative problem-solving, and innovative technology-based approaches in drama-based activities. The results of this study are expected to demonstrate the fact that young learners' pronunciation skills can be improved through drama-based language instruction and raise awareness of the potential advantages of using drama activities in English language teaching, especially in the area of pronunciation.

Küçük Yaştaki Öğrencilerin Telaffuzunun Geliştirilmesinde Dramanın Kullanımı

Makale Bilgileri	ÖZ
	Bu çalışma, drama etkinliklerinin İngilizce dil öğretiminde küçük yaştaki öğrencilerin telaffuz becerilerinin gelişimi üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Küçük yaştaki öğrencilerin telaffuzunu geliştirmek için araştırma, rol yapma, doğaçlama ve yazılı performanslar gibi drama tekniklerinin kullanımı incelenmiştir. Araştırma hem nicel hem de nitel veri toplama yöntemlerinden yararlanan karma yöntem yaklaşımıyla yürütülmüştür. Araştırma, Konya'da aynı ortaokulda öğrenim gören 14-15 yaşları arasındaki 8. sınıfta öğrenim gören 15'er öğrenciden oluşan bir kontrol grubu, diğeri ise deney grubu olmak üzere toplamda 30 genç öğrenciyi kapsamaktadır. Gruplar aynı hedef konuyu öğrenmiştir. Deney grubunda, İngilizce öğretim müfredatının bir parçası olarak bir dizi drama etkinliği kullanılmış, kontrol grubunda ise drama etkinliği olmaksızın geleneksel öğretim yöntemini kullanılmıştır. Veriler, ön ve son testler, sınıf gözlemleri ve öğrencilerin kişisel günlükleri aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Bilgiler, öğrencilerin ön test ve son test telaffuz analizi olarak sesli okuma görevlerinin kaydedilmesiyle elde edilmiştir. Çalışma küçük yaştaki öğrenciler için ilgi çekici ve etkileşimli bir öğrenme ortamı yaratmada dramanın rolünü vurgulamıştır. Bu sonuç, drama temelli etkinliklerde sosyal etkileşimin, yaratıcı problem çözmenin ve teknoloji kaynaklı yenilikçi yaklaşımların değerini göstermiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının, küçük yaştaki öğrencilerin telaffuz becerilerinin drama temelli dil eğitimi ile geliştirilebileceği gerçeğini ortaya koyması ve özellikle telaffuz alanında, İngilizce öğretiminde drama etkinlikleri kullanmanın potansiyel avantajlarına ilişkin farkındalığı artırması beklenmektedir.

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of language learning, clear and accurate pronunciation is the crucial element that paves the way for effective communication, deep cultural comprehension, and personal fluency. Learning pronunciation helps people acquire a second language easily and gives them the tools they need to communicate effectively in English. (Gilakjani &Ahmadi,2011) Pronunciation significantly affects communication, comprehension, cultural integration, and individual fluency. Getting it right is crucial for clear expression and understanding, enabling active participation in conversations. It enhances genuine communication with native speakers, fostering cultural awareness. Proficient pronunciation boosts confidence and fluency, promoting self-esteem in speaking the language. However, language learners often face common challenges like foreign sounds, accent influence, stress and intonation patterns, complex sound clusters, minimal pairings, absence of feedback, and self-consciousness. Although overcoming these challenges requires commitment and concentrated practice, it is crucial for enhancing language proficiency in general.

In this article, we aimed to investigate the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation to young learners through drama. This study focuses on two main questions: first, how do drama activities affect the pronunciation skills of young English learners? And second, does using drama-based lessons lead to better pronunciation improvements than regular teaching methods? These questions guide our research into understanding the influence of drama on pronunciation skills and comparing it to regular teaching. This study carries considerable significance for language education and the refinement of pronunciation skills. It examines the viability of using drama-based methodologies, particularly those designed for young learners. This holds relevance due to the potential to introduce innovative and engaging pedagogical approaches that may improve the effectiveness and enjoyment of language learning. The findings of the study may provide a rationale for curriculum improvements and pedagogical changes, and they may also impact educational policy.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Role of Drama in Language Education

Throughout history, drama has played a vital role in teaching languages. It has historical roots dating back to ancient civilizations. In ancient Greece, for instance, drama was an integral part of education, used to develop oratory and rhetorical skills. The Renaissance era was the emergence of commedia dell'arte, a form of improvisational theater that encouraged the use of language in creative and expressive ways for language learners. Over the centuries, the role of drama in language education has evolved, adapting to changing pedagogical approaches and technologies.

The use of drama as a teaching method for the enhancement of pronunciation proficiency derives theoretical support from a diverse array of language acquisition theories. Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis is foundational in this context, emphasizing the significance of providing learners with language input that is both slightly beyond their current proficiency level and comprehensible. Drama, through its immersive and engaging scenarios, inherently offers students rich and contextually meaningful language input, making it more readily comprehensible and stimulating. Furthermore, Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis asserts that learners acquire language most effectively when they are in a relaxed and motivated state. Drama activities are inherently playful and creative, fostering a non-threatening learning environment that can reduce language-related anxiety, while the sheer allure of drama can serve as a motivational catalyst, significantly contributing to learners' enthusiasm and engagement in the language learning process.

Lev Vygotsky's Social Interactionist Theory posits that social interaction plays a pivotal role in cognitive development and language acquisition. Within the realm of drama-based language instruction, the very essence of dramatic scenarios is rooted in social interaction. Learners partake in collaborative and interactive role-play activities, negotiate meaning, and immerse themselves in real-life conversational contexts. Consequently, learners are exposed to a dynamic linguistic landscape where pronunciation is not

a mere isolated entity but an integrated component of communication. The active dialogue and interaction within dramatic scenarios create an environment in which learners are not merely exposed to language but actively practice it, affording them opportunities to focus on pronunciation nuances and fine-tune their speech.

Merrill Swain's Comprehensible Output Hypothesis asserts that learners not only benefit from comprehending language but also from actively producing it. In drama, learners are frequently required to generate language on the spot, whether through role-play or improvisational activities.

This active deployment of language prompts learners to concentrate on pronunciation precision, providing a platform for refining their speech and bridging the gap between comprehending language and competently producing it. The engagement of learners in productive, meaning-based activities within dramatic contexts promotes accurate and contextually relevant pronunciation, thereby linking theoretical comprehension to practical application.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) concept, which highlights the ideal balance between task difficulty and learner ability, is particularly relevant to drama-based language instruction. Drama activities can be thoughtfully adapted to learners' varying proficiency levels, ensuring that tasks are challenging yet attainable, thereby facilitating optimal pronunciation practice aligned with their developmental stage. Moreover, various motivation theories, including Self-Determination Theory and Expectancy-Value Theory, underscore the paramount role of intrinsic motivation in language learning. Drama's intrinsically captivating and interactive nature often incites a profound and enduring enthusiasm among learners, thereby stimulating dedicated pronunciation practice. These theories collectively buttress the use of drama as an efficacious teaching method for pronunciation enhancement, elucidating the theoretical foundations that underscore its pedagogical potency.

Drama is an important part of English language instruction since it not only teaches language abilities such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing but also allows learners to acquire meaningful learning acquisition. (Köylüoğlu, 2010) As a result of the literature review, it was concluded that the creative drama method improved students' basic language skills such as speaking (Yuanyuan, 2019; Minh, 2016; Hazar, 2015; Ulas, 2008 Sarac, 2007;), listening (Maden, 2010; Cakir, 2018), reading (Al Rabeei et.al, 2019; Ewing et al, 2011; Wagner, 1998) and writing (Bayraktar & Okvuran, 2012; Yumurtacı& Mede, 2021). Creating a natural language learning environment is crucial in second language teaching. Utilizing creative drama is seen as essential for meaningful teaching (Demircioğlu, 2010). According to Cottrell (1987), learners need prior experiences with the language's real context to learn effectively. This highlights the importance of immersing learners in the target language for successful learning. According to İkinci (2019), going to the country where the language is spoken is the best way to learn it. If this isn't possible, drama with education is the greatest option. Since we are in the age of digitalization and creativity, we don't necessarily go abroad, as language learning classes can be full of different life-like situations, characters, and dialogue. Teaching a foreign language using drama can be effective in developing students' language skills and creative thinking. (Desai, 2020)

Drama for Pronunciation Teaching

Drama-based instruction is a highly effective approach for improving pronunciation in second language (L2) learning. Several studies have demonstrated that it can lead to significant enhancements in L2 English oral fluency when compared to traditional methods of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). While it also positively impacts comprehensibility, the improvement in this aspect may be slightly less pronounced, and there is no significant difference in accentedness scores between the two methods (Galante & Thomson, 2017, TESOL Quarterly). Additionally, research, such as the work by Bora (2021, Language Teaching Research), has shown that drama can enhance learners' pronunciation accuracy, syntactic complexity, and overall fluency. These findings collectively emphasize the diverse benefits of incorporating drama into L2 language learning.

Drama plays a crucial role in language education by promoting spontaneous and genuine opportunities for second language (L2) speaking, thereby creating a natural language learning environment (Bora, 2020, RELC Journal). Moreover, it is widely acknowledged for its positive impact on students' emotional, social, and language development, making it a valuable asset in language teaching (Uysal & Yavuz, 2018, International Journal of Learning and Teaching). The use of drama in instruction can significantly boost learners' comfort levels when speaking in their L2, potentially reducing language anxiety and instilling greater confidence (Galante, 2018, RELC Journal). In essence, drama not only facilitates language learning but also nurtures well-rounded personal and linguistic growth, making it a powerful tool in the language classroom.

Additionally, it's worth highlighting that utilizing drama activities in conjunction with native language instruction has demonstrated greater effectiveness in enhancing pronunciation skills compared to conventional methods (Ulas, 2008, American Journal of Applied Sciences). Of particular significance is the impact on the often-neglected aspect of suprasegmental-level pronunciation, which showed significant improvement when creative drama sessions were integrated, underscoring drama's potential to enhance pronunciation skills at this nuanced level (Korkut & Çelik, 2021, The Language Learning Journal). These findings emphasize that drama plays a vital role in developing both basic pronunciation skills and the finer nuances of speech, highlighting its essential role in language instruction. However, the effectiveness of drama-based instruction may vary depending on the context, learners, and specific instructional approaches used, underscoring the need for further research in this area (Belliveau & Kim, 2013).

There are several noteworthy gaps in the existing literature on teaching pronunciation through drama. Firstly, a notable absence is research on the long-term effectiveness of drama-based methods. While many studies highlight short-term gains, there is limited insight into how well these improvements are retained over time. Moreover, comparative studies that directly evaluate the effectiveness of different drama techniques and approaches are relatively scarce, leaving educators uncertain about the most efficient strategies to employ in various teaching contexts.

Additionally, there is a need for research that encompasses a wider range of linguistic and cultural contexts, as well as the development of assessment tools specifically designed for evaluating pronunciation skills acquired through drama. In light of these findings, the present study is motivated by the need to address the gaps in the literature. Specifically, the study aims to compare the relative efficacy of different drama approaches and consider the impact of cultural and contextual factors. By conducting this research, we seek to contribute to developing adaptable strategies that can aid educators in facilitating language learners' pronunciation improvement more effectively.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Within this study, which seeks to explore the impact of drama on the development of English pronunciation among young learners in state school classrooms, a comprehensive research approach blending qualitative and quantitative design techniques is employed. In second language phonology study, the use of mixed techniques improves the quality of inferences or interpretations while helping in a better understanding of the research problem (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Büyüköztürk, 2011; Isaacs,2012). Teachers can help students in achieving English pronunciation accuracy by using mixed methods to identify factors that affect pronunciation accuracy. (Kosasih, 2021). Furthermore, the mixed approach depends on the notion that the shortcomings of any data group will be made up for by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Creswell, 2009). The data collection process involves pre-tests, treatments, post-tests, and the inclusion of students' diary entries to capture subjective perspectives. To assess the study's central hypothesis, pre-intermediate level students are stratified into both an experimental and a control group, with random selection facilitating the group allocation process. Furthermore, drawing from the work of Bridget Lee, Stephanie Cawthon, and Kathryn Dawson in 2013, the study uncovers

significant variations in teacher self-efficacy and pedagogical conceptual change, underscoring the complexity of the educational landscape within drama-based language instruction.

Both the experimental and control groups took a pre-test before the experiment to determine their previous knowledge of the target English vocabulary items. The text includes 36 words from the British Council website as part of the pre-test. The text is chosen from this reliable website based on the participants' level of proficiency. A read-aloud task as a pre-and post-test is used to measure the effects of the drama sessions. In the presence of the researchers, the read-aloud performances of the participants are recorded. The passage that is read by a native speaker is noted as the key for evaluation.

For six weeks, the treatment materials are applied in two lessons (80 minutes) each week. The experimental group examines the pronunciation of sounds, words, and sentences during each session through dramatic activities like role-playing and puppets, each of which includes aspects related to the research topic. The researcher conducts the whole process by herself. The same pre-test and post-test are given to both groups after the teaching process. The hypothesis of this study is validated through analysis of the post-test results. In addition, the personal diaries of students' subjective views provide qualitative results.

Participants

Students in the 8th grade at a secondary school in Konya, Türkiye, take part in the study. Two groups are chosen from among all the classrooms that have an equal number of participants, and the participants are chosen at random from among all the students; one is considered the Experimental Group and the other as the Control Group. A total of 30 male students are in the groups. The students in both groups are between the ages of 11 and 13 with approximately equal social and educational backgrounds. Before the beginning, the students and their parents are provided with the information they need to fill out the informed consent forms. Throughout the whole semester, the students were quite nice and supportive and very excited to be a part of the research.

The study begins at the very beginning of the second term of the 2022–2023 academic year (in February). The researcher carried out the study in her position as the regular class teacher for classes 8-A (control group) and 8-C. (experimental group). The researcher chooses engaging activities that support English learning and are related to their academic areas. The students receive instruction from the same instructor to avoid differences in lectures.

The Experimental Group participants are exposed to a variety of drama techniques during the study, most of which call for creating imaginary, unplanned, and unstructured situations with a pre-text. Since personal development is one of the main objectives of this study, which included the growth of socializing abilities and cooperative behaviors, setting goals before the class is crucial. Additionally, it's crucial to choose and organize the dramatic exercises, as well as to get ready the materials for lessons that will be needed to create the backgrounds for the drama class. Poster paint, drawing equipment, chart paper, glue, poster board, flashcards, realia and narrative photos, CD players, and films were among the supplies. These elements are applied to selected role-play sketches to provide a genuine state of mind appropriate for the environment in question. The pre-text is employed as a motivating strategy since it greatly captures the interest of the students. Dramatic situations, songs, flashcards, micro roleplays, pantomime, imitation, brainstorming exercises, reading, and dramatizing are all included in the pre-text. The experimental group receives subsequent designs of the phonetic items. Each student plays a different part in the sketches. They repeatedly test the sketches in various settings that they had imagined in advance. The final part is the evaluation part. Monitoring students' development is essential while teaching them through drama. As a means of conveying ideas, these exercises help students improve their communication abilities as well as their overall growth.

The control group received vocabulary word instruction from the researcher herself. The teacher

lists grammatical patterns and their pronunciations on the board during the first class. Students are taught about these patterns via drills that need repetition. In this way, the pupils can easily comprehend the meanings of the terms. Students are also able to swiftly and easily grasp the new vocabulary terms as a result of this. For the chosen vocabulary topic, the pupils all receive the same vocabulary terms. The approach is used in all of the sessions.

Research Instruments and Processes

In this study, data is collected through the use of two distinct types of instruments: a pre-test and a post-test, along with the inclusion of student diaries for feedback. These instruments are employed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the impact of drama-based activities on young learners' pronunciation abilities.

The pre-test and post-test serve as essential tools for measuring the students' pronunciation skills before and after their engagement in drama activities. This approach allows for the evaluation of their progress and the effectiveness of the intervention. Furthermore, the incorporation of student diaries enhances the data collection process by providing qualitative feedback from the learners themselves. These diaries enable students to express their thoughts, experiences, and perceptions of the drama activities, offering valuable insights into the emotional and cognitive aspects of their pronunciation development. By utilizing these multiple data sources, this study aims to obtain a well-rounded understanding of the influence of drama on young learners' pronunciation abilities, combining quantitative and qualitative data for a comprehensive analysis.

In implementing the experimental group's lesson plans, a thoughtfully crafted approach unfolds, drawing inspiration from Sarah Phillips' "Drama with Children" book. The backbone of this instructional strategy comprises six diverse drama activities meticulously woven into a six-week curriculum. The initial focal point is the refinement of pronunciation skills, with a particular emphasis on deciphering the nuances of silent letters, notably the elusive (r) sound in words. Unlike the control group's reliance on explicit pronunciation drills, the experimental group takes a dynamic turn, prioritizing a more engaging and interactive approach. Rather than simply delivering conscious pronunciation instruction, the goal is to immerse students in creative and hands-on experiences, fostering an intuitive understanding of silent letters and, in turn, organically enhancing their broader language abilities.

As the study progresses, the experimental group's sessions evolve to emphasize peer learning dynamics. Following drama performances, students actively participate in a constructive feedback loop, offering insights on pronunciation to their peers. This collaborative environment extends beyond correctness alone, encouraging students to critically assess specific sounds and provide valuable suggestions for improvement. The focus broadens to encompass not only pronunciation proficiency but also the cultivation of effective communication strategies within the framework of collaborative learning. Meanwhile, the control group adheres to more traditional teaching methods, maintaining a course of explicit pronunciation drills aimed at mastering target vocabulary elements.

In the subsequent stages of the study, the experimental group's lesson plans take a deliberate shift away from explicit pronunciation instruction. Instead, the author introduces intricate scenarios and brief scripts tailored to encapsulate targeted words or phrases for each session. For instance, when tackling the elusive "th" sound, scenarios are thoughtfully crafted to involve words like "this," "that," or "those," enabling students to engage in repeated enactments of these scenes with heightened attention to precise pronunciation. Interestingly, despite the absence of explicit pronunciation requirements, the researcher observes a gradual yet discernible improvement in the fluency and efficacy of students' speech. This experiential and scenario-based approach not only underscores the efficacy of creative drama in enhancing language skills but also contributes to a nuanced understanding of how the organic integration of these elements transcends traditional explicit pronunciation instruction. The intricate interplay between creative engagement and linguistic development unfolds as a rich narrative within the experimental group's sessions,

offering valuable insights into the multifaceted impact of drama-based language instruction on a broader educational landscape.

Pre-Test and A Post- Test

The study incorporated a comprehensive assessment approach involving both the experimental and control groups. This assessment encompassed three key components: a pre-test, a post-test, and a set of activity questions, all designed to gauge the influence of drama in the context of English language instruction. The pre-test established baseline language proficiency, while the post-test measured changes in language skills after the introduction of drama-based instruction.

The pre-test comprised a 36-word text, thoughtfully selected from the British Council website to align with each participant's individual proficiency level. The purpose of this pre-test was to establish a baseline for evaluating the impact of the subsequent drama sessions. To assess the effectiveness of drama as a teaching method, a read-aloud activity was employed both before and after the drama sessions, serving as the pre-test and post-test, respectively. During these sessions, participants' oral performances were meticulously recorded in the presence of the research team.

To evaluate the participants' pronunciation and fluency, their read-aloud renditions were compared with a native speaker's rendition of the same text, serving as the benchmark for evaluation. This comparative analysis allowed for a precise assessment of the influence of drama on their pronunciation abilities and overall language proficiency. The use of pre-tests and post-tests, along with an authentic benchmark, ensured a thorough examination of the impact of drama in the English language teaching context.

Student Diaries

Participants in this research were actively engaged in providing their perspectives and reflections on the drama activities through the use of student journals. Reflective diaries kept by students are valuable sources of qualitative data because they shed light on how people engage with it and make decisions about what, when, and where to use it. (Jefferies & Hyde, 2009). Moreover, the teacher encouraged students to share their personal preferences and insights, asking them to reflect on whether they found the activities enjoyable and what valuable lessons they had gathered from each session. These journal entries were diligently completed after each lesson, with participants being prompted to maintain these records after every drama session.

Before commencing the journaling process, the participants received a clear explanation of the purpose behind these student journals. To further facilitate understanding, a five-minute discussion was held at the end of each class, during which the goals and objectives of the drama activities were explicitly communicated. While participants were assured that they could write in Turkish if the need arose, they were encouraged to use English as the medium for their journal entries.

With its ability to determine relationships between personal and study resources, a quantitative diary design is a valuable tool for examining student involvement and performance (A. Bakker et al., 2015). The student journals served as a valuable resource for researchers to gain profound insights into the participants' perspectives, attitudes, and responses to the specific drama activities. The analysis of these journals primarily focused on assessing whether the participants perceived the dramatization exercises as beneficial. Additionally, the challenges and obstacles faced by the participants during the drama-based lessons were carefully documented in the researchers' field notes.

This multifaceted approach not only enriched the study with qualitative data but also provided a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and perceptions related to the drama activities. The student journals, alongside the follow-up discussions, allowed for a more nuanced exploration of the impact and effectiveness of drama in English language instruction.

Data Analysis

First of all, the researcher listens to the recordings before marking the performances using the predetermined key. Another coder, an English teacher, also sees the performances. The 'Wilcoxon signed ranks test' is used to analyze the data, which is a popular analysis technique that can be used in place of the t-test in within-group studies with fewer participants. Versions 16.0 and 7.0 of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) and Excel were used to analyze the data and determine the derived values. The test was performed separately for each group, comparing the pronunciation scores before and after the intervention.

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were collected through classroom observations and students' personal diaries. Classroom observations were conducted during the drama-based lessons for the experimental group to gain insights into students' engagement, interaction, and participation during the activities. Students' diaries were also analyzed for their reflections and perceptions of the drama-based language instruction.

FINDINGS

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Table 1. *The Average Points of the Experimental Group (Pre-test and Post-test)*

Participants	Pre-test	Post-test
1 YEO	11	23
2 MY	9	17
3 AK	21	27
4 AT	25	30
5 AT2	5	13
6 EG	6	6
7 EA	16	26
8 FC	13	22
9HCE	9	11
10İS	12	23
11 VW	13	27
12KHK	2	10
13İBC	2	3
14AÇ	4	14
15MEŞ	9	14

When Table 1 above is examined, it is clear that almost all members of the experimental group improved their pronunciation and only one student's score stayed equal. Examining the pre-test results of the students who took part in the study as the experimental group, it was discovered that the lowest score was two, and the highest was 25 out of 36. According to the post-test results, the lowest score was 3 and the highest was 30.

Table 2. *The Average Points of the Control Group (Pre-test and Post-test)*

Participants	Pre-test	Post-test
1 EÖ	4	6
2 MİKA	3	10
3 AEA	7	8
4 AA	5	13
5 ABO	16	25
6 BMB	5	14
7 CA	1	10
8 FD	20	27

9KSC	12	8
10MG	14	15
11 MSK	2	5
12MA	19	21
13MAB	16	26
14MEE	26	28
15BM	1	3

It is evident from Table 2 above that practically all control group participants improved their pronunciation, and just one student's score dropped. Examining the pre-test results of the students who took part in the research as the control group, it was discovered that the lowest score was one and the highest was 26 out of 36. According to the post-test results, the lowest score was 3 and the highest was 28.

The findings demonstrate a significant change in the participants' performances before and after the treatment, with z = 3.301 by the researcher and z = 3,31 by a colleague, p <.5. both. In other words, the drama-based pronunciation lessons had a slightly remarkable impact on the participants' ability to pronounce words correctly. On the post-test, every participant student from the treatment group performed better. However, most of the students from the control group improved their pronunciation as well. The outcomes demonstrated that the students' pronunciation improved slightly more than in regular ways.

Table 3. *Student Journals Checklist Analysis*

Week 1-2 Student Journals Checklist		Freq.	Percent(%)	Week 3-4 Freq.	Percent(%)	Week 5-6 Freq.	Percent(%)
Students like the activities.	Yes	15	100	15	100	15	100
	Total	15	100	15	100	15	100
Students find it difficult.	No	8	53	12	80	15	100
	Total	8	53	12	80	15	100
Students focus on the activities.	No	15	100	15	100	15	100
	Total	15	100	15	100	15	100
Students learn something about the correct pronunciation.	Yes	7	46	8	53	8	53
	Total	7	46	8	53	8	53
Students are eager to join.	Yes	15	100	15	100	15	100
	Total	15	100	15	100	15	100
Students feel free to make mistakes.	No	7	46	13	86	15	100
	Total	7	46	13	86	15	100

Explanations for Table 3 based on Student Journal Responses:

Theme/Subtheme Analysis:

1. Theme: Student Experience and Reactions

Subtheme 1: Enjoyment and Pleasure

The majority of students consistently shared that they enjoyed participating in the drama activities. Their feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing their enjoyment through simple statements like "I enjoyed it" or more enthusiastic remarks such as "I had a great time" and "I love it." This positive sentiment remained consistent throughout the study, indicating a continuous and increasing appreciation for the interactive and engaging aspects of the drama sessions. The recurring theme of

enjoyment highlights the positive impact these activities had on creating a pleasant learning atmosphere, contributing to an overall positive experience for the students.

Subtheme 2: Difficulty Level

The majority of students consistently shared that they didn't find the lessons to be difficult. This suggests that students generally felt comfortable and at ease with the content and activities. However, it's crucial to closely monitor how this perception changes over the weeks. Keeping track of these changes on a weekly basis will provide valuable insights into how the students' views on the difficulty of the lessons may evolve. This ongoing observation will help identify any patterns or shifts in how students perceive the level of challenge, contributing to a more detailed understanding of the changing dynamics within the learning environment.

2. Theme: Educational Impact

Subtheme: Knowledge and Awareness

The analysis of student journals pointed out a consistent pattern: students tended to provide short and straightforward responses when asked about what they had learned. Even though the lessons didn't particularly emphasize pronunciation, the concise nature of their responses raises questions about the depth of their understanding and engagement with the material. This suggests the need for a closer examination of students' comprehension levels and a consideration of whether adjustments in instructional focus might be beneficial. By delving into the nuances of their responses, it becomes possible to identify potential areas for improvement and ensure a more effective and meaningful learning experience for the students.

3. Theme: Emotional Response and Engagement

Subtheme 1: Interest and Eagerness

As the lessons neared their end, there was a clear increase in students' excitement and interest in the activities. This heightened enthusiasm was particularly evident when they expressed eagerness for future lessons. A specific example is highlighted with a student asking, "What are your plans for next week? Can we repeat this activity?" This curiosity about the possibility of revisiting the activities in the upcoming week not only reflects a positive impact but also indicates a growing enthusiasm and enjoyment among the students. It suggests that the hands-on and interactive approach of the lessons has successfully sparked a desire for ongoing exploration and participation.

Subtheme 2: Free Expression

Several students highlighted that the teaching method allowed them to express themselves freely and openly. A specific example, as shared by a student, illuminates this point: "This instructor is not annoyed with me, therefore I may say whatever I want to say! I don't have to make a full sentence." This particular insight indicates that students felt a sense of ease and freedom to communicate without concerns of judgment. It underscores the importance of the instructional approach in creating an environment where students are not only encouraged but also comfortable expressing themselves, even if it means deviating from traditional language norms. Recognizing this freedom to speak openly contributes to a deeper understanding of how the teaching approach influences students' comfort and willingness to engage in expressive communication.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the impact of drama on young language learners' pronunciation abilities. The current study's findings were consistent with research conducted in many different cultures on how to improve students' pronunciation skills through drama (Korkut & Çelik, 2021; Altun, 2019; Ananto & Rusmiati, 2018; Moghaddas & Ghafariniae, 2012; Stevens, 1989). Due to the numerous variations in speech, achieving an accurate representation of real-life semantics and speech selection can be challenging (Kartal & Korucu-Kis, 2020). However, the results of the study suggest that drama can play

a significant role in pronunciation development among young learners. Drama provides children with exposure to a wide range of sounds and intonations, contributing to their ability to recognize and accurately reproduce these sounds.

Schejbal (2006) emphasizes that drama creates a unique environment for the development of speaking skills. Learners engage in real-life scenarios and have meaningful conversations, stepping out of their comfort zones and actively participating in the target language. Drama activities encourage clear and confident speaking in a safe and encouraging setting, allowing children to practice and naturally produce sounds. Comparing Schejbal's observations with the results of our drama research, we can affirm that my research aligns with Schejbal's findings. Our study also indicates that drama-based learning methods effectively enhance students' speaking skills, facilitating their stepping out of their comfort zones and enabling more effective communication in the target language. This supports the notion that drama is a valuable tool for fostering language development in learners.

The advantage of drama in providing learners with repeated practice and reinforcement of pronunciation features, as emphasized by Lemmer (2007), aligns with our research findings. In our study, drama activities consistently proved effective in offering learners immersive experiences with various accents and dialects within a meaningful context. This advantage is particularly noteworthy for young English as a second language learners, allowing them to internalize pronunciation patterns and develop muscle memory for accurate sound production. My research supports the idea that drama serves as a valuable tool for enhancing pronunciation skills and creating an engaging and linguistically rich learning environment.

Additionally, Chowdhury's (2018) observation that drama promotes the integration of language proficiency and interaction in the classroom resonates with our research findings. In our study, drama consistently proved to be a powerful tool for enhancing language proficiency by encouraging students to express themselves openly, share their ideas and emotions, and build confidence in public speaking. This aligns with Chowdhury's insights. Additionally, our research highlighted the importance of incorporating gestures and body language in drama activities, emphasizing their role in improving communication, articulation, and the development of speech organs. The connection between language development, expression, and non-verbal communication underscores the valuable impact of integrating drama into language learning environments.

The idea that drama offers an environment for immediate feedback and growth, where instructors and peers can provide pronunciation advice during practice or performances, closely aligns with what we found in our research. In our study, drama consistently allowed for real-time feedback, enabling instructors and peers to offer valuable insights during both practice sessions and actual performances. This instant feedback proved instrumental in helping students recognize and correct pronunciation mistakes, significantly enhancing their ability to pronounce words accurately. This underscores the dynamic and responsive nature of drama as an instructional tool, emphasizing its role in creating a supportive environment for continuous improvement in language pronunciation skills—a perspective in harmony with Baker and Burri's (2016) observations.

While drama techniques undeniably present various advantages in language learning, it is crucial to acknowledge certain drawbacks, as emphasized by scholars such as Richards and Rodgers (2001). Our research findings align with some of these concerns, revealing potential challenges in implementing scripted scenarios due to the perceived artificiality of language. Monitoring and evaluating student participation during dramatic activities also emerged as a significant issue, echoing the observations made by Richards and Rodgers. Additionally, our study highlighted the potential difficulties faced by introverted or shy students in fully engaging with drama-based exercises.

In conclusion, while this study provides valuable insights into the potential benefits of drama in teaching language, additional research is needed to confirm and expand upon these findings. Incorporating

drama into teaching methods can support effective pronunciation training and enhance language learners' overall abilities, particularly among young learners.

CONCLUSION

This study has shed light on the positive effects of using drama as a method to enhance young learners' pronunciation abilities. Through an extensive analysis of existing literature and empirical data, it becomes evident that drama can be a highly effective technique for improving the speaking skills of young learners.

The literature review established that drama-based activities not only engage students in interactive and enjoyable ways but also provide valuable, real-world opportunities to practice pronunciation. Students are motivated to actively use the target language while experimenting with various phonetic features through drama performances and role-playing scenarios. This fosters spontaneous and intuitive speaking, leading to enhanced self-confidence and a willingness to take linguistic risks.

To create an engaging and interactive learning environment, the study integrated drama techniques such as exploration, role-play, improvisation, and scripted performances into the curriculum. The reliability analysis of the measurement instruments used in the study indicated strong internal consistency, enhancing the validity of the research findings. This substantiates the credibility of the study's conclusions regarding the effectiveness of drama activities in developing young learners' pronunciation skills. The collected data supported the main hypothesis of this study and provided more evidence of the positive impact of drama on young learners' pronunciation abilities. The findings indicated that students who participated in drama-based activities significantly improved their ability to produce accurate and understandable sounds. This was evident in their improved production of specific target sounds, overall pronunciation proficiency, and increased phonemic awareness compared to the control group.

The results suggest that while traditional teaching methods are beneficial, teaching through drama provides a more substantial improvement in pronunciation. Young language learners actively participate in language learning in a fun and dynamic environment facilitated by drama. They engage in role-playing, improvisation, and storytelling, which allows them to practice pronunciation, explore various sounds and intonations, and gain a deeper understanding of the phonetic aspects of the language.

Drama activities contribute to the holistic development of young learners' linguistic abilities. Drama engages students in a multisensory learning process that involves auditory, visual, and kinesthetic components. Dramatic performances, which incorporate body gestures, facial expressions, and intonation patterns, enhance students' motor skills and provide them with a profound understanding of pronunciation. This active approach helps young learners internalize and replicate the correct pronunciation patterns more effectively. Drama's interactive approach also enables students to work on listening, speaking, and even reading abilities while connecting pronunciation to meaning and context.

Furthermore, drama creates a supportive learning environment where young learners feel comfortable taking risks and making mistakes. Through group projects and performances, students assist and learn from one another, fostering a sense of community and an enjoyable atmosphere for improving pronunciation. This encouraging environment promotes increased confidence, higher motivation, and improved pronunciation skills.

It is crucial to emphasize that the effective use of drama in pronunciation instruction requires qualified and experienced teachers. Teachers play a pivotal role in creating suitable drama activities, providing guidance, and offering constructive feedback. Professional development opportunities for teachers to become more familiar with drama pedagogy and its application in language instruction are essential.

While this study has highlighted the benefits of using drama to help young learners improve their pronunciation abilities, further research is needed to explore other factors that may affect the effectiveness

of drama in various linguistic and cultural contexts. Additionally, investigating the long-term effects of drama on students' pronunciation skills can offer valuable insights into curriculum development and language teaching techniques.

The results, analyzed using SPSS, indicated a slight positive impact of drama-based English language instruction on young learners' pronunciation skills. However, the study had limitations, primarily a small sample size of 30 participants and a relatively short duration of six weeks. This study underscores the potential of drama as an effective technique in language classrooms for enhancing young learners' pronunciation abilities.

The present study is greatly restricted by the lack of information on the long-term effects of students' enhanced pronunciation abilities as a result of the drama. It is highly advised to carry out additional experimental follow-up investigations that go beyond the first post-intervention step to close this gap. These studies have to use a longitudinal approach to thoroughly monitor students' pronunciation skills over a longer time, offering insights into the length and stability of the noted improvements. Determining the various demographic groups and educational settings can help develop a more complex understanding of variances in persistent progress. Furthermore, exploring the underlying mechanisms that impact the durability of improved pronunciation abilities, such as continuous exposure to creative theater or different teaching approaches, may provide educators with useful information.

On the other hand, it contributes to the field of teaching English as a second language by emphasizing the value of drama activities as a powerful method for improving young students' pronunciation skills. As educators and researchers seek new ways to teach languages, this study encourages innovation and creative problem-solving in language instruction. By incorporating drama approaches, teachers can expand the learning environment in language classes, inspiring young learners to take an active role and improve their pronunciation. To enhance the validity of future research, it is recommended to include larger and more diverse participant pools, extend the study duration, and explore cross-cultural variations in drama-based language instruction. Furthermore, addressing the challenges of assessing pronunciation, both subjectively and objectively, can improve measurement accuracy. Implementing drama techniques in the regular English language curriculum, coupled with teacher training programs, can facilitate broader integration and enhance language education. Collaborative learning environments, technology-based tools, and innovative approaches are suggested to further enrich drama-based language instruction, ultimately fostering young learners' pronunciation skills and their overall language development in the English classroom.

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