

The Effects of Using English Drama on the Learning of Target Expressions for Primary School Students

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There is an abundance of literature readily available on the affective benefits that English drama can offer in L2 learning and how to use it in the language classroom (Davies, 1990; Kim, 1998; Park, 2011). However, there is a lack of studies which investigated the direct effects of English drama on the learning of target expressions and structures. The present study intends to address this lack. Forty nine primary school students participated in English drama class for 8 weeks. The results of Post-test I demonstrated that English drama was an effective aid for participants to learn the expressions that appeared in the play. In Post-test II, the participants were found to be able to utilize the learned expressions in new situations half of the times. They depended heavily upon formulaic speech (Ellis, 1994) rather than creative speech, producing either a perfect sentence or nothing. In this paper, we researchers gave this the term, 'All-or-nothing phenomenon'. Additional important findings include male students' superiority over female students in the retrieval of expressions gleaned from the roles of others. However, female students were better in remembering and using their own lines rather than their counterparts, when given new situations.

Keywords: English drama, play, young learners, primary school

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of using drama as a way to improve learners' English ability has been popular for many years. In Korea, many teachers at primary school integrate English drama into class, and some schools set up English drama clubs as a part of their after-school extracurricular program. Some eager parents send their children to private English drama class after school. They all hope and believe that these drama classes will help improve their children's English ability, especially in speaking.

In fact, there have been a sufficient number of studies that reported the positive effects of using drama on L2 learning (Fuentes, 2010; Phillips, 2003; Stern, 1980; Zyoud, 2012), most of which focused on affective factors. In other words, they claim that learners' motivation, interests, and confidence in learning English are raised as a result of English drama class, and that it will ultimately affect the L2 learning positively. This would be an indirect effect of English drama on language learning.

There are also many articles describing how to use English drama in the classroom (Davies, 1990; Kim, 1998; Kim, Park, & Kim, 2008; Park, 2011). However, these how-to articles do not provide any evidence which proves that the use of English drama actually helps students learn the language.

There are some studies that investigated the effects of using drama on the improvement of overall English competence. According to Park and Won (2003), after a total of 6 hours of English drama classes, students' overall communicative competence improved, particularly in the subcategories of grammar and vocabulary. Yet, it is not convincing enough to believe that learners' 'general' communicative competence has improved after such a short time of drama participation.

Therefore, the present investigation narrowed the scope of the study to examine whether and how much primary school students actually learn the expressions that appeared in the drama. The common assumption is that students will naturally learn the expressions in the drama because, while participating in it, they have to read and understand the text, memorize their lines, rehearse and perform the play. The present study attempts to test this

common assumption. In addition, this project intends to find out if students can use the expressions learned through drama when they encounter new situations which are likely to elicit those expressions. The data will be further analyzed in terms of gender and English proficiency level of the students. The last and more important objective of this study is to find out whether students learn only their own lines, or also the lines of others. Finally, a gender difference will be explored with regard to the picking up of other people's lines.

Forty nine primary school students participated in English drama for 8 weeks in class and the results were analyzed in order to identify any effects that the use of English drama had on the learning of target expressions. This investigation hopes to provide teachers with detailed information on what and how much English drama can do for young learners at the beginning level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Depending on one's focus, there are a number of ways in which drama may be defined. Holden (1981) defined drama as any kind of activity where learners are asked either to portray themselves or to portray someone else in an imaginary situation. She focused on the 'let's pretend' aspect of drama where learners project themselves imaginatively into another situation and the character of another person (p. 1, cited in Davies, 1990). In the meantime, Hubbard, Jones, Thornton and Wheeler (1986) proposed a definition of drama as "a wide range of oral activities that have an element of creativity present" (p. 317). They emphasized the oral and creative side of drama. In terms of oral activities, drama can take several forms when employed in a language classroom. Mime, role-playing, simulation, various forms of dialogues and dramatized story-telling are some examples of drama techniques (Davies, 1990).

Among these forms, dramatized story-telling, which is also called the 'scripted play', may be the one that is traditionally perceived by many people

as drama. For the present study, we used a simple scripted play where students were asked to perform their roles orally, with actions in an imaginary situation.

Then what are the advantages of using drama in an EFL classroom? Firstly, Maley and Duff (2005) pointed out that drama integrates language skills in a natural way. Since students read the text, listen to other people's lines, and play their roles, the integration of reading, listening, and speaking occurs, making language learning natural and effective. During the process, students become actively involved in playing the drama; thus, learning becomes learner-centered (Fuentes, 2010). Secondly, drama is beneficial because it involves the use of the language in a specific context (Phillips, 2003). When a specific context is given, the relationship between the language form and function becomes clear, which promotes meaningful language learning. In addition, from the discursive point of view, meaning becomes clearest in the context of a large stretch of discourse. For young learners with limited English ability in particular, English drama can be a good starting tool in providing language in contexts within the extended length of a coherent story.

Thirdly, drama helps learners gain the confidence and self-esteem needed to use English. The experience of learning English by doing and the enjoyment as reward from performing all contribute to boosting these affects. Here, learning by doing means that students are engaged in drama to learn language in a natural way, using body language and facial expressions, making pauses and interruptions, and showing emotions in their interpretations of the play (Lenka Krivkova, 2011). When this process is rewarded on stage, the sense of accomplishment and the confidence that students feel will have positive effects on English learning in general. In Gardner's study (as cited in Fuentes, 2010) it is found that the increased motivation to learn language often leads to greater success in language proficiency.

Fourthly, multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983, 1993) are often used as a theoretical background to support the use of drama in the language classroom. According to Gardner, individuals possess nine distinct intelligences (i.e., logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, body/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic,

interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal/linguistic, naturalist, existentialist intelligence). However, only the students with the logical/mathematical and verbal/linguistic intelligence tend to have an advantage at school. Therefore, in order to facilitate language acquisition among diverse students with different strengths, teachers are advised to develop learning activities which tap on multiple intelligences. In that sense, drama offers a variety of activities where multiple intelligences such as visual/spatial, body/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, verbal/linguistic intelligence are drawn.

Lastly, as for the linguistic advantage, it is known that drama helps learners with pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency in particular (Fuentes, 2010).

Despite the advantages mentioned above, drama does have its limitations. Sometimes, the situation and drama lines could be artificial; it might be difficult for a teacher to monitor the activity; there may still be some shy students who do not want to perform in front of other people, and some cultures may not prefer this kind of learner-centered activity (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

In spite of these possible disadvantages, people tend to believe in the advantages of using English drama. Even native speakers share this blind belief in drama from an educational point of view. According to Stern (1980), British teachers do not use drama to teach about language or literature primarily. Being influenced by Piaget and Vygotsky, the English curriculum in the British educational system focuses on students' "personal and emotional experiences, imagination, intuition, and sensibility rather than subject matter. The question is not 'how drama helps English...but how drama...helps the child'"(Hoetker, 1969, p. 12). While it is easy to agree on drama's educational value in general, EFL practitioners would still want to know if drama is actually effective for students to pick up and learn linguistic expressions and structures.

Yet, there has been a lack of studies which test the direct effect of drama on the learning of specific expressions. As previously mentioned, Park and Won (2003) reported the improvement in vocabulary and grammar as a result

of drama class. However, they discussed the improvement under the framework of overall communicative competence. The present researchers thought that discussing the enhanced overall communicative competence from the result of taking part in drama for 6 hours might be an overgeneralization.

In terms of language acquisition, Kim, Park and Kim's study (2008) seems more relevant. They witnessed their participants using the expressions they have learned through drama in real life. For example, when a teacher reprimanded a student for talking loudly, the student said, "We'll listen to you!" (p. 108). Also, after a girl's shoes were hidden by a friend who later denied it, the girl shouted, "You are a liar from the inside out!" (p. 108). These expressions were from the drama they had performed, and the primary school students were using them in real life situations. However, Kim, Park and Kim only mentioned these two instances in brief from their casual observation. Therefore, more studies are needed to investigate the direct effects of English drama on the learning of particular expressions.

Lastly, who benefits most from English drama? Park and Won (2003) maintained that, in the Korean context, the grade level that benefits most is primary school. The next level is middle school, and the least benefitted group is high school students. They explained that primary school students are more active and open to participating in drama because they are not afraid to make mistakes and they find English drama interesting and fun. Especially in Korea, middle school students and high school students tend to focus on getting high scores on written tests, and thus lack the time and energy to take part in drama. Subsequently, we chose primary school students for the participants of the current investigation.

METHODS

Participants and Procedures

Forty nine 4th graders in a primary school in Seoul participated in the

study. They were from two classes with 26 male and 23 female students. In Korea, teaching English as an official subject begins at the third grade in primary school. Therefore, it can be said that these participants have been learning English for just over a year. However, since private learning is so prevalent in Korea, the length of students' learning English can vary. However, this school is not in an economically privileged area, so the variation is not considered as great as in more affluent areas of the country. Therefore, the participants will be labeled as typical 4th grade students in Korea.

The students participated in drama activities one hour per week for 8 weeks. Even though the duration of the drama class was 8 weeks, it should be noted that the total number of hours was confined to 8. The teacher was one of the researchers of the present project. In the first week, the script was distributed and the class read the text together and discussed the content of the play. The teacher provided an L1 translation for each sentence to make sure that everyone understood the story. Reading the script once again was the homework for next week. In the second week, the groups were organized based on the results of the pre-test so that members of a group were mixed in terms of English proficiency level. Each group decided on the roles and started reading parts together for Act I of the script. In the third and fourth week, students in groups read their parts together for Act II and III respectively. They were encouraged to read their lines, expressing the feelings of the characters with the use of body language and facial expressions. In the fifth and sixth week, the participants continued to practice the play and started to memorize the lines. In the process, the teacher monitored each group and provided any help or feedback whenever needed. In the seventh week, there were rehearsals for each group and in the final week, the students performed the play with masks and a few stage props they had prepared. The audience was other classmates and a few mothers.

The participants were given a pre-test before they began the drama class. They took Post-test I and II a week after the final performance. These post-tests were developed to measure the degree to which the participants had

learned the expressions that were introduced in the play. There was no control group in this study.

Research Instruments

Selection of the Drama

For young learners, the drama script should be selected with care. Kim (1998) suggested that the drama should be written in modern colloquial English and in the form of dialogues, not monologues. He added that the drama should be suitable for the learning purpose and English proficiency of the students. Also, for young learners, it should have a simple plot with interesting content and should be short in length.

Based on the criteria mentioned above, a short play titled, “The Little Half-Chicken” was selected (See Appendix for excerpts). In order to make more participants get involved, we selected a play with 17 characters so that three to four roles could be assigned to one student when his lines were too short. In other words, there was a balance in the number of lines each student had. The play was a very short one with 890 words and the language level and the length were considered suitable by the teacher in charge.

Pre-test

In order to find out how many target expressions and structures² the participants had the knowledge of before they were exposed to the drama, a

² Among the target expressions and structures are ‘Once upon a time’, ‘I can’t believe my eyes!’ ‘You’re right’, ‘What do you want?’ ‘When I need your help,’ ‘Let me get the king’, ‘It is time for me to leave here’. The first four are examples of ‘expressions’ that can be memorized as a whole without having to analyze the parts. The latter three are examples of ‘structures’ with their parts having a high chance of being manipulated and substituted. Due to the spatial limitation, the target expressions and structures will be shortened as the target expressions from now on.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results section will begin with the main question of the study, “Is English drama class effective for primary school students to learn specific expressions in the script?” In short, there was a statistically significant improvement in the participants’ knowledge of the target expressions after drama activities for 8 hours. In order to compare the mean score of the pre-test to that of Post-test I, the paired-samples t-test was conducted using the SPSS program version 20. The level of significance was set at .05 for all analyses, and Table 1 demonstrates the result.

TABLE 1
Paired-Samples *t*-Test of the Pre-test and Post-test I

	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pre-test	49	6.22	6.32	8.99	48	.000
Post-test I	49	13.79	10.30			

Effect size (Cohen’s *d*) : 0.886

As shown in Table 1, the mean of the pre-test was 6.22, which means that the students were aware of 6 expressions out of 37 expressions before the drama experience. After the drama class of 8 hours, the mean of Post-test I increased to 13.79. Since there was a statistically significant difference between the mean of the pre-test and that of Post-test I, we can say that, statistically, English drama helped the participants learn the expressions in the play.

In the meantime, one myth commonly believed in Korea is that female students have a far greater enthusiasm for drama than their male counterparts. Therefore, there was a need to verify this belief and to find out whether the female participants learned the expressions better through drama class. The independent samples t-test was run to find out whether there was a gender difference in learning English expressions through drama (Table 2).

TABLE 2
Independent-Samples *t*-Test of Pre-test and Post-test I by Gender

	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pre-test	M	26	5.42	5.46	-.943	47	.351
	F	23	7.13	7.19			
Post-test I	M	26	12.69	10.14	-.787	47	.435
	F	23	15.02	10.56			

As can be seen in Table 2, the mean of the male students($n=26$) of the pre-test was 5.42 and the mean of the female students($n=23$) was 7.13. The mean score of the female students was higher. However, the result of the independent samples *t*-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the genders in the mean of the pre-test, which means that the male and female participants were similar in terms of their knowledge of the target expressions before they were exposed to the English drama. Next, the *t*-test was also conducted for Post-test I, which is the same test as the pre-test, and the mean of the male students' scores rose to 12.69 and that of the female students' was 15.02. Again, the mean score of the female students was a little higher; yet, there was no statistically significant difference between the genders in the Post-test I. In sum, the gender effect was not found, leading to the statement that, regardless of gender, young learners can benefit from English drama.

Next, we examined the difference between the high-proficiency and the low-proficiency group to determine which group would benefit more from the English drama experience. First, in order to divide the group in terms of English ability, the distribution of the pre-test scores was examined (Figure 1). It was assumed that the more expressions the participants knew, the higher their general English proficiency was.

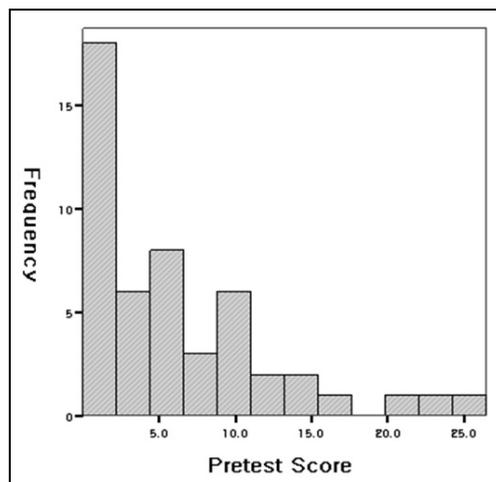


FIGURE 1
The Distribution of the Pre-test Scores

Based on the distribution, it was decided that the low-proficiency group includes the students whose scores were between 0 to 2.5 points. Since one point was assigned for each question, this means that these students only knew zero to two and a half expressions out of the 37 target expressions. There were 19 students in the low-proficiency group. Also, the cut-off point for the high-proficiency group was 10.5 points and above. There were 13 students in the high-proficiency group. These students knew at least ten and a half expressions out of 37 expressions before they were engaged in the drama. Seventeen students in the middle were eliminated from the analysis.

In order to find out the English proficiency effect on the language learning through drama, a paired t-test was conducted (Table 3 & 4).

TABLE 3
T-Test of Pre-test and Post-test I Scores of the Low-proficiency Group

Proficiency	Test	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Low	Pre-test	19	1.13	.80	5.40	.000
	Post-test 1	19	5.68	3.91		

TABLE 4
T-Test of Pre-test and Post-test I Scores of the High-proficiency Group

Proficiency	Test	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
High	Pre-test	13	14.92	5.40	7.91	.000
	Post-test 1	13	26.27	6.78		

In a nutshell, there was a statistically significant improvement in the learning of the target expressions for both high- and low-proficiency groups. The mean score of the low-proficiency group increased from 1.13 to 5.68 points. Even though the achievement level was less than satisfactory, the improvement was still statistically significant. In the meantime, the mean score of the high-proficiency group increased from 14.92 to 26.27 points, which was statistically significant. Therefore, we can say that the use of drama is beneficial for young learners regardless of English proficiency level.

So far, we have looked at the direct effects of English drama on the learning of the target expressions by comparing the pre-test with Post-test I. Now we attempt to answer if students can use the expressions when they encounter new situations where those expressions are likely to be used. Since there is no test to compare results with, only the results from Post-test II will be reported here.

In Post-test II, in order to examine whether the different mode of production will affect the students' production, the students were divided into two groups. One group was asked to write down, and the other group to speak the expressions required by the given situations. The result of the independent t-test is shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
T-Test of Post-test II (Writing vs. Oral)

Medium	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Writing	23	5.76	4.04	.401	47	.690
Oral	26	5.31	3.86			

As you might recall, in Post-test II, students were asked to produce whole expressions on their own, not to fill in the blanks as in Post-test I. Out of 11 target expressions, the students were able to write 5.76 items correctly. Also, the mean of the oral group was 5.31, which means that the students were able to say 5.31 items spontaneously and correctly out of 11. No statistically significant difference was found between the groups, meaning that the students performed similarly whether they were asked to write or say the target expressions. They were able to produce about half of the expressions properly in new situations.

The fact that there was no statistical difference between the writing group and the oral group in the performance of using expressions in new situations was rather surprising. The initial expectation was that the oral group would perform less successfully because of the time pressure. In other words, while administering Post-test II, the teacher was right there waiting for the student to respond immediately. Also, Korean students are well known for their reluctance to speak in front of others. The fact that the oral group was as successful as the writing group is encouraging in a sense that the participants got rid of their fear of speaking English through drama class. Also, it could be partial evidence to support that acquisition was underway. If a learner can produce what he wants to say subconsciously and spontaneously, we can say that he has *acquired* those language items (Krashen, 1985). Whether it is called acquisition or procedural knowledge (i.e., being able to use the knowledge for communication), we have observed that a deeper level of learning took place as a result of the drama experience. The repetition of the lines while students were actively engaged in drama practice seems to help them learn and possibly acquire the language that appeared in the drama.

Then what is the nature of learner language reflected in Post-test II at this stage of learning? One of the concerns that the researchers had before rating the students' production was constructing a scoring rubric. When a student wrote down or said only part of the expression and structure, how should we go about scoring them systematically? However, as we reviewed the students' production, this problem was quickly solved. Surprisingly enough, students' responses were either a perfect sentence or a complete blank. We would like to call this 'All-or-nothing phenomenon'. There were few cases, if any, where a partial point was assigned, but overall, this phenomenon was obvious; a perfect sentence or no response at all. For example, in a situation that was supposed to elicit the expression, "What a beautiful city it is!" the students' performances were either a complete sentence or a complete blank.

We suspect that the students must have memorized the drama lines in chunks rather than analyzed them in parts. In other words, most of the drama lines were memorized like formula. This seems natural because, according to Ellis (1994), formulaic speech (e.g., expressions which are learned as unanalysable wholes) is one of the characteristics of the early stages of SLA. Since the participants of the present study are fourth graders, most of them fall into the category of learners at the beginning stage. Ellis explained that we can distinguish formulaic speech from other creative language because of its 'well-formedness' (p. 86). For example, the utterance, "What a beautiful city it is!" may be a too well-formed and advanced sentence compared to other utterances produced by these learners. To Ellis (1994), who supports the role of formula in SLA, formulas would be eventually analyzed, go into the knowledge system that the learner uses to produce and understand creative speech. Therefore, even if the drama lines were memorized like formula, if we take Ellis's position, it is likely that they would eventually help learners produce creative speech.

Finally, and most importantly, the researchers were interested in finding out whether the participants had learned only their own lines or had they learned other students' lines as well. One can naturally expect that students would learn their lines better because they have to read, memorize, rehearse,

and finally perform them. Yet, we do not know whether or how much they would learn from others' lines when they were engaged in drama practice for 8 hours. To our knowledge, there have been no studies that closely looked at this area.

For the analysis, the participants' roles and the test items that were matched with them were identified in Post-test I. On average, each student had 5.7 matching questions with their roles and got 3.57 items right (65.8%). This means that the students remembered about 66% of the expressions in their lines. Next, the calculation was done on the test items that were from others' roles. The results showed that out of 31.3 questions, the students got 10 questions right. In other words, the students remembered 32% of the expressions from others' lines. In short, it turned out that the students remembered the expressions in their own lines roughly two times better than those in others' lines (Figure 2).

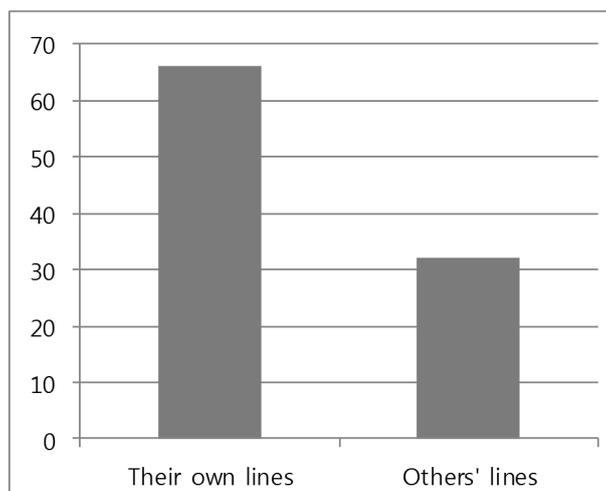


FIGURE 2
Percentage of Correct Answers in Post-test I

Next, in order to further examine the patterns in which the participants have learned from their own lines and others' lines, Post-test II was analyzed. As you remember, in Post-test II, eleven new questions were developed to investigate whether students can use the expressions from the drama when they encounter new situations that require those expressions. For Post-test II, the students were divided into two groups with one group responding in writing and the other in speaking. Post-test II was considered more challenging than Post-test I because the situations were new and the students were asked to write or say the whole sentence on their own instead of filling in the blanks as in Post-test I. What we researchers wanted to know through Post-test II was whether the students were able to use the expressions they had learned through drama in other situations.

The percentage of being able to use the expressions from their own lines in new situations turned out to be 59.5 on average. There was a reduction from 65.8% of Post-test I. This result is understandable as the given situations were new and the participants had to produce the whole sentence.

Interestingly enough, a rather unexpected result was obtained from the analysis of items testing the expressions of others' lines. As can be seen in Table 6, the writing group got approximately 50% of the test right and the speaking group 45% right.

TABLE 6
Degree of Learning from Others' Lines

Group	N	Average # of items from other's lines	Average # of correct items	% of correct items
Writing	23	9.0	4.5	49.7
Speaking	26	9.2	4.2	44.6

In Post-test I, which measured the learning degree of the expressions from the drama, only 32% of others' lines was learned by the participants. Now, in the new situations, the writing group was able to remember and utilize the

relevant expressions about 50% from others' lines, and more encouragingly, the speaking group about 45%. This number is much higher than 32% in Post-test I where the same situations were given from the play. But what would be the reason for the students getting higher scores when they were tested in new situations (Post-test II) than in exactly the same situations as the drama (Post-test I)?

Our speculation is that, while they were taking Post-test I, the students became aware of the fact that they were being tested on the expressions from the drama. When asked to fill in the blanks, they easily gave up when a question was testing other people's lines. However, when given the new situations, these young learners might have made less of a connection of Post-test II with the drama expressions. They responded to the new situations given and provided answers that they thought were suitable. As a result, the percentage of utilizing others' lines in new situations turned out to be higher than that of memorizing them in exactly the same situations.

While this finding seems encouraging, the analysis of Post-test II by English proficiency level revealed that only the high-proficiency group tended to be able to use the learned expressions in new situations.

TABLE 7
Degree of Learning from Others' Lines by Proficiency (Post-test II)

Proficiency	N	Average # of items from other's lines	Average # of correct items	% of correct items
High	13	9.0	7.7	85.2%
Low	18	9.1	1.4	16.0%

As can be seen in Table 7, the high-proficiency group got 85.2% of the test correct and the low-proficiency group 16.0%. Additionally, on the expressions from their own lines, the high-proficiency group got 94.2% right and the low-proficiency group 55.2 % right. Therefore, when tested on their lines, even the low-proficiency group got over the half of the items right.

However, when tested on others' lines, the low-proficiency group got only 16% of the test items right. Obviously, the low-proficiency group was not able to pay attention to others' lines because of their limited proficiency.

Lastly, we researchers wanted to find out whether there is a gender difference in learning and applying their own lines and others' lines in new situations. As a result, some interesting findings were obtained. Firstly, as Table 8 shows, the female students tended to learn and use their own lines more than the male students did. This was true of both writing and speaking groups.

TABLE 8
Gender Difference in Using Expressions from their Own Lines (Post-test II)

Production Mode	Gender	Average # of items from their roles	Average # of correct items	% of correct items
Writing	M (n=13)	2.3	1.6	63.9
	F (n=11)	2.4	2.1	87.9
Speaking	M (n=13)	2.4	1.7	70.8
	F (n=13)	3.8	3.3	82.3

However, when it comes to learning and using from others' lines, the opposite outcome was produced. As Table 9 demonstrates, the male students tended to be able to learn from others' lines and use them in new situations better than the female students.

TABLE 9
Gender Difference in Using Expressions from Others' Lines (Post-test II)

Production Mode	Gender	Average # of items from others' roles	Average # of correct items	% of correct items
Writing	M (n=13)	9.4	4.9	52.1
	F (n=11)	8.6	4.0	46.5
Speaking	M (n=13)	8.0	4.4	55.0
	F (n=13)	9.2	4.5	46.5

Previously, we learned that there was no gender difference in learning the target expressions in general. However, when we examined the gender disparity in learning from their own lines and others' lines and using them in different situations, a notable difference was found. In learning their own lines and using them in new situations, the female participants were better than the male participants. Yet, learning others' lines and using them in other contexts, the male students were better than their female counterparts. Even though we could not come up with a theoretical basis to explain this finding, this pattern was clear. Since this pattern was identified only by percentages with a relatively small number of students, it would be worthwhile to conduct a larger-scaled study to explore this issue further.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the use of drama with young EFL learners and the results were relatively positive in general. Among the findings were that English drama actually helped students acquire English expressions that appeared in the play regardless of gender and proficiency. However, despite its statistical significance, we admit that some teachers might not be satisfied with the achievement level that the students have reached. For example, out of 37 target expressions, the participants were aware of 6.33 expressions before the drama activities and 13.79 after. If students have learned 7.46 expressions more after 8 hours of English drama activities, it becomes hard to claim their effectiveness as a language learning tool. Simply, one might argue that any treatment can produce this level of improvement. This may be one of the reasons why many studies have focused on the affective benefits that drama can offer and their indirect effects on L2 learning (Fuentes, 2010; Phillips, 2003; Stern, 1980; Zyoud, 2012).

However, when we look at the results of Post-test II more closely, more positive aspects become apparent. First, English drama promoted speaking because the students spoke the expressions as successfully as they wrote.

Secondly, even though Post-test II was more challenging, the participants were able to use half of the target expressions in new situations. Even though their production reflected the All-or-nothing phenomenon where they produced a perfect sentence or a complete blank, this was considered characteristics of learner language at the beginning stage of L2 acquisition. Thirdly, students' performance was better in using others' expressions in new situations (Post-test II) than in the drama situation (Post-test I). In other words, given new contexts, the participants were better able to retrieve others' lines, which they did not purposely memorize. This finding seems meaningful.

Lastly, a new important finding was revealed. Given new situations, the female students remembered the expressions from their own lines better than the male students. In terms of remembering expressions from others' lines, the male students were better than their female counterparts. Therefore, as a pedagogical implication, it can be said that female students should be advised to pay more attention to lines other than their own while male students should be given the opposite advice.

One limitation of using English drama with young learners was that the students tended to produce formulaic expressions rather than creative speech. Even though it was characterized as learner language, in an effort to overcome this shortcoming, improvisation without a script (i.e., learners create their own story by acting out situations without a preconceived plan) or creative drama where learners script the play after improvised sessions, could be employed in the classroom. They are expected to foster the use of creative speech among learners. Once more, research on the effects of the improvisation and creative drama on the learning of specific expressions should follow.

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APPENDIX

Excerpt from the Script, *The Little Half Chicken* (with target expressions underlined)

Narrator: Once upon a time in a ranch in Spain, six chicks were hatched. The hen mother was surprised when she saw the last one.

Mother: Oh, my! What's this?

Narrator: The hen mother looked at the baby chick.

Mother: I can't believe my eyes! He's so different from my five other chicks. He has only one wing...one leg...one eye... half a head.... and half a beak!

Narrator: When all the animals in the ranch knew about the special chick that was born, they came to see him.

Duck: Quack, quack... poor little baby... quack, quack!

Turkey: He's so ugly!

Horse: He looks funny!

Cow: Moo! He's only a half chicken! Moo!

Bull: He doesn't belong here!

Pigeon: He's Half Chicken! Ha, ha, ha, ha

Narrator: A few weeks later, Half Chicken heard two pigs talking about him.

Pig 1: I don't think he will remain under his mother's protection for a long time.

Pig 2: You're right. He is not obedient like his brothers.

Pig 1: Maybe it's because he's different. There's no one else like him!

Narrator: Then Half Chicken thought.

Half Chicken: **They are right.** I don't belong here. It's time for me to leave the ranch.

Narrator: That same day he talked to his mother.

Half Chicken: Mother, I'm tired of this life in this dull ranch. I'm off to Madrid to see the King.

Mother: To Madrid! No, no... you're so little, and it's a long trip. Stay here with me, and some day, when you are bigger, I will go with you.

Half Chicken: No, mother, I already packed my things.

Mother: Very well, just be sure to tread kindly everyone you meet.

Narrator: Half Chicken said good bye to his mother and left the ranch, and he kept walking until he found a stream.

Stream: Oh, Half Chicken! Please help me! Move the branches and weeds so that my waters can flow freely.

Half Chicken: Sorry, I can't waste time. Move them yourself! ... I am going to Madrid to see the King.