

A Descriptive Analysis and Classification of Drama Techniques for Language Teaching

OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID:
EDU-2024-12027058

Volume: 12

Issue: 2

Month: March

Year: 2024

P-ISSN: 2320-2653

E-ISSN: 2582-1334

Received: 24.12.2023

Accepted: 15.02.2024

Published: 01.03.2024

Citation:

Başaran, S. (2024). A Descriptive Analysis and Classification of Drama Techniques for Language Teaching. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 12(2), 8–19.

DOI:


<https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v12i2.7058>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Süleyman Başaran

Batman University, Turkey

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3262-098X>

Abstract

This study offers a descriptive analysis and classification of drama techniques that can be used in foreign language teaching. The aim is to provide language teachers and practitioners with accessible techniques that can be easily utilized in major stages and skills of the language teaching process as needed. The method of the study includes descriptive analysis and classification, resulting in the identification of five major categories of drama techniques. These include introduction and warm-up techniques, awareness-raising techniques, self-confidence and motivation techniques, techniques for speaking and listening skills, and techniques for reading and writing skills. For each category, several techniques were selected and described as examples. It is hoped that this study will make these techniques more available to teachers and researchers, ultimately improving language teaching practices. Since there seems to be no study in the literature on the classification of drama techniques in terms of language teaching, we hope that this study will fill an important gap.

Keywords: Drama Techniques, Process Drama, Educational Drama, Classification

Introduction

The use of drama as a pedagogical tool in foreign language teaching has gained increasing attention in recent years, as it provides learners with a dynamic and engaging environment in which to acquire language skills. This study offers a descriptive analysis and classification of drama techniques that can be used in foreign language teaching, with the aim of providing language teachers and practitioners with accessible techniques that can be easily utilized in major domains of the language teaching process as needed.

The study employs a method of descriptive analysis and classification, resulting in the identification of five major categories of drama techniques. These categories include introduction and warm-up techniques, awareness-raising techniques, self-confidence and motivation techniques, techniques for speaking and listening skills, and techniques for reading and writing skills. Several techniques were selected and described for each category. Based on analytical thinking and years of experience using drama in the classroom, it was explained how these techniques serve the intended purpose in each category.

The first category, introduction and warm-up techniques, includes techniques such as Breathing, Kitty in the Corner, Catch My Name, Name Show, and Half-a-Minute Handshake, which can help learners overcome their psychological barriers and become ready for more difficult drama techniques and English lessons. The second category, awareness-raising techniques, includes techniques such as Follow Your Nose, Follow the Hand, Traffic Lights, Mime, Crying and Laughing, Bomb and Shield. These techniques require students to be watchful, observant, and careful, thus raising their awareness.

The third category, self-confidence and motivation techniques, includes techniques such as drama games and exercises that can help learners develop a sense of confidence and self-assurance in using the target language. Examples given for this category are Mirror, Shade, Caricature, Sound and Action, Soundscape, Throw Your Face, and Ten Second Objects. The fourth category, techniques for speaking and listening skills, includes techniques such as Spacewalk, Adverb Game, Who What Where, One Word at a Time, Two Truths One Lie, Thought Tunnel, Hot Seating, Story Telling, Mantle of the Expert and Role-Play. Finally, the fifth category, techniques for reading and writing skills, is comprised of extensions of techniques such as Writing in Role, Role on the Wall, Role-Play, Hotseating, Still Images, Forum Theatre, Mantle of the Expert, and One-Word Stories, which provide opportunities for creating reading and writing activities in the classroom.

It is intended that this paper will increase the accessibility of these methods for educators and scholars, thereby enhancing the quality of language instruction. By providing a comprehensive framework for the use of drama techniques in foreign language teaching, this study aims to empower language teachers and practitioners to create a dynamic and engaging learning environment for their students, ultimately leading to improved language proficiency and communicative competence. We believe that this study will close a significant gap in the literature, as there doesn't appear to be any research on the categorization of drama techniques in terms of language instruction.

Literature Review

Educational drama is a creative and collaborative approach to teaching and learning English language and literacy skills. It involves the creation of a fictional world where learners can explore, experiment, and communicate in authentic and meaningful ways. Process drama has been widely used in language teaching for various purposes, such as developing language skills, enhancing motivation and confidence, and fostering intercultural understanding and communication. In this literature review, I will discuss the benefits and challenges of

using process drama in language teaching, focusing on three main aspects: language skills development, learner motivation and confidence, and intercultural communication.

Language skills development is one of the main goals of language teaching, and process drama can facilitate the development of various language skills, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Research has shown that process drama can provide learners with opportunities to practice their language skills in a real-life context, making it more relevant and meaningful to their lives ([Baldwin & Galazka, 2021](#)). For example, [Bsharat and Brahmeh \(2020\)](#) found that process drama improved the speaking ability of ESL students by providing them with a supportive and engaging environment to express their ideas and opinions. Similarly, [Shahani and Tahriiri \(2015\)](#) found that process drama enhanced the listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition of EFL learners by exposing them to different types of texts and genres. Process drama can also develop learners' reading and writing skills by integrating them with other language skills and encouraging learners to create and respond to texts in various forms and modes ([Baykal et al. 2019](#); [Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020](#); [Rieg & Paquette, 2009](#)). Drama plays a crucial role in education by providing learners with the opportunity to immerse themselves in a fictional world, enabling them to engage in authentic and meaningful ways of exploration and communication. Research has shown that drama-based instruction can significantly enhance speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners ([Sirisrimangkorn, 2018](#)). Educational drama provides a platform for students to engage in authentic contexts, which is essential for effective language learning ([Liu et al., 2021](#)). The use of drama in education has also been associated with challenging traditional forms of knowledge production, particularly in decolonizing pedagogy ([Athimoolam, 2018](#)). The literature supports the notion that drama is a valuable and effective tool for promoting authentic and meaningful learning experiences across various educational contexts.

Educational drama can be an effective tool for enhancing learner motivation and engagement in language learning. It has been recognized as a

powerful tool for creating engaging and empowering learning experiences, particularly in the context of language learning (Belliveau & Kim, 2013). By making language learning more enjoyable, worthwhile, and meaningful, drama techniques can positively impact learner motivation and confidence, foster creativity and imagination, and create a fun and dynamic learning atmosphere. Research has shown that process drama can increase learners' motivation and interest in learning English by making it more enjoyable and challenging (Syuhada & Fatimah, 2021). Process drama can also boost learners' confidence and self-esteem in using English by reducing their anxiety and fear of making mistakes and by providing them with positive feedback and encouragement (Stinson & Freebody, 2006). Moreover, process drama can foster learners' creativity and imagination by allowing them to explore different roles and identities and by stimulating their curiosity and inquiry skills (Warren, 1999). In addition to creating a fun and dynamic learning atmosphere, process drama can also create a meaningful learning environment that connects language learning to learners' lives, experiences, and emotions and that allows them to use language in authentic and contextualized ways (Lee et al., 2020; Uştuk, 2022; Mwange, 2015; Hanney, 2017). For example, Uştuk (2022) found that process drama activities increased the language learning motivation and self-confidence of students with ethics of care, as they felt more respected and engaged and experienced an increase in their communication skills. Furthermore, the students displayed a greater understanding of authentic communication when the content was relevant to their emotional labor. These studies suggest that process drama can have a positive impact on learners' motivation and engagement, leading to improved language learning outcomes.

Intercultural communication is an important skill for language learners in the globalized world, and process drama can promote intercultural understanding and communication by exposing learners to different cultures and perspectives. Research has shown that process drama can help learners develop intercultural competence and awareness by enabling them to experience and reflect on cultural differences and similarities and

by facilitating dialogue and empathy among learners from diverse backgrounds (Piazzoli, 2010; Rothwell, 2011). Process drama can also help learners develop their identity and agency as language users and cultural beings by empowering them to express their views and values and by challenging them to critically examine their own and others' assumptions and stereotypes (Harter et al., 1997; Gallagher, 2001).

Earlier studies have clearly shown that drama techniques have multiple benefits for language teaching and learning. Drama techniques are powerful and versatile tools for teaching and learning English language and literacy skills. They can enhance learners' language skills development, motivation and confidence, and intercultural communication by providing them with rich and meaningful learning experiences. However, educational drama also poses some challenges and limitations for language teachers and learners, such as the need for adequate time, space, and resources, the difficulty of assessing learning outcomes, and the potential for cultural misunderstandings and conflicts (Dawson et al., 2011; Hulse & Owens, 2017; Lasisi, 2020). Therefore, it is important for language teachers and learners to be aware of these challenges and limitations and to adopt appropriate strategies and techniques to overcome them and maximize the benefits of using process drama in language teaching. It is an important task for teachers and practitioners to recognize and categorize drama techniques in terms of their characteristics and to use them according to the purpose of a particular English lesson and the needs of the students. This study aims to serve this purpose and contribute to the field by analyzing drama techniques and classifying them according to their characteristics.

Method

The method of the study consists of a descriptive analysis of the functions and benefits of educational drama techniques and an analytical analysis of which stages, domains, and skills of language learning processes these techniques can benefit. First, the most important domains of language teaching processes were identified and categorized. Then, based on the experience of using drama in language teaching

and related studies in the literature, the qualities of educational drama techniques were described and presented. Then, analytical thinking was used to determine which category of language teaching processes these qualities could serve, and the related drama techniques were classified under that category. A thorough examination was conducted to understand how these drama techniques can enhance each stage, domain, or skill of the language learning process. The backbone of this study is to categorize drama techniques according to their functions and benefits and the purposes of language teaching, thus contributing to the development of educational drama and facilitating the work of teachers and practitioners. With these aims in mind, the characteristics of drama techniques were matched with the elements of language teaching processes, and the techniques were classified in this way.

Analyses and Results

In this part of the study, we observe educational drama techniques as objects and analyze them through analytical thinking. The descriptions of the drama techniques in written sources, the adaptations and applications of the techniques in videos, and my own experiences of using these techniques in my own classes are the sources of this analysis. While analyzing drama techniques through written texts, Farmer (2007, 2011, 2012), Farmer (n.d.), and Başaran and Farmer (2015) were taken as the main sources. The videos showing some of the drama techniques mentioned in the classification section below are available on David Farmer's Drama Resource YouTube channel (Farmer, n.d.). By examining the descriptions of drama techniques in written sources, we gain a theoretical understanding of their purpose and potential impact on students' learning experiences. Studying the adaptations and applications of these techniques in videos allows us to see real-life examples of their effectiveness in action. Drawing on my own experiences of using these techniques in my own classes provides firsthand insights into how they can be implemented and modified to suit different educational contexts. Through this comprehensive analysis, we gain a deeper understanding and comprehension of the benefits and challenges associated with using educational drama techniques in the classroom.

Common Characteristics of Drama Techniques

When we take a closer look at drama techniques and analyze them, we see that they have a number of common features. The most important common feature is that all drama techniques create a fictional universe in the student's mind. This fictional universe of make-believe and pretense serves as a platform for the student to explore various emotions, scenarios, and perspectives. By immersing themselves in this imaginative world, students can develop empathy and understanding for different characters and situations. Drama techniques also encourage active participation and engagement, as students are required to interact with the fictional universe through dialogue, movement, and expression. These common features of drama techniques enhance the learning experience by fostering creativity, critical thinking, and personal growth.

The second common feature of drama techniques is their interactionist nature. Every drama technique inherently requires the presence and cooperation of others. This feature naturally develops students' speaking, cooperation, and communication skills. By working together with their peers in drama activities, students learn the importance of listening and responding to others' ideas and perspectives. They also gain a deeper understanding of teamwork, as they must rely on each other to create a successful performance. Through these experiences, students develop the ability to collaborate effectively and build strong relationships based on trust and respect. This interactionist nature of drama techniques not only enhances social and emotional development but also prepares students for the collaborative nature of real-world situations.

Another common feature of drama techniques is that they are fun. This feature stems from their similarity to games and is the result of their characteristics, such as fictionality, unpredictability, and competition. Engaging in drama techniques allows students to tap into their creativity and imagination, making the learning experience enjoyable. The element of fictionality allows students to step into different roles and explore diverse perspectives, while the unpredictability keeps them on their toes and adds an element of excitement. Additionally, the element of competition encourages students to

push themselves and strive for excellence, making the learning process both challenging and enjoyable.

All drama techniques require preparation, modeling, and rehearsal. This common feature is one that complicates the work of teachers and drama practitioners. However, preparation and rehearsals are crucial in order to ensure that the students fully understand and embody the characters and concepts they are working with. It allows them to develop a deeper understanding of the material and helps them feel more confident in their performances. The process of rehearsing and modeling also helps to build a sense of camaraderie and teamwork among the students as they work together to create a cohesive and engaging performance. While the preparation and rehearsal may be challenging for teachers and drama practitioners, it is a necessary step in creating a successful and impactful learning experience for the students.

Classification of Drama Techniques in the Context of Language Teaching

Since students often come to foreign language classes with negative attitudes and feelings, one of the most important stages of the language teaching process is the beginning of the lessons and the stage of warming up the students. Teachers should definitely take this into consideration and start the lessons after the students have merged with each other, a community atmosphere has been formed, and the students have been psychologically prepared. Drama techniques that can be used for introduction and warming up are the best tools for this stage. These techniques can include icebreaker activities and introduction games. By engaging students in these interactive activities, teachers can create a relaxed and welcoming environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves and getting to know each other in the target language. Such drama techniques encourage active participation, boost students' confidence, and foster a sense of unity within the class. Incorporating drama techniques into the beginning of language lessons can greatly contribute to overcoming students' negative attitudes and facilitating a successful language learning experience. Thus, the first category of drama techniques has emerged as introduction and warm techniques.

Introduction and Warm-up Techniques

Some of the drama techniques have been designed and used, especially at the beginning of the lessons, to warm up the students or to help them meet and get to know each other. For example, techniques such as Breathing, Kitty in the Corner, Catch My Name, Name Show, and Half-a-Minute Handshake serve this purpose. In the Breathing technique, the teacher helps students relax by teaching them diaphragmatic breathing by giving commands such as "Raise your right hand and place it on your chest; raise your left hand and place it on your belly; breathe deeply through your nose; fill the breath into your abdomen, not your chest; wait three seconds; now exhale through your mouth; push all the air out." The Half-a-Minute Handshake technique is a very enjoyable introduction and warm-up technique that requires students to quickly shake hands and greet everyone in the class within 30 seconds, and variations such as slow, excited, or panicked can be applied. Such techniques not only break the ice but also build trust and confidence among the students. They allow the students to feel comfortable and connected with one another, which is crucial for a successful group dynamic. Additionally, these warm-up activities help to foster a positive and inclusive environment where every student feels valued and included. Incorporating these drama techniques at the beginning of the lessons sets the tone for a collaborative and supportive learning experience.

By starting each lesson with these drama techniques, students are immediately engaged and interested in the learning process. Techniques such as Breathing and Kitty in the Corner help students relax and overcome their psychological barriers, while Catch My Name and Name Show create a sense of unity and shared purpose and encourage active participation and active listening. Through the Half-a-Minute Handshake, students are encouraged to interact with one another in a friendly and respectful manner, fostering a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. In the introduction and warming up stage of language classes, drama techniques such as Greetings and Ten-Second Objects can be used to create a sense of community and establish a positive classroom atmosphere. By starting the class with engaging and interactive activities,

students are encouraged to connect with one another and build relationships. This not only promotes a friendly and welcoming environment but also sets the stage for open communication and active participation throughout the lesson. As a result, the classroom becomes a safe space where students feel comfortable taking risks, expressing themselves, and exploring their creativity. This positive and inclusive environment not only enhances the students' learning experience but also promotes their overall personal growth and development. By fostering a sense of belonging and mutual support, students are more likely to engage in meaningful discussions, collaborate on projects, and take ownership of their learning. This inclusive environment also helps to reduce social barriers and hierarchies, allowing every student to feel valued and heard. This positive classroom atmosphere cultivates a love for learning and empowers students to reach their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally.

Awareness Raising Techniques

Learners find it difficult to learn a foreign language not only because of psychological barriers such as negative emotions but also because of their low awareness of their own bodies and language competence. This lack of self-awareness hinders their ability to effectively communicate and comprehend the nuances of the foreign language. Additionally, learners may struggle with understanding the grammatical rules and structures, leading to further frustration and discouragement. Overcoming these obstacles requires a combination of self-reflection, practice, and guidance from experienced language instructors. With time and dedication, but most importantly, with effective tools such as drama techniques, learners can gradually raise their awareness. Increased self-awareness improves students' language competence and helps them overcome the psychological barriers that impede their progress.

Some drama techniques, due to their intrinsic characteristics, force individuals to be attentive and watch their body or linguistic production. Drama techniques and games such as Follow Your Nose, Follow the Hand, Traffic Lights, Mime, Crying and Laughing, Bomb and Shield have such a function

and therefore make students aware of their body and hence linguistic production. These techniques require students to be fully present and engaged in the moment, encouraging them to pay close attention to their physical movements and verbal expressions. For example, in the Follow the Hand technique, which is done in pairs or groups of three, the student or students who follow the hand of another student by keeping a constant distance as if there is an invisible rope between that hand and their own face develop both their attention skills and awareness of their bodies. Similarly, when practicing the Crying and Laughing technique, four or five people sitting next to each other have to imitate the crying or laughing of the leading person in a higher and higher tone but in the same style. In order to be able to apply the technique successfully, students are naturally driven to observe the voice and gestures of the lead student very carefully and to recognize their own voice and body in order to be able to imitate them, thus developing self-awareness. By actively participating in these activities, learners become more conscious of their language use and are able to identify areas for improvement. This heightened self-awareness ultimately leads to enhanced language competence as students gain the ability to effectively communicate and express themselves without the limitations of psychological barriers.

Self-Confidence and Motivation Techniques

Two of the most important problems in foreign language learning are self-confidence and motivation. Without self-confidence, learners may be hesitant to speak or practice the language, hindering their progress. On the other hand, without motivation, learners may lack the drive to consistently study and engage with the language. Therefore, it is crucial for language learners to develop both self-confidence and motivation in order to overcome these challenges and achieve fluency. However, it is not easy to develop these two qualities in a classroom environment due to the fact that both the learner and the classroom are at the heart of the problem. Complex mental, psychological, and social elements of the language learning process usually lower both the self-confidence and motivation of students. Such a situation makes it almost impossible to learn a

new language effectively. Without self-confidence, students may be afraid to make mistakes or speak in front of others, hindering their ability to practice and improve their language skills in the classroom. Additionally, a lack of motivation can lead to a lack of effort and engagement in the learning process, resulting in minimal progress. Hence, it is crucial for language educators to address these issues and provide support and encouragement to students to boost their self-confidence and motivation, ultimately enhancing their language learning experience.

Drama-based language teaching is the most effective and enjoyable way of addressing self-confidence and motivation issues and overcoming these problems. Drama-based language teaching allows students to actively participate in role-plays and performances, providing them with a safe and supportive environment to practice their language skills. This hands-on approach not only boosts their self-confidence but also enhances their motivation to learn and improve. By immersing themselves in drama activities, students become more engaged and invested in the learning process, resulting in greater progress and a more enjoyable language learning experience. Drama-based language teaching encourages students to step out of their comfort zones and take on different roles and perspectives. This not only builds their self-confidence but also helps them develop empathy and understanding for others. Through the process of rehearsing and performing, students learn to overcome obstacles and challenges, which further enhances their self-belief and motivation. Thus, drama-based language teaching empowers students to become more active and confident language learners, ready to take on any linguistic challenge that comes their way.

The vast majority of drama techniques are fun and help students develop self-confidence and motivation. However, techniques such as Mirror, Shade, Caricature, Sound and Action, Soundscape, Throw Your Face, and Ten Second Objects are particularly good for developing self-confidence and motivation because they are easy and fun and help students realize the power of their body and voice. These drama techniques allow students to explore and express themselves in a safe and supportive environment. Ten Second Objects, for

example, prompts students to quickly act out an object, enhancing their creativity and self-belief as they successfully convey meaning through physicality. Similarly, techniques such as Mirror, Shade, Caricature, Sound and Action, and Throw Your Face encourage students to imitate each other's movements and gestures in a simultaneous or sequential manner, boosting their self-confidence as they realize their observation and imitation skills and the power of their bodies. With Soundscape, students are able to create and explore different auditory landscapes, fostering their imagination and ability to communicate through sound. This activity allows students to collaborate and experiment with various sounds, leading to an increased sense of self-expression and confidence in their own abilities. Overall, these creative exercises and techniques provide students with a supportive platform to explore their artistic potential and develop a strong sense of self. It is, therefore, clear that these engaging and enjoyable techniques not only foster self-confidence and motivation but also enable students to discover the strength and potential within themselves.

Techniques for Speaking and Listening Skills

Listening comprehension and speaking skills are the most important skills in the language learning process because they allow learners to effectively communicate with and understand others. Developing competent speaking skills enables learners to confidently express their thoughts and ideas, fostering meaningful conversations and connections with others. Mastering these skills greatly enhances overall language proficiency and fluency. If a person cannot understand and speak a language when he/she hears it, it means that he/she does not know that language well enough to effectively communicate with others. This can lead to frustration and hinder the ability to form connections and build relationships with people who speak that language. Without strong listening comprehension skills, it can be difficult to fully grasp the nuances and subtleties of a language, making it challenging to understand jokes, idioms, and cultural references. Listening comprehension and speaking skills are crucial for successful language learning and meaningful communication.

The process of language learning is not only a rule-formation but also a habit-formation process. This is why a lot of meaningful and enjoyable repetition is needed in order to learn to understand and speak the language. Drama techniques are indispensable for foreign language learning processes because they allow for a large number of meaningful and entertaining repetitions that promote language acquisition and fluency. By engaging in drama activities, learners can practice their listening and speaking skills in a dynamic and interactive way. They can act out various scenarios, improvise dialogues, and participate in role-plays, all of which provide ample opportunities for learners to understand and use language in a realistic context. Moreover, drama techniques help learners develop their vocabulary and grammar skills by exposing them to authentic language use. By immersing themselves in different roles and situations, learners are able to encounter new words and phrases and learn how to use them accurately. Also, drama activities encourage learners to think on their feet and respond spontaneously, which enhances their ability to communicate effectively in real-life situations. Therefore, incorporating drama into foreign language learning not only makes the process more enjoyable but also facilitates a deeper understanding and mastery of the language.

Drama techniques such as Spacewalk, Adverb Game, Who What Where, One Word at a Time, Two Truths One Lie, Thought Tunnel, Hot Seating, Story Telling, Mantle of the Expert and Role-Play offer plenty of listening and speaking opportunities in the target language. These activities allow learners to practice their language skills in a dynamic and interactive way, encouraging them to think on their feet and react in real-time. By engaging in these drama techniques, students are able to simulate real-life situations and use their language skills in a practical setting. This not only helps them become more confident and fluent in the language but also improves their ability to think critically and problem-solve in a foreign language. For example, in the Who What Where technique, a group of students decide on a scenario and improvise a short scene based on the given prompts. This requires them to quickly think about the characters, the situation, and the dialogue

while using the target language. The teacher, then, asks who-what-where questions to guide the audience members (the other students in the classroom) to guess the situation or scenario. By doing so, students are able to apply their language knowledge in a creative and spontaneous way, helping them become more comfortable and proficient in the language. Drama activities like Role-Play and Mantle of the Expert allow learners to step into different roles and perspectives, broadening their cultural understanding and empathy towards others, while in Hotseating, students can explore different characters and their motivations through questioning and improvisation. These drama activities also encourage students to think critically and problem-solve, as they have to consider the perspectives and needs of their assigned role. Incorporating drama techniques into language learning can greatly enhance students' linguistic abilities and overall language acquisition.

Drama Techniques for Reading and Writing Skills

Reading and writing skills are also important skills in the foreign language learning process. When we consider today's foreign language usage areas, it is not enough to understand and speak a foreign language; it is also necessary to be able to read and write in that language. Being able to read and write in a foreign language opens up a whole new world of opportunities. It allows us to explore literature, news articles, and online resources in that language, thereby enhancing our overall comprehension and knowledge. Writing in a foreign language helps us express our thoughts and ideas more effectively, enabling us to communicate with native speakers via digital means in modern times. Therefore, developing strong reading and writing skills is crucial for a well-rounded foreign language learning experience.

Drama techniques can also be a source of reading and writing activities and thus make a holistic and long-lasting contribution to the foreign language learning process. Drama techniques not only engage students in active and immersive language practice but also provide them with opportunities to explore different contexts and perspectives. By participating in role plays, students can develop their reading and writing skills as they create scripts and dialogues,

allowing them to apply their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary in a meaningful way. In terms of writing skills, some drama techniques, such as writing monologues or diary entries from the perspective of a character, can help students develop their creativity and storytelling abilities. Additionally, drama activities can also enhance students' reading comprehension skills as they analyze and interpret scripts or perform close readings of dramatic texts. Techniques such as Writing in Role and Role on the Wall can directly engage students in writing from specific characters' perspectives, text analysis, and critical thinking, as they require students to deeply understand and empathize with the characters they are portraying. By exploring the motivations and perspectives of these characters, students are able to develop a deeper understanding of the text and its underlying themes. Drama activities encourage students to collaborate and communicate effectively with their peers. Through group discussions and improvisation exercises, students learn to actively listen to one another, negotiate ideas, and work together to create a cohesive performance. This not only strengthens their social and interpersonal skills but also helps them develop a richer understanding of the text through different perspectives and interpretations. To sum up, drama activities provide a dynamic and interactive way for students to engage with characters and scripts and deepen their reading and writing skills.

Drama techniques such as Role-Play, Hotseating, Still Images, Forum Theatre, Mantle of the Expert, and One-Word Stories can be easily adopted for the development of writing and reading skills. For example, Hotseating, where students take on the role of a character and answer questions from their classmates, can improve their ability to think critically and analytically about a text. Still Images, where students freeze in a pose to represent a particular moment or scene, can help them visualize and understand the events of a story. In the Still Images technique, students identify the important moments of an event or story through group work and perform still images of these important moments with their bodies. The teacher guides the transition from one still image to another by clapping. These still images can be photographed, printed, or projected on a

screen and then transformed into effective speaking, writing, and reading activities. Forum Theatre, where students act out a scene and then invite audience members to suggest different outcomes, can encourage creative thinking and problem-solving. Finally, the Mantle of the Expert technique, where students take on the role of experts to explore a topic in depth, can prompt them to research and write about a subject, further developing their reading and writing skills. Overall, incorporating drama into the classroom can provide valuable opportunities for students to engage with literature and develop a range of important skills. Drama allows students to connect with the text on a deeper level as they take on the roles and emotions of the characters. It also encourages critical thinking and analysis as students explore different perspectives and outcomes. By actively participating in dramatic activities, students become more confident and expressive, enhancing their communication skills. Moreover, drama fosters collaboration and teamwork as students work together to create and perform scenes. Drama offers a dynamic and immersive learning experience that can greatly foster students' critical thinking and empathy and, hence, help them improve their reading and writing skills.

Discussion

The analysis and categorization of drama techniques revealed that they can make very important contributions to important areas of language learning processes. In this study, it was emphasised that drama techniques can provide significant benefits in areas such as introduction, warming up, awareness-raising, self-confidence, motivation, speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the foreign language learning process due to their intrinsic nature and qualities. These findings are in line with the findings of the studies cited in the literature review that discuss the impact of process drama on language skills development, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Earlier research highlighted that process drama provides learners with real-life context practice, making language learning more relevant and meaningful (Baldwin & Galazka, 2021). Studies have shown that process drama improves speaking ability (Bsharat &

[Brahmeh, 2020](#)), enhances listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition ([Shahani & Tahriri, 2015](#)), and develops reading and writing skills ([Baykal et al. 2019](#); [Alasmari & Alshae'el, 2020](#); [Rieg & Paquette, 2009](#)). Drama-based instruction can significantly enhance speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners ([Sirisrimangkorn, 2018](#)) and provide a platform for students to engage in authentic contexts ([Liu et al., 2021](#)). The analysis and classification made in this study according to the characteristics of drama techniques and their contributions to foreign language teaching is also compatible with the studies that emphasize the role of educational drama in enhancing learner motivation and engagement and assert that process drama increases learners' motivation and interest in learning English ([Syuhada & Fatimah, 2021](#)), boosts learners' confidence and self-esteem ([Stinson & Freebody, 2006](#)), and fosters learners' creativity and imagination ([Warren, 1999](#)). It also supports the idea that drama activities create a meaningful learning environment that connects language learning to learners' lives, experiences, and emotions ([Lee et al., 2020](#); [Uştuk, 2022](#); [Mwange, 2015](#); [Hanney, 2017](#)) and that they increase students' motivation and self-confidence in language learning.

Conclusion

The use of drama techniques in foreign language teaching can enhance the learning process and outcomes by providing various benefits such as increasing motivation, self-confidence, awareness, and communicative skills. However, language teachers and practitioners may not be familiar with the range and applicability of these techniques. Therefore, this study aimed to describe and classify drama techniques according to their functions and purposes in different stages and skills of language teaching. Based on a descriptive analysis, five major categories of drama techniques were identified and exemplified. These categories are: introduction and warm-up techniques, awareness-raising techniques, self-confidence and motivation techniques, techniques for speaking and listening skills, and techniques for reading and writing skills. This study is expected to contribute to the literature by offering a comprehensive and accessible framework of drama

techniques for language teaching and to the practice by providing language teachers and practitioners with effective and adaptable techniques that can improve their teaching methods and learners' outcomes. For future studies, it is suggested that the effectiveness of these techniques be empirically tested and compared with other teaching methods in various contexts and levels of language learning. Moreover, it would be interesting to explore the learners' and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of drama techniques in language teaching and the possible challenges and barriers that may hinder their implementation.

References

- Alasmari, N., & Alshae'el, A. (2020). The effect of using drama in english language learning among young learners: A case study of 6th grade female pupils in Sakaka City. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 8(1), 61-73.
- Athiemoolum, L. (2018). The value of drama-in-education as a decolonising pedagogy through embodied drama strategies in a higher education classroom. *Journal of Education*, 72.
- Baldwin, P., & Galazka, A. (2021). Introduction. In *Process Drama for Second Language Teaching and Learning: A Toolkit for Developing Language and Life Skills* (pp. 1-4). London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Başaran, S., & Farmer, D. (2015). *Educational Drama in English Classes*. Dicle University Press.
- Batt-Rawden, S. A., Chisolm, M. S., Anton, B., & Flickinger, T. E. (2013). Teaching empathy to medical students: An updated, systematic review. *Academic Medicine*, 88(8), 1171-1177.
- Baykal, N., Sayın, İ., & Zeybek, G., (2019). The views of ELT pre-service teachers on using drama in teaching english and on their practices involved in drama course. *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research* , 6(2), 366-380.
- Belliveau, G., & Kim, W. (2013). Drama in L2 learning: a research synthesis. *Scenario*:

- Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning Research*, 7(2), 7-27.
- Bsharat, T. R., & Barahmeh, M. Y. (2020). The influence of applying educational active drama in enhancing speaking skills in teaching-learning English language: A theoretical response. *Technium Social Sciences Journal*, 14(1), 10-32.
- Dawson, K., Cawthon, S. W., & Baker, S. (2011). Drama for schools: Teacher change in an applied theatre professional development model. Research in Drama Education. *The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 16(3), 313-335.
- Farmer, D. (2007). *101 Drama Games and Activities*. Lulu Publications.
- Farmer, D. (2011). *Learning through Drama in the Primary Years*. Lulu Publications.
- Farmer, D. (2012). *101 more Drama Games and Activities*. Drama Resource.
- Farmer, D. (n.d.). *Drama Resource: Creative Ideas for Teaching Drama*.
- Gallagher, K. (2001). *Drama education in the lives of girls: Imagining possibilities*. University of Toronto Press.
- Hanney, R. (2017). Throwing away the textbook: A process drama approach to teaching ESL in China. *Dialogue: Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), 4-20.
- Harter, S., Waters, P. L., & Whitesell, N. R. (1997). Lack of voice as a manifestation of false self-behavior among adolescents: The school setting as a stage upon which the drama of authenticity is enacted. *Educational Psychologist*, 32(3), 153-173.
- Hulse, B., & Owens, A. (2017). Process drama as a tool for teaching modern languages: Supporting the development of creativity and innovation in early professional practice. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 13(1), 17-30.
- Lasisi, B. A. (2020). Applied drama: Reflection on the practice and the question. *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 9(1), 06-15.
- Lee, K. K., Abbott, M., & Chen, N. (2020). Increasing students' willingness to communicate: Drama-based approaches to language instruction in English for academic purposes classes. *TESL Canada Journal*, 37(3), 75-87.
- Liu, Y., Hwang, W., & Liu, Z. (2021). Effects of mobile drama with authentic contexts on English learning. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 59(7), 1294-1318.
- Mwange, S. (2015). *Process Drama: Affecting the Second Language Learning Classroom*. University of Cape Town.
- Okoli, E. C. (1996). *Reconciling Cultural Values through Drama Education*. The University of Calgary.
- Piazzoli, E. (2010). Process drama and intercultural language learning: An experience of contemporary Italy. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 15(3), 385-402.
- Raatikainen, E., Rauhala, L. A., & Mäenpää, S. (2017). Qualified empathy: A key element for an empowerment professional. *Social Pedagogy*, 18, 113-121.
- Rieg, S., & Paquette, K. (2009). Using drama and movement to enhance english language learners' literacy development. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 36, 148-155.
- Rothwell, J. (2011). Bodies and language: Process drama and intercultural language learning in a beginner language classroom. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 16(4), 575-594.
- Shahani, S., & Tahriri, A. (2015). The impact of silent and freeze-frame viewing techniques of video materials on the intermediate EFL learners' listening comprehension. *Sage Open*, 5(2), 1-8.
- Sirisrimangkorn, L. (2018). The use of project-based learning focusing on drama to promote speaking skills of EFL learners. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 9(6), 14-20.
- Stinson, M., & Freebody, K. (2006). The DOL project: The contributions of process drama to improved results in english oral communication. *Youth Theatre Journal*, 20(1), 27-41.
- Syuhada, L., & Fatimah, S. (2021). Students' motivation in learning English after the practice of teacher-in-role. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 10(4), 674-687.

- Uştuk, Ö. (2022). This made me feel honoured: A participatory action research on using process drama in English language education with ethics of care. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 28(2), 279-294.
- Warren, K. (1999). *Hooked on Drama*. Social Science Press.
- Zakopoulos, V., Makri, A., Ntanos, S., & Tampakis, S. (2023). Drama/Theatre performance in education through the use of digital technologies for enhancing students' sustainability awareness: A literature review. *Sustainability*, 15(18).

Author Details

Süleyman Başaran, Batman University, Turkey, **Email ID:** suleyman.basaran@batman.edu.tr