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Use of Drama to Enhance Speaking Skills of English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners

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Abstract

This study delves into the transformative potential of Shakespearean drama staging in enhancing the speaking skills of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in higher education. Employing a qualitative interpretive research paradigm and drawing on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the research utilizes semi-structured interviews as the primary tool to explore the experiences of teachers and students in a specific Department of English Language and Literature at a private university in Chattogram, Bangladesh. The findings illuminate the manifold benefits of drama, including heightened speaking confidence, improved teamwork, enhanced improvisational skills, and increased self-esteem. This study not only contributes valuable insights into the advantages of incorporating Shakespearean dramas in ESL settings but also establishes a foundation for future research in diverse contexts beyond national borders.

Keywords: Theatrical arts, Shakespearean drama techniques, Dramatic Staging, ESL, education, Communication skills, Learner's speaking development

Introduction

English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in South Asia, including Bangladesh, encounter persistent challenges in attaining fluency and confidence in spoken English. Despite the acknowledged importance of speaking skills in today's globalized world,

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conventional teaching methods often fail to address these issues, creating a substantial barrier to language development.

In today's internet and communication technology world, students with good control over communicative skills can have better job options in Bangladesh and beyond. Despite the recognized importance of speaking skills, ESL learners in South Asia, including Bangladesh, often struggle to attain fluency and confidence in spoken English. The existing teaching methods and curricula may not fully equip learners to overcome these challenges, creating a significant barrier to language development.

This paper explores the transformative potential of drama, particularly the staging of Shakespearean plays, in addressing the unique challenges ESL learners face. By delving into the broader implications of drama in tertiary-level English language education in Bangladesh, this study aims to shed light on its effectiveness in enhancing learners' speaking proficiency. The addressed problem is the underutilization of Shakespeare's dramas for developing students' speaking skills. The research further investigates the potential of the use of Shakespearean drama and drama techniques to enhance the ESL/EFL learner's speaking skills and other related skills. The primary objective is to help students connect with Shakespeare's timeless characters, which, despite being created centuries ago, reflect universal emotions, expressions, and sensibilities shared by all of humanity.

It is observed that students at large face manifold limitations while attending an English class, be it language or literature. They hardly produce an extempore speech in class before the students and teacher. The fear, lack of communicative skill, and subsequent frustration push them hard into the cocoon of inhibition. As a result, they develop a kind of apathy toward studying English as a second language. Research in language pedagogy has shown that innovative and engaging teaching methods can significantly improve speaking skills. Drama, as an interactive and immersive approach, holds great potential in addressing these challenges. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, for instance, suggests that learning occurs through social interaction and collaboration. Drama, with its emphasis on dialogue and role-play, aligns well with Vygotsky's principles, making it a promising avenue for enhancing speaking skills. Maley and Duff (2005) assert the benefit of drama study in the language classroom by saying, "It draws upon both cognitive and affective domains, thus restoring the importance of feeling as well thinking. (p.1). Drama techniques generate a vibrant engagement in the students, which enhances their skills of perceiving and feeling, and thus generates language learning in action. Rainer and Lewis (2005) opine, "Drama is a human need. Throughout time and culture, human beings have enacted events to understand them or gain power over them" (p.3). It is further observed that the use of drama techniques

allows the students to become independent, tolerant, friendly, and empathetic. Drama technique reduces stress factors for the students, it removes the inhibitions from the learners. By using the drama technique, L2 learners can get rid of their inhibition, and they can develop the skill of self-analysis as well. Fabio (2015) quoting Aldavelo (2008) notes, "Drama activities foster pupils 'socialization, critical thinking, problem-solving and improve oral communication skills, by exploring different language styles and registers'" (p.11).

On the other hand, L2 students often experience anxiety when communicating, particularly when speaking in front of peers in a language course. Despite years of studying English, students may not feel at ease using the language in real-life situations. Several factors contribute to this situation, including a lack of confidence, unpreparedness, insufficient control over grammatical nuances, inhibition or shyness, low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, fear of mockery, limited opportunities for speaking practice outside the classroom, and a lack of confidence in pronunciation.

Drama techniques can play vital roles in reducing and removing the mentioned problems of the L2 students if properly used in the classroom and inducted into the curricula of the institutions. And the use of Shakespearean dramas can be more effective in ensuring students' steady and healthy intellectual growth. They can learn in fun embedded situations, for learning through pleasure generates proper and lasting knowledge in the students. Maley and Duff (2005) opine, "It fosters self-awareness (and awareness of others), self-esteem and confidence; and through this, motivation is developed" (1). Once a sense of self-awareness and confidence are developed in the students, they get motivated to speak freely and spontaneously, and this act of spontaneity drives off all the rooted inhibitions from the students, and they can have strong self-esteem. Nicholson, (2000) observes, "It is worth reiterating that active and physical engagement in drama enables students to develop new understandings and forms of knowing, which may not be so accessible in other, more traditional, ways of learning" (p. 9).

On the other hand, students also find it convenient and thus get motivated to deliver speeches by making certain required physical gestures. The use of drama in a language class "adds vitality and interest." (Stewig, 1974, p. 67) and allows the students to learn the language in action. The use of drama engages the students in very fetching and enticing ways: students can be made to role play from drama, spontaneously deliver the dialogues, make physical gestures, laugh, cry, and trot around the stage. And the classroom is the stage for them. All these activities make the students learn the language in action, engage them mentally and physically, and make them sweat while memorizing the dialogues in a very effective, exhaustive, and fun mode. "Drama encourages several

facets of oral facility...” (Stewig, 1974, p. 68). This spontaneity in them plays the magic and removes the inhibitions that the students usually possess in the L2 learning classes. The use of Shakespearean drama in the class has not yet been explored much in Bangladesh. Students can also improve their cognitive skills by using Shakespearean dramas in the classroom. Drama technique determines and enhances the communicative skills of the students. L2 learners can derive oral and other communicative skills over language in the action process. The drama technique enhances students’ self-confidence, motivation, socialization, team spirit a sense of improvisation, and overall growth and personality. It also helps students to create contexts. (Davis, 1990; Even, 2008; Hall et al., 1982; Kucharczyk & Kucharczyk, 2022; Maley & Duff, 2005; Rainer & Lewis, 2005; Stewig, 1974) have dedicated their works to the benefits of the role of dramatic techniques in language classrooms for oral and other skill development. Nicholson (2000) opines, “Drama education, at its most inclusive, invites students not only to engage with the dramatic narratives of others but also to find ways to communicate their idea” (p.2). Thus, L2 students develop their skills of communication in all possible ways. While talking about drama Maley and Duff (2005) assert, “It integrates verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication” (1). Drama techniques in the L2 language classroom enhance students’ communication both verbally and in other ways like gestures and posture.

The L2 learners at large can enhance the skill of improvisation by studying drama and enacting it on stage. Even (2008) argues, “Improvisation lies at the core of drama pedagogy. Contrary to the common belief that one has to be very clever and witty to improvise, all of us improvise in our daily exchanges and constantly invent and reinvent ourselves” (p.163).

Davis (1990) observes the following ways to ensure dramatic activities in the L2 classroom: Mime, Role Play, Simulation, exploiting a scripted play, creating one’s improvisation without a script, Exploiting the course work for dramatic purposes, Further possibilities, etc. (pp. 90-92). Hall et al. (1982) assert the importance and influence of drama by saying, “It is within the framework of a drama course that a great deal of metacommunication takes place ...” (146). The researchers outline diverse ways to achieve the desired target in L2 settings.

While the researchers have explored the potential of using drama in EFL classrooms to enhance students’ language skills in diverse ways, there remains a notable gap in our understanding of how Shakespearean drama specifically impacts English as a Second Language (ESL) learners’ speaking skills. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the effects of integrating Shakespearean drama techniques into ESL classrooms.

The significance of this research is twofold. First, it sheds light on the effectiveness of using classical literature, particularly Shakespearean drama, as a pedagogical tool in language education. Second, it has practical implications for educators seeking innovative approaches to enhance ESL learners' speaking skills.

Theoretical Perspectives

This study relies on Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which accentuates the vital role of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process. Vygotsky posits an intrinsic connection between language and thought, contending that social interactions provide learners with opportunities to internalize language and actively construct meaning.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD): Vygotsky introduced the Zone of Proximal Development as the space between a learner's current and potential abilities. Learning is most effective within this zone, facilitated by the guidance of more knowledgeable individuals such as peers and teachers (van der Veer, 2007, p. 81).

Social Interaction and Scaffolding: Vygotsky underscores the significance of social interaction in cognitive development, asserting that cognitive processes initially occur in social contexts and are subsequently internalized by individuals (Cole et al., 1978, p. 57). Scaffolding, closely tied to the ZPD, involves a knowledgeable person providing guidance and support, gradually diminishing assistance as the learner progresses.

Vygotsky's theory intricately weaves together cultural tools, mediation, and private speech. His conceptualization of the social world extends beyond individual interactions to encompass broader sociocultural and historical influences on learning. Key tenets include the primacy of culture, the pivotal role of language as a cultural tool, and the student's developmental journey within the sociocultural context. Culture, encapsulating socially accepted behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs, dynamically shapes and is shaped by personal development (Zhou & Brown, 2017, p. 33).

In the context of utilizing drama, particularly through Shakespearean drama staging, to enhance speaking skills in ESL classrooms and drawing on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, the study strategically employs the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Within this framework, teachers act as guides, facilitating students in achieving speaking skills beyond their current abilities through scaffolded activities. Scaffolding, embodied in teachers providing support and progressively reducing assistance, becomes instrumental as students gain confidence in their speaking endeavours. The social nature of cognitive development is underscored through the organic social interactions inherent in drama activities, creating an environment conducive to language development that mirrors real-

life communication. Moreover, the incorporation of Shakespearean drama functions as a cultural tool, mediating students' relationship with the English language and allowing them to explore language nuances within a culturally rich context. This multifaceted approach not only aligns with Vygotsky's theoretical framework but also extends to the practical application of drama in language education. In the broader context of drama, this theoretical perspective posits that engaging in theatrical activities offers EFL learners meaningful language practice within a relevant and captivating context. Furthermore, drama provides a collaborative space for learners to interact with peers and negotiate meanings collectively, reinforcing Vygotsky's emphasis on the social dimension of learning.

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

- How does using the Shakespearean drama technique in language class affect learner development?
- How does staging Shakespeare help develop an L2 learner's speaking skills?
- How does drama performance help reduce the anxiety level of L2 learners?

Methodology

Research Design and Methodology: This study adheres to a qualitative phenomenological research paradigm, employing phenomenology as the primary research method. The research methodology involves conducting semi-structured interviews with both teachers and students to elicit in-depth insights into their lived experiences with Shakespearean drama within the ESL classroom. Phenomenology, as the chosen method, allows for the exploration of the participants' subjective perceptions and the meaning they attribute to their encounters with drama education.

The study involves two teachers and five 7th-semester B. A (Honours) students who are majoring in English Language and Literature at a private university in Chattogram, Bangladesh. Aged 22-24, with a mix of urban and rural backgrounds, these students completed Bengali-medium government school education before joining the university's English department. Their academic journey includes diverse drama courses, such as "Introduction to Drama and Novel," "Shakespeare: Tragedies and Histories," "Shakespeare: Comedies and Sonnets," and "The History of Theatre." The culmination of their theoretical exposure occurs in the 7th semester when they actively stage Shakespearean dramas. In this course, students form teams, rehearse, create stages, arrange attire, and manage props, engaging in roleplaying, mimicking gestures, producing speeches, and create background sounds. Teachers oversee and evaluate these performances, playing a crucial role in students' linguistic and personal development.

I carried out semi-structured interviews with five students (3 females and 2 males) who were in their 7th semester of B. A (Honours) Programme in the Department of English Language & Literature at a private university in Chattogram. The interviews were carried out in a one-on-one setting, and each participant was approached via email and scheduled for an interview session.

Data analysis involved transcribing the interview recordings, followed by coding and categorizing the responses. Thematisation was conducted manually without the use of any software, relying on the identification of recurrent themes and patterns in the participants' responses.

During the analysis, themes emerged organically based on the frequency and relevance of specific concepts. Notable themes include 'Building Confidence' and 'Overcoming Inhibition,' which were identified as prominent in the data.

Results

The following findings have been elicited from the interviews carried out with teachers and students.

Teaching Strategies in Drama Classes

Lecturing as a Traditional Teaching Mode:

Teacher 1 emphasizes a traditional lecturing approach, where listening skills are targeted.

Concerns about the lack of technical support hinder the transition from text-based teaching to performance-oriented teaching.

Teacher 1 opines, *Because of the lack of opportunities for the students to come to this performance level, many universities don't have these facilities for students to come up with a performance on the call of an instructor.*

Techno-Blending/Integration:

Both teachers incorporate techno-blending, using video clips of the dramas they teach.

This method aims to enhance students' listening and speaking skills by requiring them to reproduce dialogues.

Roleplay as an Effective Method:

Roleplay is identified as a powerful tool for engaging students in drama activities.

This method contributes to the development of self-confidence and speaking skills, reducing inhibition, fear, and anxiety.

Teacher 2 asserts that *by doing role-play, students develop their language skills and overall growth as individuals.*

Performance on Stage:

Teacher 2, from the “History of Theatre” course, emphasises the significance of stage performance. Students benefit in terms of teamwork, speech delivery, miming, improvisation, and speaking skills through drama activities.

Teacher 2 further observes that *by performing stage, students benefit greatly in terms of teamwork, speech delivery, miming, improvisation speaking skills, etc.*

Recommendation for Teaching Shakespeare:

Teacher 1 suggests that teaching Shakespeare should go beyond improving language skills to make students better human beings. Shakespeare is compared to medicine for curing psychological barriers among the students.

Findings: Student Interviews

Impact of Drama Performance:

Students report positive transformations, including improved speaking skills, team-building, improvisation, self-esteem, and confidence.

Student 5 asserts, *that before doing drama performance, I was always afraid of talking to others in the classroom, but now I am a more confident speaker.*

Student 2, initially weak and shy, experienced a drastic positive change after participating in a drama performance.

Student Perspectives on Learning Strategies:

Students express that performing dramas helps them overcome fear, shyness, and anxiety in speaking before a large audience.

I never thought of speaking in front of my teacher and other students in the classroom, but after my drama performance, I can now speak confidently. (Student 2 asserts.)

These findings collectively suggest a positive impact of drama activities on both teachers’ strategies and students’ personal and language development.

Discussion

This section undertakes a comprehensive analysis by synthesizing insights derived from extensive interviews with teachers and students. Through an exploration of key themes, the discussion delves into the profound impact of drama on the speaking skills of ESL learners. This nuanced analysis provides valuable perspectives on teaching strategies, student transformations, and the broader implications for language education.

Challenges in Transitioning Teaching Strategies

The students' metamorphosis after drama sessions indicates overcoming challenges, gaining self-confidence, and developing oral communicative skills. Student 5 attests to this transformation, stating, "Before doing drama performance, I was always afraid of talking to others in the classroom, but now I am a more confident speaker." Teacher 2 further supports this observation, emphasizing the significant benefits students accrue, including teamwork, speech delivery, miming, improvisation, and enhanced speaking skills through stage performance.

According to Shraiber & Yaroslavova (2016), a teacher's multifaceted role as an initiator, counsellor, encourager, and supporter in facilitating drama-based education becomes evident. The humanistic approach to education, as advocated by Shraiber & Yaroslavova (2016), aligns with observed student transformations. The positive outcomes, such as increased self-confidence and improved oral communicative skills, resonate with the humanistic ideals of education. Students' testimonials and the teacher's perspective highlight how drama sessions act as catalysts for overcoming inhibitions, fostering teamwork, and enhancing speaking skills. Shraiber & Yaroslavova's assertion that drama is rooted in a humanistic approach underscores the teacher's pivotal role in creating a supportive and encouraging learning environment (p.61).

Role of Technology in Language Learning

Drama techniques, including video clips, contribute to students speaking and communicating freely with confidence. Atas (2015) talks about the use of drama as a technique to effectively teach the English language with benefits and asserts:

Drama itself has become a teaching technique that encourages students to learn a new language creatively and effectively. This means that drama techniques create an atmosphere where students learn in contexts, use their imagination, and spontaneously react. Speaking a language without any preparation is of great importance for fluency in EFL. Fluency requires "performance". To achieve fluency, a learner has to perform the language. (p. 962)

Atas's perspective underscores drama's potential not only as a methodological approach but also as a catalyst for cultivating creativity, contextual learning, and the indispensable role of performance in achieving fluency in the English language. This aligns with the theme of integrating drama and technology to foster spontaneous reactions and creative language use, as discussed in the context of observed student transformations.

Effectiveness of Roleplay in Language Development

Staging Shakespeare's drama enables students to engage in role-play, miming, and simulation, enhancing speaking skills. Roleplay is one of the most effective methods of teaching language and literature. A role play is "essentially an imitation of the reality in which the students are required to act and speak properly in line with the context of their "roles". Angelianawati, (2019, p.130). The researcher further opines, "Role-play enables students to develop a wide range of abilities, such as initiative, self-confidence, group work and communication as well" (p.130). The issue is aptly validated further as Gill (2018) posits, "Non-native speakers are exposed to a barrage of English, with more international English being spoken than they would expect to find in class" (p.3). Students one, three, and four articulate a transformative journey resulting from their involvement in staging Shakespearean plays. They describe a metamorphosis wherein they successfully conquered their apprehension and hesitation to speak in front of a large audience by engaging in role-play, miming, and improvising during unforeseen challenging situations on stage. Student one, for instance, shares his evolution, recounting, "*Assigned the role of King Lear for a stage performance, I initially faced fear and uncertainty about navigating the intricate soliloquies. Yet, through dedicated rehearsals with my teammates and under the guidance of our teacher, I ultimately triumphed in the portrayal.*"

Vygotsky's concept of scaffolding is evident in the roleplay activities. Teachers, through guidance and support, scaffold students' learning experiences, helping them navigate complex Shakespearean texts and develop both language skills and a deeper understanding of dramatic elements.

Significance of Stage Performances

Students gain speaking skills through stage performances, and Shakespeare's dramas expose them to diverse cultures. The significance of stage performances in enhancing students' speaking skills aligns with the assertion made by Kucharczyk and Kucharczyk (2022) regarding drama as the engine of the creative process. According to the authors, drama catalyzes turning raw ideas into fuel, fostering a deeper understanding of narratives, and promoting creative output such as writing and

collaborative activities (p. 55). The observed benefits of stage performances extend beyond the development of speaking skills; they become instrumental in building empathy among students and encouraging collaborative efforts.

Kucharczyk and Kucharczyk (2022) further argue that drama, as an inclusive activity, stimulates interaction and cooperation, getting individuals to talk, work, and laugh together. This collaborative aspect is particularly evident in the observed improvements in students' speaking skills during stage performances. By connecting these findings with the broader concepts presented by Kucharczyk and Kucharczyk, we unveil the transformative potential of drama, not only as a tool for language development but as a holistic approach that nurtures creativity, empathy, and active learning.

The collaborative nature of stage performances aligns with Vygotsky's emphasis on social interaction. Through joint efforts in creating props, rehearsing dialogues, and performing together, students are engaged in cooperative learning, enhancing their cognitive development.

Broader Implications of Teaching Shakespeare

Shakespeare's dramas contribute to language skills, cultural knowledge, and aesthetic appreciation. The broader implications of teaching Shakespeare extend beyond language skills to encompass cultural knowledge and aesthetic appreciation, aligning with the observations made in this study. The positive impact of well-told stories, including those of Shakespeare, on language development, is supported by Winston (2013), who emphasizes the captivating power of narratives in language immersion (p. 13). This aligns with the observed benefits in our study, where students experienced positive transformations in language skills, cultural awareness, and aesthetic appreciation through the staging of Shakespearean dramas.

Furthermore, connecting these findings with Kucharczyk and Kucharczyk's (2022) perspective on drama contributing to creativity and holistic learning, we can infer that Shakespeare's plays serve as a rich source for multifaceted educational experiences. The exposure to diverse characters, cultures, and customs in Shakespeare's dramas not only provides pleasure but also imparts extended knowledge of the human psyche and culture. Integrating various art forms, as suggested by Kucharczyk and Kucharczyk, enhances sensory engagement in storytelling, contributing to a deeper understanding of narratives and fostering creativity.

In essence, teaching Shakespeare carries significant implications for language development, cultural enrichment, and aesthetic appreciation, aligning with established scholarly perspectives on the broader impact of drama on education.

Student Transformations and Experiences

Positive transformations include improved speaking skills, team-building, and self-esteem. The observed positive transformations among students, marked by improved speaking skills, enhanced team-building, and increased self-esteem, resonate with the insights provided by Shraiber and Yaroslavova (2016). These researchers emphasize the multifaceted role of drama in education, portraying it as a tool that not only enhances language skills but also nurtures students' capacity to become self-reflective and analytical (Shraiber & Yaroslavova, 2016, p. 60). The transformative experiences reported by students in our study align with the broader educational philosophy advocated by Shraiber and Yaroslavova, reinforcing the idea that drama contributes significantly to holistic development.

Vygotsky's theories highlight the role of social interaction in cognitive development. Student testimonials about newfound confidence and self-esteem indicate that the social aspects of drama education contribute significantly to their personal and cognitive growth.

Comparison of Learning Strategies

Performing dramas helps students overcome fear and shyness, contributing to better language presentation. The observed positive outcomes regarding students' ability to overcome fear and shyness through drama align closely with the perspectives presented by Farooqui (2007), who quotes Brown (2001) on the crucial role of teachers in language learning. Brown (2001) emphasizes the significance of providing students with opportunities to speak, even if their attempts are initially halting or imperfect (p. 269). This notion resonates with our findings, where the immersive nature of drama activities plays a pivotal role in reducing fear and anxiety among students, fostering a supportive environment for language presentation.

In our study, students reported a notable transformation in their ability to present themselves confidently in English after participating in drama sessions. This aligns with Farooqui's emphasis on the teacher's role in encouraging students to speak, irrespective of initial challenges. The experiential learning provided by drama not only diminishes apprehensions but also empowers students to navigate real-life language situations with greater confidence.

Cultural Tools and Cognitive Development

Shakespeare's dramas expose learners to diverse cultures and facilitate cognitive development. The exposure of learners to diverse cultures through Shakespeare's dramas, as observed in our study, resonates with Nicholson's (2000) perspective on

drama as a distinctive ability to conceptualize and interpret the social world. Nicholson emphasizes that language, including the multi-modal languages found in drama, plays a pivotal role in creative learning and serves as a dynamic mode of communication and thought (p. 4). Our study aligns with this view, illustrating how Shakespearean dramas act as cultural tools, enriching learners' cognitive development.

The observed cognitive benefits of studying Shakespeare's language, such as the use of functional shifts, align with Davis's (2006) explanation of how the brain reacts to Shakespearean phrases. Davis posits that Shakespeare's language, with its unconventional word usage, has a cognitive effect on the human mind, surprising and exciting it in a manner that produces a sense of drama and creativity (p. 1). In our study, learners experienced the transformative impact of Shakespeare's language, not only enhancing language skills but also broadening humanistic virtues and cognitive skills.

Conclusion

In addressing the dearth of utilizing Shakespeare's dramas for the advancement of students' speaking skills, this research has delved into the potential of incorporating Shakespearean drama and related techniques to enrich ESL/EFL learners' speaking abilities. The study has underscored the significance of introducing learners to Shakespeare's literary works and the immersive experience of drama activities in the classroom. The findings of this study have several noteworthy implications for language teaching and learning.

The interviews conducted with teachers and students have unveiled compelling insights. Participants consistently reported tangible improvements in their speaking skills, coupled with heightened self-confidence, and a notable reduction in anxiety related to English language communication.

The study has effectively addressed the research questions posited at the outset. The application of Shakespearean drama techniques in English language classrooms has demonstrated a measurable impact on students' speaking skills, affirming the central role of this approach in fostering enhanced confidence in English communication. These outcomes align seamlessly with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which posits the pivotal role of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development. The observed transformation in students' speaking skills and self-confidence directly correlates with their engagement in Shakespearean drama, providing empirical support for the theoretical underpinnings of this study.

The implications of this study carry significant weight for English language educators. Integrating drama techniques, especially those rooted in classical literature like Shakespeare, into language classrooms emerges as a potent strategy for helping

students overcome speaking barriers and cultivating essential communication skills. The practical application of these findings holds promise for educators seeking innovative approaches to language instruction.

While the study contributes valuable insights, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations, such as the relatively small sample size. Future research endeavors might consider expanding participant groups to enhance the generalizability of findings. Furthermore, investigating the long-term effects of drama integration in language classrooms could offer a deeper understanding of its sustained impact.

In conclusion, this research addresses a critical gap in language education and provides a foundation for educators to reconsider the role of classical literature and drama techniques in shaping the language development and confidence of ESL/EFL learners. The transformative potential observed in students suggests a promising avenue for the evolution of language teaching methodologies.

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