



## USING DRAMA AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

## DRAMANIN ÇOCUKLAR İÇİN İLETİŞİM ARACI OLARAK KULLANIMI

Rahime Buhur HAZAR<sup>1</sup>**Abstract**

Drama is seen as an effective way to improve young learners communication skills while enabling them a creative and authentic atmosphere. Teachers may help children by setting up a classroom in which many students enjoy creative activities such as drama. With the help of drama activities, students of young age can find it easy to produce the target language and participate in the activity willingly. The main aim of the study is to indicate the usefulness of drama activities for young learners of ESL in speaking classes. The study was conducted on 48 participants from 7th grade students at a private secondary school in Ankara. A qualitative study was conducted to find out whether dramatic activities are helpful for young learners of EFL in speaking classrooms through teacher's diaries, video tapes and interviews. To achieve 3 lesson plans were designed in a 6 week period, and each of the dramatic activities and the attitudes of students were observed. The results of this study aimed to prove that dramatic activities are helpful for young learners in speaking classrooms.

**Key Words:** drama, drama in education, young learners, speaking, communication

**Özet**

Drama aktivitelerinin yaratıcı ve doğal bir atmosfer sağlayarak çocuk yaştaki öğrencilerin iletişim becerilerinin geliştirmede etkin bir metot olduğu görülmektedir. Öğretmenler sınıflarında çocukların drama gibi hoşlarına gidebilecek bir öğrenme ortamı yaratarak onların yabancı dil öğrenimine katkıda bulunabilirler. Drama sayesinde küçük yaştaki öğrenciler söz konusu aktivitelere istekli olarak katılarak hedef dili daha rahat üretebilirler. Bu araştırmanın temel amacı drama aktivitelerinin çocuk yaştaki öğrencilerin konuşma derslerindeki kullanışlılığını ortaya koymaktır. Bu çalışma Ankara'da bulunan bir özel okuldaki 48 adet 7 inci sınıf öğrencisi üzerinde yapılmıştır. Drama aktivitelerinin çocukların konuşma derslerinde İngilizce öğrenimine katkısı olup olmadığı bir niteliksel araştırma yöntemi ile öğretmen günlüğü, video kayıtları ve görüşmeler vasıtasıyla yapılmıştır. Bu amaca yönelik olarak 6 hafta boyunca uygulanacak olan 3 ders programı dizayn edilmiş ve öğrencilerin drama aktivitelerine yönelik tavırları bu zaman zarfında araştırmacı tarafından gözlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma drama aktivitelerinin çocukların konuşma derslerine olumlu katkıda bulunduğunu kanıtlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** drama, eğitimde drama, çocuklar, konuşma, iletişim

## **1. Introduction**

"The earth has music for those who listen." says Shakespeare. I want to adapt this quote from Shakespeare to this study as "a classroom has so many opportunities for those who are ready for the process". As many of the recent studies suggest, drama is one of the most creative techniques in teaching EFL which facilitates students learning process. In this respect, teachers can set up a classroom in which many students enjoy creative activities like drama. With the help of drama activities, students of young age can find it easy to produce the target language and willingly participate in the activity. Drama in education which has been evolving for about twenty years makes a successful use of theatrical forms in teaching in our modern day. It is one of the oldest forms of art meeting the demands of young people in their education. Drama in child education is a creative process of learning as it constitutes a platform in which children can express their ideas and thoughts. Drama in education was not only the general practice of drama in schools but was also a term to describe it. It was Slade (1954) who had described child drama as a separate form of art as opposed to adult theatre. And it was his writing and practice that had more widespread influence in schools. Slade's approach was characterised by respecting the creative ability of children. According to John Haycraft, *English Teaching Theatre* "Drama makes students that English is not just words, structures and idioms, but it is a lively, dramatic and versatile means of communication". Haycraft's observation about the usefulness of *English Teaching Theatre* applies equally well to the use of drama activities in general. Drama offers an excellent opportunity for students in developing fluency in English. Drama has a communicative role on young learners of EFL. The more they get involved in dramatic activities, the more they can express themselves effectively. Wagner (1998) claims that "drama provides children with experiences that enhance their ability to judge the appropriateness of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies for a wide variety of imagined experiences" (p. 35).

Creating an authentic atmosphere in a classroom is a challenging task in most of the learning processes. It is also not easy for a teacher to draw children's attention and get them involved in activities. When students remain submissive throughout a lesson, they easily become bored and aggressive which is not desired in learning. Traditional methods do not fully address this situation. Contemporary methods are essential in order to break the artificiality of the classroom and refresh the learning environment. When there is no authenticity in the classroom, children can question the usefulness and the helpfulness of the learning process. Teachers continue to confront these problems in their classrooms daily. As far as young learners are concerned, they feel anxious and bored with the learning process when they don't actively participate. This situation decreases the production of the language in speaking classrooms. A teacher needs to plan his or her activity well before hand for an enjoyable and participatory classroom. Otherwise, undesired situations such as boredom and nervousness may occur. In this respect more creative techniques are required to get all the students involved. In this study, role of drama is examined in terms of its contributions to young learners' language skills in English speaking classrooms.

### **Aim of the Study**

Drama is observed as one of the effective techniques in teaching EFL, especially for young learners. When they take roles in an activity individually or as a group, the artificial atmosphere of a classroom tends to fade away instantly. Drama also can make children enjoy the learning process and help them produce the language. Therefore, this study aims to find out how drama contributes to young learners in speaking classes, and the attitudes of the students towards speaking based drama activities. Accordingly, the study aims to find out meaningful answers to the research questions. For this purpose, two research questions are proposed by the researcher:

1. Are drama activities helpful for young learners of ESL in speaking classes?

2. What kind of attitudes do the students have towards drama activities in speaking session?

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Participants**

48 seventh grade students aged between 10 and 12 from a private school in Ankara are chosen as the participants of the study. Their level is pre-intermediate to intermediate. Almost all of them come from educated families with high income, which facilitate their understanding of the context. The participants are aware of the fact that they are in a study, and all the permission from administrators and parents are taken to conduct the study.

### **2.2. Instruments**

This study aims to find out whether drama activities help young learners in speaking classes. To achieve this 3 lesson plans are designed in accordance with 3 dramatic activities throughout a 6 week period. 2 of the dramatic activities are chosen from "100 ideas for teaching drama book" by Johnnie Young, and 1 of them is chosen from "With drama in mind: Real learning in imagined worlds" by Patricia Baldwin. The researcher also adapts some parts in accordance with the aimed level.

Regarding the research questions, three different data collection tools are used: The students are video-taped during the drama activities for 6 weeks, and interviewed after each of the activities. Also the teacher keeps diaries on the activities for 6 weeks. The results of the interviews are analyzed by qualitative data analysis based on the observations of the teacher. The instruments that are used in this study reflect what is aimed to find out with the research questions. The observations through the journal of the teacher are also satisfactory to present the importance of the dramatic activities in speaking classrooms with young learners.

## **3. Findings**

In this chapter, the findings were presented in terms of three parts which are identification with the characters, association with personal experience, and retention of the knowledge. The findings of dramatic activities were also presented in accordance with drama strategies as Baldwin (2008) suggested. The activities were observed and analyzed regarding the strategies used in drama.

### **3.1. Identification with the Characters in accordance with Lesson Plans**

Dramatic play is defined as what the players explore and improvise the characters and motions among them in a free environment. Children might learn socializing and sharing ideas faster, also they can create their own way of expression, and improve it with the help of dramatic activities (Adıgüzel, 2012, p. 16-17). From the observations, they seemed pleased with the characters in the dramatic activities. One of the participants whose character was his older brother was eager to tell about his character. He acted as a really enjoyable boy and demonstrated that he loved playing tennis. He imitated some of his brother's famous behaviours which made his friends laugh.

Another student chose her mother who was a disciplined and strict person who telling her that she had to study harder, and do the best that she could, all the time. She seemed that she observed her mother's behavior so well. She performed her character well as some of the students reacted her performances enthusiastically. One of the students in 7-B wanted to express which character he chose and the reasons why he preferred that character. The character was his dog which he loved so much, and when he revealed information about his dog, the other students also reacted that they did not get surprised at his choice, as he kept telling about it all the time. He showed us, how his dog behaved when he felt excited and frustrated. He also showed us how his dog ate and drank which was funny and enjoyable to watch. Through his performance, it can be indicated that when a performer use dramatic

strategies in the classroom, it is possible for the others to feel satisfied with the learning process, as well.

For the first activity, eight characters were determined for the students. One of them was an old man who needs help in reading newspapers. This character had a dialogue with one of the students. He stayed like an old man, and improvised what was in his mind. His intonation was also like an old man which made his friends laugh. Another character was the teenager close to their age who loved playing. The dialogue between the character and one of the students was as follows:

- Hi, teenager! Why do you love playing video-games so much?
- I love playing them, because they are so colorful and enjoyable. They make me energetic!
- Tell me some video game names.
- Can they make me energetic too?
- Yes, of course."

Another dialogue between the character and one of the students was as follows:

- " Hello, you look so fit! I like it. How do you stay so healthy?
- I do yoga and eat healthy. That is how I stay so fit.

For the busy working mother character one of questions was as follows: "Why didn't you quit working when you had a child?". And the answer was: "I thought quitting my job, but I couldn't because we needed extra money as a family." This answer was reasonable for the other students, thus they reacted to her as "You are right, we know." From the observations, it could be stated that they enjoyed simulating a real life situation in the classroom through improvisation of a character. Throughout hot seating, they enjoyed setting up sentences, phrases and even come up with new words with the help of their peers. In the end, the goal to make them communicate and enjoy the lesson simultaneously seemed to work well.

In the second activity, the students were asked to form a circle, and one of the students was singled out in order to express his thoughts in the middle of the circle. When he voiced his thoughts, the circle of the students echoed the sentence he uttered immediately. In one of the examples, he and then the circle uttered: " I am so lucky to be in the same classroom with my best friend."

Then another student stood in the middle of the circle, and uttered a sentence about a part of her school life. She said: "I enjoy doing my English homework all the time." Then the circle echoed the same sentence. This also created different intonations which was enjoyable and attractive for the students as well. As it was observed, with this activity, and strategy used in it the participants both enjoyed the learning process, and communicated in a playful way which was appealing to young learners of EFL. The characters were also observed in acting out their roles well, as the role was a part of their lives. They integrated real life into the classroom atmosphere thus the artificiality of the classroom tended to fade away.

One of the shy students was not eager to express what was in her mind. With a little bit encouragement, she was convinced to say a sentence about her life. The student told us " If I lose my grandmother, I will cry, and won't come to school." This sentence made her feel sad, which reflected her biggest fear. This also showed how powerful a dramatic activity could be in expressing deeper feelings and thoughts. These can be the findings of the activity to support the helpfulness of the dramatic activities for young learners. The rest of the characters also did a good job in answering the questions according to their ideas about the character. Any big obstacles or problems throughout the session were not observed. Both the

characters and the investigators were pretty ambitious in their task and had positive feedbacks in the end.

For the warm up part of the third lesson plan, one of the participants told that she saw a big elephant in a big jungle and that was the place that she wanted to be. Another participant raised his finger and told us that he could be one of the characters in "Hunger Games" film. Some of the participants asked the reason why he chose "Hunger Games", and he replied as "I chose this film, because I like action and defending myself against bad people. He revealed one of his characteristics with the help of this activity. Another participant also told that "I can see a waterfall and amazing trees in the sunlight." The reaction to this dream was interesting as almost all of them expressed their wish to be in the same environment.

At the practice part of the third lesson plan, one of the plays was about a community in middle ages which the students learnt a week ago in their reading lessons. One of students said he was going to be the leader of the community, and there was a battle at that time. They wanted to improvise a situation in the battle, and they expressed themselves as follows:

Participant 1: I am the leader of the village and these are my people!

Participant 2: We love our village and its people and we will fight for them!

Participant 3: I am the daughter of the leader, and I like riding horses. I can do anything for my village to win the battle!

As they kept performing their dramatic play, the researcher also guided them by asking some questions such as "Do you like strangers in your community?, What is your culture?, Who is the leader in the village?, etc." which helped them plan the play in an organized way. They seemed to be successful in improvising the situation from the past. They chose appropriate sentences and words to express their roles. As they performed, they also seemed to embrace their characters and the situation. The second classroom formed two groups consisting of 12 students in each. The first group chose to improvise a specific African group and their culture which they learnt in their previous reading lesson. They chose it as they liked that African culture and they wanted to perform the characters in the text. The characters in text were street dancers who wanted to earn money to save one of their friends who had cancer.

As they were structuring their dramatic play, the researcher was a guide during the process to motivate and encourage them. They formed a circle and stood frozen for a minute. One of the students said "Hah!" loudly and their dance performance began.

After their dance performance, they started to introduce their characters. They told their names, a little bit about the culture and why they danced. The researcher also guided them by asking some questions to widen their speech on the characters as follows: "Can you tell us more about your community? What is your culture? What do you think about illnesses? etc." which might help them plan the play in an organized way. Even they performed a play that was read before, they put their imagination and creativity in such a way that was appealing for the rest of the classroom.

The findings of the lesson plans presented that the characters in the dramatic activities helped young learners produce the target language and communicate in an effective way in the speaking classrooms. As the characters were observed, the dramatic activities and strategies seemed to be important for the learning process which could not be underestimated.

### **3.2. Association with Personal Experience through Observations**

Drama serves as a bridge between the classroom and the real life, just like it serves the same mission between the inner world of an individual and outer worlds of others who are involved in the same process (Henry, 2010). When they were asked how useful was their



drama classes, the students replied that the drama activities were enjoyable and attractive as they could demonstrate their language skills in class through thinking, creating, and enjoying together. They stated that although only one or two students were active in normal hours, it was everybody in the drama activities that were active, dealing with more creative tasks rather than the mechanic and already-decided activities. The students also reflected that the real life events of the drama activities helped them see the connection between the school and the real life outside. One student stated that she could normally learn in real life through doing, and in the drama activities she had the same chance in her speaking classroom. She explained that during the act outs, she could communicate effectively which would be useful for her in real life communication outside the class, and she would always remember them because she practiced them in a meaningful context in the drama activities.

The most essential step in the process of interaction between people and the environment is communication. This fact creates a living and it is interpreted with the other livings. In the end, a progress is gained (Cüceloğlu, 1987). When the students were asked what the strengths of the drama activities were, they agreed on that they practiced the target language in a communicative way through enjoyment. The drama activities created a natural environment for language development in which the students were not expected to memorize the target language but rather practice it through various strategies used in drama such as improvisation. One of the participants stated that "In drama activities, I did not memorize; I developed my own speech at that moment and acted my role on. it was really good."

The students were not restricted with the pre determined contents, they were allowed to enhance their imagination and as a result, they created more in a given set of situations simulated the real life they were accustomed to. They were able to practice the language and display their language skills in speaking classes. They stated that the characters they turned into in class helped them feel different emotions and develop more insights into their characters. In addition, when the students were asked how the drama activities contributed to their language development and performance, they expressed that they found the drama activities useful for speaking. One of the students went on explaining that it was through the drama activities that they practiced speaking English naturally, improvising the language and developed their ability to produce natural and original responses in English. "We do not speak much English outside of the class, actually we almost never use English in daily life. But in drama activities, we spoke by improvising the language. It helped our speaking in this respect." Some other students agreed and added that they could think and produce creatively, spontaneously and fast in English without memorizing and feeling under pressure.

Young learners needed to learn English in the best way possible, for which drama activities would be helpful because they would acquire English effectively in a natural way. The students who engaged in drama activities felt encouraged especially since they improvised the language.

### **3.3. Retention of Knowledge for Young Learners**

Bordan (1970) suggests there are some benefits that a dramatic activity enables to students: " It can meet the specific needs of a particular class in a way no other teaching device can. It also sharpens the children's critical thinking, and at the same time it gives the child a new perspective on a concept which can become an extension of himself. " (p. 243). In the study, the researcher found some general views of the participants on dramatic activities. One of the participants stated that they were able to speak and talk their minds, also had a chance to do all sort of things that they wanted to do in drama, even if they were not actually playing themselves, they still could get things out in different ways. They were able to communicate comfortably and efficiently. One of the participants said that "I used to be a quiet and shy person. Now I am loud and am not scared to ask my teacher things and tell them what I think of. Thanks to dramatic activities I tell them if it is not good, or if I don't agree

with something." Another participant said that "Drama helped me talk with more people and not be scared to express myself." Dramatic activities also helped participants reduce their affective filter as in the example: "I used to be nervous when I talk to people, but now it changed. Drama helped me quite a lot because I can now speak to people who are authorities and teachers and I suppose it has made me more confident in general." They could also observe some characteristics of dramatic activities as in the example: "I am trying out what it feels like to be somebody else who is important."

Alexander (2000) states that drama naturally combines action, thought and talk which, enables the most effective learning. The children have the opportunity to empower themselves and each other. They feel more in control and this enables them to be planned and feel secure in doing something. Drama can reduce the stress of performing in front of others which leads expressing their feelings comfortably. The more they get used to perform and express themselves, the more they feel encouraged and confident.

The warm up activities in the study were implemented in order to help students feel more comfortable in the main activities. The warm up activities could be seen as a rehearsal. Rehearsal helped them feel more comfortable with the situation retrospectively or in advance of repeating it for real.

Young learners also were observed that they could easily get bored when there was no action in the classroom. When they seemed to feel bored and lonely, they could pretend that something interesting was happening around themselves. This situation was also observed that teachers should stimulate them and help them shift moods which affected their attitudes towards their speaking lesson. One of the participants explained "I sometimes get bored in the classroom and pretend that I have an imaginary friend new to me. That makes me relaxed and happy." As it could be comprehended from the participant's statement, this age group tend to think creatively and imagine superstitious things. In this respect drama is something where the teacher has to work a lot with especially young learners.

Eggers (2010) states that "Children's own personas like their heights, their voices, and their shapes change quickly and continuously, and their teachers can never keep up with how they identify themselves in stories. Stories change in significance for children because their expectations change, and we have to try to keep up. We need to recognize that children can develop an expertise in drama at an early age. This means that we can trust children's interests and abilities, and they can learn." (p. 35).

One of the students stated that the drama activities were different for her. She learnt quickly through real life experiences. In dramatic activities, she said that she acted the English out. She stated that she wouldn't forget the real life words used in the activities. In terms of communication and interaction with the others, drama helped her a lot as she stated.

According to the responses to the Q1 the students seemed to enjoy the first activity in which they were active. Being a character and acting it out were appealing to them. There were some shy students, but they still expressed that they liked the activity. Some of the students had fear of being mocked, but with the help of the activities they tended to forget it. They liked that they had the chance to express themselves, and thus they wanted to communicate more. Being someone else made them feel pleased, and it improved their acting skills.

Overall, regarding the first interview question, the dramatic activities were enjoyable for the students which enable them to communicate more. To be able to assume and perform the role they want helped them express themselves.

According to the responses to Q2, the feelings of the students varied. They felt they were accomplishing something important. They had positive feelings for the process. A few

of the students felt bored when another student talked a lot during the activity. Some of the students expressed intensive feelings which reflected their desire to participate in the dramatic activities, and act out their roles. They said that they could feel as they lived in somewhere else thanks to their characters. They seemed to have a good relationship with their characters which helped them perform the play well. They thought drama was creative and this feature was a plus for them to be able to speak in the classroom.

They said that they really spent a good time with the other students which improved friendship and confidence. As they communicated throughout the activities their attitudes seemed positive. Some of the students felt happy about their characters, and some of them felt good about the dramatic situation. As they learnt new information through dramatic activities, they felt satisfied with the process. One of the students stated about Q.2. that "I felt that there were other people in the world and they have different feelings and points of view towards what they are experiencing. I felt that we were not the same."

According to the responses to Q3, one of the students said that he found dramatic activities worth to participate in as he enjoyed the process. Another student stated that dramatic activities were useful for them. They said that these activities were different from other traditional activities. One of the students specifically stated that "The activities are useful for us, because I want to go abroad, and express myself well in English. For this aim, they are really necessary. As they learnt new information and spoke a lot during the activity, they found it more useful than the other ordinary activities. As the activities integrated with expressive and communicative features, they seemed useful for the speaking classrooms. One of the students stated that "in my speaking class, this activity is one of the best one among the other activities such as we sit and talk on a topic. I found it useful due to this reason." The expectation of the parents were also met as one of the students stated that "The activities were useful because, when my parents asked "what did you learn or do in the school today? I could explain that I became a character and learned about her."

According to the responses to Q4, the findings supported the helpfulness of dramatic activities used in speaking classes of seventh grade students. One of the students said that "I had many chances to talk to my friends and that was enjoyable for me and for them as well. I am an extravert person and I like speaking to people, so this activity made me so happy for that reason." They communicated all the time and this seemed to improve their speaking skills. However, some students shared their negative feedback as "We spoke to each other, and had fun. The only negative side of it was some were talking too much. However, it made us speak more than the other activities." Almost all of the participants in the study agreed with the communicative side of the dramatic activities as it could be implied from the interviews.

#### **4. Discussion and Conclusion**

Via (1987) claims that drama is not a method; it is a tool to be used in any of the language learning processes. A teacher could work on a dramatic project for the whole term; however she could also maintain it for just five minutes of the lesson. It enables students to welcome language learning process as a communicative one rather than just an academic study. The study reveals how using drama as a communication tool in speaking classes enables young learners to successfully practice and produce the target language. This study makes a strong case for inclusion of drama in speaking classrooms as a main activity in secondary schools.

Drama appeared to have a profound effect on the seventh grade students. They received many benefits from drama, and they experienced the effects of it. The different strategies used in drama affected students learning skills in a positive way. Wessel (1987), on the same topic, also states that "Drama in second language teaching is seen as a method which



belongs to communicative language learning. Moreover it is a technique that is used to improve specific language learning skills."

In the light of these statements, drama is an important technique (Emunah, 2013) which can compatibly fit in speaking based activities, and it is different from accustomed, traditional methods. It provides students a creative atmosphere in which they can use innovative frames of language learning process. It is the potential lifeblood of the language training experience because it accomplished things in the classroom that no one has been able to duplicate through traditional methods and it does it by creating a classroom environment that the students actually enjoy. It does it by removing the punishment of embarrassment and the alienation of the students from the knowledge through anxiety. It does it by creating a context for the knowledge in which the student can associate their own cultural experience in a familiar learning environment. It establishes a "whole brain" learning environment that accelerates the acquisition of language ability and its retention. And it does all of this in a way that encourages the students to carry their classroom experience into the world outside of the classroom. In this sense, drama removes the walls between the classroom and the "real world". It moves the process of language learning to a new level because it takes into consideration how students naturally learn about language and culture from their earliest years. As such, this study presents the unavoidable conclusion that drama has strong and positive influence on language learning and, for that matter, learning of new knowledge in any discipline. It is the recommendation of this research that the use of drama in language learning classroom is an indispensable and necessary part of the learning experience and it should be seriously reconsidered by those who have dismissed it as an unnecessary complication. Thus, students' communicative skills tend to become strong. Teacher is also an important factor for the students as he or she demonstrates and helps them adopt an alternative way of learning the target language. With the help of the teacher's guidance, the students tend to react to communication aimed activities in a more positive way.

Drama can facilitate the process of learning the target language. Thus, the prejudice towards learning a foreign language tends to eliminate. One of the most significant features of drama is to be enjoyable for the children. The dramatic activities lower the anxiety and the tension of the students and increase their motivation.

According to Wagner (1998), there are goals and focuses of drama: "an experience through which students may come to understand human interactions, empathize with other people, and internalize alternative points of view" (p. 5). With the help of drama activities (Wan, 2017), accustomed classroom environment may turn into a comfortably active and innovative area. The activities enable all of the students to express themselves authentically. Eventually, children feel that they are important for the others and the activity, they are aware of the importance of communication and sharing ideas, and respecting different points of view.

Drama is an effective way to improve communication skills (Hawkes, 2016). In a group work, it gets easier for students to become friends and express their feelings and thoughts. In this kind of activities, it is almost impossible for a child to isolate himself from the other students as it all requires interaction with the others constantly. As a result, drama presents a more permanent learning, when it is compared with the traditional methods. Furthermore, drama is a humanistic method. It has a physiological side which has positive influences on the participants. This feature tends to eliminate the fear and the anxiety which occur in some of the language learning processes. Shy and introvert students feel stressed when a question is directed to them. However, they can find a relaxed atmosphere with the help of drama activities. Thanks to all of these features that drama provides both to the students and the teachers, it is accepted as a useful method in ESL.

## **5. Limitations and Suggestions**

As in most of the studies on EFL, the researcher encountered some limitations during the conduction of the study as well. Social and sex differences between the participants have been regarded as the same in the course of data analysis. There were 48 students in the study which was limited with the number of the 7th grade classes.

Based on the study, some suggestions might be made for school authorities and environments. The physical environment of learning process in which the dramatic activities are practiced should be determined and prepared properly. The awareness of the administration and the other authorities is of importance. The necessity of visual aids and contemporary materials in practising dramatic activities cannot be underestimated. Also, it may be gratifying for contemporary teachers to reach a large number of studies on the use of drama activities in second language teaching for the immediate future.

Increasing numbers of teachers are discovering classroom drama to be highly valuable as an instructional tool (Kaaland-Wells, 1994). As an English teacher, I was also amazed at how useful drama is to capture the attention of the students in the EFL classroom. It was a gratifying experience to see that integrating dramatic activities in speaking classes was an effective way for the young learners. The artificiality of the classroom can be transformed into a real language situation and provide an endless amount of opportunities for student's communication skills. We shouldn't underestimate this powerful communication tool to reach our students. And finally, it is the conclusion of this study that language instructors in general must continue to educate themselves with regard to new teaching methods if they want to successfully educate their students. It is also the recommendation of this study that more research should be done with a variety of language learning contexts, age groups, and cultural settings further to verify the validity of this approach.

## References

- Adıgüzel, Ö. (2012). *Eğitimde yaratıcı drama*. Antalya: Naturel Yayıncılık.
- Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture and pedagogy: International comparisons in primary education*: Blackwell.
- Baldwin, P. (2008). *The practical primary drama handbook*. London: Sage.
- Bordan, S. (1970). *Plays as teaching tools in the elementary school*. West Nyack, N.Y.: Parker Pub.
- Cüceloğlu, D. (1987). *İnsan insana*. İstanbul: Altın Kitaplar Yayınevi.
- Eggers, K., & Eggers, W. (2010). *Children's theater: A paradigm, primer, and resource*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow Press.
- Emunah, R. (2013). *Acting for real: Drama therapy process, technique, and performance*. Routledge.
- Hawkes, T. (2016). *Routledge Revivals: Shakespeare's Talking Animals (1973): Language and Drama in Society*. Routledge.
- Henry, M. (2010). Drama's ways of learning. Research in Drama Education. *The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 5(1), 45-62.
- Kaaland-Wells, C. (1994). Classroom teachers' perceptions and uses of creative drama. *Youth Theatre Journal*, 8(4), 21-26.
- Slade, P. (1954). *Child drama*. London: University of London Press.
- Wagner, B. J. (1998). *Educational drama and language arts: What research shows?* Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Wessels, C. (1987). *Drama*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wan, Y. S. (2017). *Drama in Teaching English as a Second Language-A Communicative Approach*. *The English Teacher*, 13.
- Via, R. A. (1987). *The magic if" of theater: Enhancing language learning through drama*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.