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LEARNING CREATIVE DRAMA WITH PROVERBS*

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ABSTRACT

Language is a written and oral expression of emotions, ideas, beliefs, lifestyle, and desires. Language is also the most important tool that transfers culture from the past to today and to the future. Proverbs are important for transferring our values and national culture to following generations as well as teaching the intricacies of the Turkish language. The purpose of this study is to identify the effects of story-based creative drama on developing the vocabulary of 4th grade students. The study was planned as a pre-test and post-test control group experimental model. The study adopted a mixed method to employ quantitative and qualitative techniques together. The study was conducted in an elementary school in Kırşehir on two 4th grade classes with one experiment and one control group. During application, selection of proverbs, generating and applying related meaning tests, generating related stories, animating these stories with drama, and post-test process were selected. When understanding the proverb scores of students in the experiment and control groups were compared, the experiment group that learned the proverbs with stories had higher scores than the control group. However, this difference was statistically insignificant and there were significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores of the experiment student group. In teaching indirect and metaphoric concepts such as proverbs in elementary education and helping students understand these concepts, using creative drama was recommended for teaching such difficult articulation with correct usage.

STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Introduction

Language is a written and oral expression of emotions, ideas, beliefs, lifestyle, and desires. Language is also the most important tool that

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transfers culture from the past to today and to the future. Proverbs are important for transferring our values and national culture to following generations as well as teaching the intricacies of the Turkish language. According to Altun (2004:79), Turkish proverbs are "important research field since these proverbs reflect sentence structures of speaking and writing Turkish language and presenting expression opportunities in Turkish language".

In this study, the reason for teaching proverbs through using creative drama is caused by the dual-meaning of proverbs: the real meaning, and the underlying meaning. This means that most of the proverbs have abstract articulation. For example, "Damlaya damlaya göl olur" (meaning many a little makes a mickle) proverb means even a drop of water could cause great damage. However, what this proverb means is to avoid waste and problems that could be caused by waste. Selecting proverbs for the subject of this study was to enable students to comprehend proverbs with rich abstract and hidden meanings as well as distinguishing the meanings to develop vocabulary and meaning accumulation.

The aim of the study is to examine the efficiency of creative drama in enriching fourth grade primary students' vocabulary through proverbs. Within this overall goal, the answers to the following questions are sought:

1. Are there any meaningful differences between the pre-test scores of the experiment group which will receive creative drama before practices, and the control group in which classroom teachers will deliver lectures based on their plans?

Do the pre-test and post-test scores of students in the experiment group, which will receive creative drama, differ significantly?

- 2. Do the pre-test and post-test scores of students in the control group, in which classroom teachers will deliver lectures based on their plans, differ significantly?
- 3. Are there significant differences between the post-test scores of the students in the experiment group and the control group?

Method

This study, which aims to examine the efficiency of creative drama compared to traditional methods inn teaching ten proverbs to improve students' language skills, is designed as a semi-experimental model with a pre-test and post-test control group. The sample of the study consists of fourth grade students from two classrooms, one of which is defined as the control group while the other is the experiment group, in a primary school in Kırşehir As one of these classrooms' teacher has a "creative drama leadership" certificate, it is thought that this would contribute to professional practice, so this group was determined to be the experimental group. 25% of the students in the experiment group was female while 75% was male. Similarly, in the control group, male students outnumbered female students (69.6% male and 30.4% female).

The data of the study was collected through the use of The Comprehension Test of Proverbs, which was prepared by the researcher. In creating this test, the learning outcomes in curriculums of the Turkish

Course (1st-8th Grades) Educational Program (2015 and 2017) and the Primary Grade Turkish Course (1st-5th Grades) Educational Program and Guide (2005) were used. The proverbs as well as experts' opinions were also included.

The prepared tests were implemented on 100 different students from a different primary school as a pilot. Then, the incoherent questions were revised or excluded. Following the final editing, the KR-20 coefficient was measured as .89.

After composing the study groups and before practicing any activity with them, The Comprehension Test of Proverbs was applied as a pre-test to determine whether students were familiar with the proverbs within the study context and whether they understood their implicit and explicit meanings.

Following the pre-test, the experiment group was read the proverbs by the researcher and then asked to perform creative drama based on the over the span of 10 weeks with one two-hour class per week. On the other hand, the students in the control group were read the same stories once by the researcher paying attention to accent and intonation over the course of the 10 weeks. At the end of the implementation, The Comprehension Test of Proverbs was applied to the students again as a post-test. Later, the data was recorded and analyzed statistically. The researcher used arithmetic average, frequency, percent and t-test techniques in the analysis of data from both groups.

Findings and Conclusion

- Considering the pre-test scores of the students in both groups, it is found that the score averages of the students in the control group seemed higher, but this difference was not significant (t(41)= 1.5 ve p>.05).
- The findings suggest that using creative drama to teach the proverbs (experiment group) statistically and significantly influenced the scores (t(19)= 8.02 and p<.05).
- The pre-test and post-test score averages of the students in the control groups were seen to be close to each other (t(22)=1.24) and p>.05.
- Upon comparing the post-test scores of the students in both the experiment and control groups, it was revealed that the experiment group, which learned the proverbs through creative drama, had higher scores than the control group students, but this difference was not statistically significant (t(41)=.501 and p>.05).

Suggestions

This study aimed to teach students proverbs, which include metaphoric expressions as well as their explicit meanings, and are difficult to understand due to their abstract features. The study findings suggest that the students in the experiment group scored higher on the test. Thus, creative drama can be utilized to teach difficult-to-understand and abstract topics in primary schools more often.

The school administration should provide classrooms with physical conditions necessary for a comfortable creative drama practice, or they should support the teachers who would supply these conditions.

In case there is not suitable space for creative drama activities in classrooms, the school administration can organize a special room for creative drama practices which can be used by all classes alternately.

The competency of teachers in creative drama should be improved, and The Ministry of National Education should adopt guidelines concerning creative drama practices and include sample applications for teachers.

That the classroom teacher completed creative drama courses and had a creative drama leadership certificate was influential in determining the control group in the study. For more professional practices of the creative drama activities, the researcher also received support from the classroom teacher. Similarly, for a healthy function of creative drama practices in all other schools, taking support from an expert teacher or a trainer is also suggested.

Keywords: Native language, proverb, creative drama technique.

ATASÖZLERİNİN YARATICI DRAMA İLE ÖĞRETİLMESİ

ÖZET

Dil, duygu, düşünce, inanış, yaşayış ve isteklerin yazılı ve sözlü olarak ifade edilmesidir. Dil aynı zamanda geçmişten günümüze ve geleceğe kültürü aktaran en önemli araçtır. Atasözleri değerlerimizin ve millî kültürümüzün yeni nesillere aktarılmasında ve Türk dilinin inceliklerinin öğretilmesinde önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bu çalışmanın amacı ilkokul 4. sınıf öğrencilerinin söz varlığını geliştirmede hikâye temelli yaratıcı drama yönteminin etkisini ortaya koymaktır. Araştırma ön test-son test kontrol gruplu deneysel model olarak planlanmıştır. Araştırmada nicel ve nitel tekniklerin birlikte kullanılmasına imkân sağlayan karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Çalışma Kırşehir ilindeki bir ilkokulda bir deney ve bir kontrol grubu olarak belirlenmiş iki 4. Sınıf subesindeki öğrenciler ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Uygulama sürecinde; atasözlerinin belirlenmesi, atasözleri ile ilgili anlama testlerinin hazırlanması ve uygulanması, atasözleri ile ilgili hikâyelerin olusturulması. oluşturulan hikâyelerin drama yoluyla canlandırmalarının yapılması ve son testlerin uygulanması süreci izlenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda deney ve kontrol grubundaki öğrencilerin atasözlerini anlama puanları karşılaştırıldığında atasözlerini drama tekniği ile öğrenen deney grubu öğrencilerinin puanlarının kontrol grubu öğrencilerinden daha yüksek olduğu fakat bu farkın istatistiksel olarak anlamlı düzeyde olmadığı; deney grubu öğrencilerinin ön test ve son test puanlarının ise anlamlı düzeyde farklılaştığı belirlenmiştir. Temel eğitim düzeyinde atasözleri gibi dolaylı ve mecazî anlamlar içeren ve bu yaş grubu öğrencileri için anlaşılması, yerli yerinde kullanılması olan söyleyişlerin öğretilmesinde yaratıcı drama tekniğinin kullanılması önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anadili, atasözü, yaratıcı drama tekniği.

Introduction

Language is a written and oral expression of emotions, ideas, beliefs, lifestyle, and desires. Language is also the most important tool that transfers culture from the past to today and to the future. Proverbs are important for transferring our values and national culture to following generations as well as teaching the intricacies of the Turkish language. According to Altun (2004:79), Turkish proverbs are "important research field since these proverbs reflect sentence structures of speaking and writing Turkish language and presenting expression opportunities in Turkish language".

Proverbs are "publicly accepted prologues that have become principles and patterns in terms of words of wisdom or advice based on general rules of judgement observed by our ancestors" (Aksoy, 1993: 37). According to Parlatir (2007:2) proverbs are "stereotyped aphorism that gives wise advice based on long trials, strict commands, provides guidance, and have become shared values of the public as these aphorisms are nurtured orally by the public for centuries."

Proverbs are erudite sentences that transfer ideas and thoughts from concrete to abstract from generation to generation orally and in written form (Güzel and Torun, 2004: 223). In addition to properties such as being anonymous and public intelligence, proverbs are part of the daily language and can act as a mirror that reflects the public world of thought and lifestyle (Hüsenov, 1998: 48-49).

The main objective of Turkish classes is to develop the skills of students to understand and express language effectively. In current education programs, it is expected that students will be raised to expresses themselves orally and in written form, have self-confidence, and will effectively engage in the learning process. In 2005, 2015, and 2017, Elementary Level Turkish Class (1-5th grades and 1-8th grades) Education Programs, students are at the centre of the learning process for Turkish teaching. In this program, easing the burden on children and promoting entertaining education with games, offering learning based education rather than memorising, and applying modern education methods and techniques are frequently emphasised.

The fundamental point of education and training activities is to help all students to achieve the highest learning gains. At this point, individual differences between students should be considered. Each student has different learning speeds, capacities, and methods. Therefore, the highest number of sense organs should be included in the learning process. By using various methods and techniques in learning activities, all students could be attracted and actively engaged with learning by increasing their motivation. Drama is one of the leading methods that provides direct engagement and high motivation to students throughout learning process.

Drama is a teaching method and education area based on learning by experience (San, 2003: 110). In this sense, a high number of sense organs are involved in creative drama. In-class creative drama applications can provide ideas, conversations, and discussions among children and support language and communication skills (Ataman, 2009). According to Johnson and O'Neill (1984) animations in drama will provide a sense of belonging to individuals as well as skills related to forming comfortable and healthy relationships with other people.

Drama animators will create at that moment and can express their ideas freely without fear of failure. The thing that makes drama different from other teaching methods is that it contains other artistic activities such as music and dance (Kitson and Spiby, 1997: 9). When a sociological perspective was considered, individuals could gain information about themselves as well as the society they live in, present, future, and humanity (O'Neill & Lambert, 1995). When creative drama is used as a method, the aim is to attract the attention of students in a short time, increase interest towards the class, stimulate emotions and ideas, bringing expression and understanding skills about public topics to a higher level, making the learning process more entertaining, and developing imaginative thinking (Adıgüzel, 2010).

In this study, the reason for teaching proverbs through using creative drama is caused by the dual-meaning of proverbs: the real meaning, and the underlying meaning. This means that most of the proverbs have abstract articulation. For example, "Damlaya damlaya göl olur" (meaning many a little makes a mickle) proverb means even a drop of water could cause great damage. However, what this proverb means is to avoid waste and problems that could be caused by waste. Selecting proverbs for the subject of this study was to enable students to comprehend proverbs with rich abstract and hidden meanings as well as distinguishing the meanings to develop vocabulary and meaning accumulation.

The aim of the study is to examine the efficiency of creative drama in enriching fourth grade primary students' vocabulary through proverbs. Within this overall goal, the answers to the following questions are sought:

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- 3. Are there significant differences between the post-test scores of the students in the experiment group and the control group?

Method

This study, which aims to examine the efficiency of creative drama compared to traditional methods inn teaching ten proverbs to improve students' language skills, is designed as a semi-experimental model with a pre-test and post-test control group.

The Study Sample

The sample of the study consists of fourth grade students from two classrooms, one of which is defined as the control group while the other is the experiment group, in a primary school in Kırşehir As one of these classrooms' teacher has a "creative drama leadership" certificate, it is thought that this would contribute to professional practice, so this group was determined to be the experimental group.

Table 1: The classroom and gender range of the participant teachers

Groups	Gender	Frequency	Percentage	
Experiment	Female	5	25,0	
	Male	15	75,0	
	Total	20	100,0	
Control	Female	7	30,4	
	Male	16	69,6	
	Total	23	100,0	
Gra	nd Total	43	100,0	

25% of the students in the experiment group was female while 75% was male. Similarly, in the control group, male students outnumbered female students (69.6% male and 30.4% female).

Data Collection Tools

The data of the study was collected through the use of The Comprehension Test of Proverbs, which was prepared by the researcher. In creating this test, the learning outcomes in curriculums of the Turkish Course (1st-8th Grades) Educational Program (2015 and 2017) and the Primary Grade Turkish Course (1st-5th Grades) Educational Program and Guide (2005) were used. The proverbs as well as experts' opinions were also included.

The prepared tests were implemented on 100 different students from a different primary school as a pilot. Then, the incoherent questions were revised or excluded. Following the final editing, the KR-20 coefficient was measured as .89.

The Data Collection and Analysis Processes

After composing the study groups and before practicing any activity with them, The Comprehension Test of Proverbs was applied as a pre-test to determine whether students were familiar with the proverbs within the study context and whether they understood their implicit and explicit meanings.

Following the pre-test, the experiment group was read the proverbs by the researcher and then asked to perform creative drama based on the over the span of 10 weeks with one two-hour class per week. On the other hand, the students in the control group were read the same stories once by the researcher paying attention to accent and intonation over the course of the 10 weeks. At the end of the implementation, The Comprehension Test of Proverbs was applied to the students again as a post-test. Later, the data was recorded and analyzed statistically. The researcher used arithmetic average, frequency, percent and t-test techniques in the analysis of data from both groups.

Findings

Table 2: The comparison of pre-test score averages of the students in the experiment and control

groups							
Groups	N	$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$	S	sd	t	p	
Experiment	20	8.85	4.93	41	1.5	.139	
Control	23	11.0	4.42	41	1.3	.139	

The pre-test scores of the experiment and control groups were compared with the t-test, and the findings are presented in Table 2. Considering the pre-test scores of the students in both groups, it is found that the score averages of the students in the control group seemed higher, but this difference was not significant (t(41)= 1.5 ve p>.05). Pre-test score averages of the students in the experiment group was $\overline{X} = 8.85$ while the pre-test score averages of the students in the control group was X=11.

Table 3: The comparison of pre-test and post-test score averages of students in the experiment

group							
Measurement	N	$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$	S	sd	t	p	
Pre-test	20	8.85	4.93	10	9.02	000	
Last-test	20	12.7	5.68	19	8.02	.000	

With the aim of comparing the pre-test and post-test score averages of the students in the experiment group, the researcher made use of Paired Samples t-Test, and the findings are shown in Table 3. The findings suggest that using creative drama to teach the proverbs (experiment group) statistically and significantly influenced the scores (t(19)= 8.02 and p<.05). The score averages of the students before the implementation was \overline{X} =8.85 while after teaching the given proverbs through

the creative drama technique, the score averages were found to increase to \overline{X} =12.7. This finding can be interpreted as that the teaching of the given proverbs through creative drama significantly contribute to students' understanding of proverbs.

Table 4. The composition	f mus tost and	most tost sooms orranges	of students in the control amoun
Table 4: The comparison of	or pre-test and	post-test score averages	of students in the control group

Measurement	N	$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$	S	sd	t	p
Pre-test	23	11.0	4.42	22	1.24	.226
Last-test	23	11.9	4.61			

With the aim of comparing the pre-test and post-test score averages of the students in the control group, the researcher made use of Paired Samples t-Test, and the findings are presented in Table 4. The pre-test and post-test score averages of the students in the control groups were seen to be close to each other (t(22)= 1.24 and p>.05). The pre-test score averages of the students was $\overline{X} = 11$ while the post-test score averages was $\overline{X} = 11.9$.

Table 5: The comparison of post-test score averages of the students in the experiment and control

groups							
Groups	N	$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$	S	sd	t	p	
Experiment	20	12.7	5.68	41	.501	.619	
Control	23	11.91	4.61				

Upon comparing the post-test scores of the students in both the experiment and control groups, it was revealed that the experiment group, which learned the proverbs through creative drama, had higher scores than the control group students, but this difference was not statistically significant (t(41)=.501 and p>.05). The post-test score averages of the students in the experiment group increased to \overline{X} =12.7. However, there was a slight increase in the post-test score averages of the students in the control group (\overline{X} =11.91).

Conclusion and Discussion

Considering the pre-test scores of the students in both groups, it is found that the score averages of the students in the control group seemed higher, but this difference was not significant $(t_{(41)}=1.5 \text{ ye p}>.05)$.

The findings suggest that using creative drama to teach the proverbs (experiment group) statistically and significantly influenced the scores ($t_{(19)}$ = 8.02 and p<.05). Proverbs reflect notions and behaviors of time and surroundings in which they develop. They also play important role in transfer of culture and teaching native language (Bulut, 2013). Therefore, teaching proverbs with most effective methods is essential. Concordantly, there are similar results that are emphasize positive effect of drama method on students behaviors. (Akyel \$ Yalcın, 1990; Lazar, 1993; Öztürk, 1997; Lang, 1998; Akar, 2000; Bowell & Heap, 2001; Jasinski, Jasinski & Crumpler 2002; Sullivan, 2003; Kratochvil, 2006; Kaya Güler, 2008).

The pre-test and post-test score averages of the students in the control groups were seen to be close to each other ($t_{(22)}$ = 1.24 and p>.05). Cakmakcı (2009) underlines that student know proverbs inadequently. If we want to cultivate the people who know and hold the cultures, we should give more importance to the younger generations to be aware of the folk literature products and the cultural and mural elements.

Upon comparing the post-test scores of the students in both the experiment and control groups, it was revealed that the experiment group, which learned the proverbs through creative

drama, had higher scores than the control group students, but this difference was not statistically significant ($t_{(41)}$ = .501 and p>.05).

Suggestions

This study aimed to teach students proverbs, which include metaphoric expressions as well as their explicit meanings, and are difficult to understand due to their abstract features. The study findings suggest that the students in the experiment group scored higher on the test. Thus, creative drama can be utilized to teach difficult-to-understand and abstract topics in primary schools more often.

The school administration should provide classrooms with physical conditions necessary for a comfortable creative drama practice, or they should support the teachers who would supply these conditions.

In case there is not suitable space for creative drama activities in classrooms, the school administration can organize a special room for creative drama practices which can be used by all classes alternately.

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That the classroom teacher completed creative drama courses and had a creative drama leadership certificate was influential in determining the control group in the study. For more professional practices of the creative drama activities, the researcher also received support from the classroom teacher. Similarly, for a healthy function of creative drama practices in all other schools, taking support from an expert teacher or a trainer is also suggested.

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