

THE ROLE OF DRAMA IN TEACHING ENGLISH: TOWARDS THE  
ENHANCEMENT OF STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills at the University of Namibia. The discussions of the research focused on assessing the benefits of using drama in the teaching of English to increase students' motivation and self-confidence, as well as meeting the aims of integrating drama activities in the teaching of the English Access Course at the University of Namibia or in any other English language teaching elsewhere.

The mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for this study. This was a classroom based research involving a class of 45 students enrolled for the English Access Course (EAC) at the University of Namibia. To collect data, the researcher employed entry and exit questionnaires, focus group interviews, researcher's reflective notes and participants' portfolios that comprised of participants' views, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values and perceptions towards English learning and teaching. Furthermore, the data was collected during teaching hours because the researcher was simultaneously the English Access course lecturer. The researcher with the help of the participants integrated drama activities in the English Access Course curriculum with the purpose of enhancing students' communicative skills for the whole second semester in 2014.

Data obtained through the entry and exit questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages while the data from the participants' portfolios,

researchers' reflective notes and interviews were transcribed, organized, and coded according to the steps of qualitative data content analysis listed in Creswell (2003).

Research findings revealed the effectiveness of drama oriented English lessons to the benefit of students' speaking skills, motivation, self-esteem and confidence in their abilities to communicate in English. In addition, the findings revealed that drama activities aided students develop a community and foster group cohesiveness, which helped in building students' confidence when speaking English in front of their classmates. Moreover, the results repeatedly revealed that motivation is linked to self-confidence as the drama activities accorded students the opportunity to use the target language in real life situations.

Based on the research findings it could be concluded that drama plays a crucial role in enhancing ESL students' communicative skills. The findings are conclusive, in that drama activities can be successfully implemented in the English Access lessons and coordinated to reinforce the regular curriculum. Finally, these research findings provide an opportunity for the English Access Course (EAC) and English courses curriculum designers in the Language Center at the University of Namibia and elsewhere to gain insights of the possibilities to incorporate drama activities in ESL lessons with the aim of enhancing the students' communicative skills.

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**DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my late daughter Amenenge Aletta Mukete, my son Prince Haitange-Omwene Namundjebo and my daughter Queen Faith Latungika Mundilo.

**DECLARATION**

I, Elizabeth Queen Mwachangelai Namundjebo, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher education.

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..... [Signature]

Date: 25 November 2016

Elizabeth Queen Mwachangelai Namundjebo

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### **ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

APA	American Psychological Association's
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign languages
CA	Communicative Approach
CC	Communicative Competence
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CS	Code Switching
DNEA	Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment
EAC	English Access Course
ECSS	Evaluating Communication Skills Scale
ED	Educational Drama
EDOL	English Drama Oriented Lessons
EFL	English as Foreign Language
EL	English Language
ELL	English Language Learners
ELTDP	English Language Teacher Development Projects
ESL	English Second Language
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LDELS	Learning Difficulties of English Literature Survey
MBESC	Ministry of Basic Education and Culture
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MOE	Ministry of Education

NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIED	Namibian Institute of Education and Development
OELS	Oral English Literature Survey
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SWAPO	South West People's Organisation
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UTN	Urban Trust of Namibia
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Orientation of the study

Over the last three decades, English has become the most spoken language globally. At present, English is the language for international communication, science, education, commerce, advertising, diplomacy and transmitting advanced technology. It has also become a "lingua franca" among speakers of languages that are not mutually intelligible (Donato, 2012). There are over a billion people learning English as a foreign language while over 750 million people have English as a second language (Donato, 2012). The global significance of English contributes to the efforts of donor agencies, such as the British Council, in funding programmes targeted at improving the English proficiency of non-native speakers in developing countries (Dougill, 2009). Furthermore, Dougill asserts that "in the age of globalism, the interdependence of nations and countries creates a need for the global language and no language qualifies for this better than English" (p. 10).

When Namibia gained its independence in 1990, the English-as-the-official-language implementation was one of the political changes the country experienced. The SWAPO-led government introduced and implemented the language policy which has been under scrutiny for several years now. English being merely a native language to 2% of the Namibian population became not only the official language but the medium of instruction of education country-wide (Brock-Utne, 2002). This is an extremely low percentage and it would mean that the approximately 99% of the

population that are indigenous to other Namibian national languages have to study in a medium that is not their mother tongue. This holds true, regardless of the fact that Namibia has thirteen other recognised national languages.

The language policy emphasized the importance and equality of the national languages, but its implementation leaves much to be desired due to disparities of the language of medium of instruction in different schools (MBESC, 1993). Ever since 1992 English has been required as the main medium of instruction from grades 4-12 in school. One of the disparities mentioned earlier in the language policy entails, if parents or the school wish to use English as the medium of instruction in the Lower Primary Phase, permission must be obtained from the Ministry of Education. From grades 1 through 3, children are supposed to be educated in their mother tongue as much as possible, but for different reasons sometimes it is not so. In those cases the medium of instruction is English starting from the first grade (MBESC, 1993).

According to Harlech-Jones (1998), the language policy was associated with nationalism, modernization, and globalization. He states that the policy raised eyebrows, in questioning the foundation of language choices which led to the ongoing debate that calls for the review of the language policy. Harlech-Jones further affirms that the call for the language policy review since 2001 to date is an issue for discussion at almost every meeting at the Namibian Institute of Education and Development (NIED). These debates validate a genuine concern of educators, as they cause stress on both the teachers and learners who had to use English despite their low English proficiency level. Consequently, he asserts that the language policy

failed to harmonize the learner-centred education and curriculum participation as initially intended. As a result, the language policy placed the Namibian teachers and learners at the mercy of a second language in which they are not proficient. The Namibian language policy hinders learners' participation and prohibits teachers to go beyond the textbook due to poor English proficiency. Regarding this, Krashen (2004) states that, it is extremely difficult for students to fully engage in class or for a teacher to effectively teach the language if there is a language deficiency amongst learners and teacher.

As mentioned earlier, the new language policy was implemented with the goal of a seven-year primary education phase. The language policy would have afforded learners reasonable English competencies to prepare them for the English medium of instruction throughout the secondary phase and beyond, but that dream is far from the reality, states Harleth-Jones (2004). The MBESC (2003) adopted a language policy that would guide how the language issues would be implemented in the Namibian education sector. In MEC (2003) the benchmarks the language policy as:

- Grade 1-3 will be taught in the mother tongue or the dominant language.
- Grade 4 will be the transitional year when the change to English as a medium of instruction must take place.
- Grade 5-7 English will be the medium of instruction. In the Upper Primary Phase the mother tongue may only be used in a supportive role and continues to be taught as a subject.
- Grade 8-12 will be taught through the medium of English, and the mother tongue will continue to be taught as a subject.

- Examinations in grades 7, 10 and 12 will be nationally taken through the medium of English; the mother tongue will continue to be taught as a subject.
- English is a compulsory subject starting from grade 1 and continuing throughout the school system.
- All learners must study two languages as subjects at grade 1 onward (p. 25).

There is not significant literature available on aspects of language input and comprehension in relation to the implementation of English as a medium of instruction policy. In her research findings when she investigated the Namibian language policy, Wolfaardt (2005), reports that there are several obstacles in English language instruction in schools. The low level of students and teachers' proficiency surfaced as a primary obstacle in having English as a medium of instruction. She asserts that with Namibian language policy disparities, learners' English language proficiency is too low to meet the requirements of the grade they are in. Consequently, learners do not consistently understand instructions, and as a result they are not able to perform as they would in their mother tongue. Wolfaardt (2005) also postulates that the teachers' English language proficiency should be viewed as an obstacle in achieving the desired results as per the language policy. Although she acknowledges that there has been improvement since 1999, Wolfaardt (2005) asserts that there is still a need for remediation in many cases, especially in the regions with low academic performance.

The status of English on the international level is a major factor that contributes to the increase in the importance of English in Namibia. Namibia is a multilingual country with approximately 13 recognized national languages and over 50 dialects of

those languages. As mentioned earlier, after independence in 1990, the Ministry of Basic Education realised that a new language policy for schools was urgently needed, hence the document “*The language policy for schools: 1992 – 1996 and beyond*” (MEC, 1993) was formulated and implemented. The national language policy for schools in Namibia (MEC, 1993) stipulates that the medium of instruction in Grades 1 – 3, the Junior Primary phase, should be the mother tongue and English will be taught as a subject and from Grade 4 onwards the medium of instruction should change to solely English (Wolfaardt, 2006).

The Namibian language policy as published (MEC, 1993) is a combination of an additive and subtractive model of language in education policy. During the initial implementation, the policy followed a gradual transition or late-exit language programme. Currently, it is a subtractive or early-exit language programme. In practice, however, the language policy discrepancies leaves children to the insufficiently qualified educators, as with the low English proficiency of their teachers, exposes learners only to their native languages and makes it increasingly difficult for them to cope with the English language as the official language and language of instructions. The dilemma of the implementation of the Namibian language policy is identified as one of the major contributing factor to low English proficiency language among learner and teacher which extends to poor academic performance (Jones, 2008).



Otaala (2006) reports that even though Namibia introduced English as a medium of instruction at independence, many teachers were not qualified to teach the language nor did they have sufficient English language competencies which limited them in serving as role models for Standard English. At some point, the term “Namlish” (a Namibian coined word to mean Namibian English) was established to pay attention to certain forms of incorrect but typical use of English in Namibia (Otaala, 2006). The Namibian English can be observed in daily conversations, newspaper articles, radio talk shows, and television presentations, which reinforce the manifestation of “Namlish.” Furthermore, “Namlish” speakers are found among school teachers and even university lecturers who contribute to the reproduction of an incorrect use of English through the students they teach (Otaala, 2006).

Otaala further states that many teachers would not necessarily be able to detect and correct English errors in students’ assignments, and those who are aware of their limited English language competencies may intentionally not pay attention to students’ English, but focus only on the content of the subject they teach (such as history, geography or biology). Such neglect of students’ English may instil in students the wrong impression that their English is correct. Consequently, Otaala argues that students will not see a need to improve upon their use of the language. Owing to their insufficient English language competencies, however, Otaala (2006) states that students may be ill prepared to critically and analytically comprehend scientific concepts they are supposed to study, which may have negative implications for their academic success as well as their professional careers.

As per Otaala's (2006) postulations, teachers are perceived as the backbones of education and it is crucial for language policy makers to investigate the teachers' English language proficiency before the implementation of the language policy. The teachers' English proficiency was not a priority when the language policy was implemented as most teachers could not speak English in 1990 when English became the official language and the language in education. Most senior teachers in Namibia went through the Mbantu education system offered in the Afrikaans medium and did not use English in their daily lives as is the case today. Such factors may contribute to teachers' incompetence in English. The aforementioned led to the national survey on teachers' English language proficiency in 1999 by the then Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture. The survey was conducted in three phases, primary, junior and secondary phase through the English Language Teacher Development Projects (ELTDP) (Murray, 2010).

Murray (2010) reports that English test results across the three phases show that the junior and secondary teachers performed better than their counterparts, who in turn performed better than their primary colleagues. In regard to the English language proficiency of Namibian teachers, the survey further shows that reading and the usage of grammar are the two weakest areas. The survey reports that 71% of the teachers lacked sufficient high proficiency, specifically in reading skill and only 29% is proficient in English. The ELTDP findings of English proficiency among teachers informed the Ministry of Education to introduce the English Language Proficiency

Program (ELPP) in 2011 after a thorough analysis and study of the education system which discovered that both the teaching of the mother tongue and English were poor in primary schools, and in the education system as a whole due to teachers poor English proficiency.

Studies in English Second Language (ESL) acquisition have shown that in general, some ESL students have a low English proficiency which is evident in their everyday communication, as they are more conversant when using their native languages. (Di Pietro, 2008). This problem is said to continue to be the case even when students graduate from universities and enter the private sector. Namibian students are not an exemption from the latter. The English language proficiency level in Namibia as a second language and an official language as in most other countries in the Sub-Saharan regions remains a daunting task. The implementation of the English language instruction policy had English becoming an important asset for anyone seeking employment in business, industry or technology in Namibia. Accordingly, one of the aims of teaching English in Namibian secondary schools is to enable students to communicate in English so that they are able to enrol for further studies at institutions of higher education and in the labour market. This aim of having Namibian students proficient in English is thus far a goal not yet accomplished.

It is worth mentioning that speaking is one of the four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) which enable students to communicate with others to

achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, and aspirations. In addition, people who are proficient in a specific language are referred to as 'speakers' of that language. According to Nunan (2008), in most contexts, speaking is the most frequently used language skill. Nunan states that unlike the other three language skills, speaking is used twice as much in our communication which makes it imperative that students are equipped with adequate English proficiency skills.

Many second language learners in Namibia, particularly from rural schools have difficulties expressing themselves in English. As a result, they choose to remain silent during lessons to avoid embarrassments. Mackey and Gas (2005) argue that individuals suffering from communication apprehension usually adopt avoidance and withdrawal behaviour and are therefore less likely to engage in oral communication. They further argue that in the classroom, the teacher may regard quiet students as 'perfect' in that they do not present discipline problems. The same authors also emphasize, however, that often the lack of response or participation on the part of students is due to their low proficiency in English. This has a negative, spiralling effect as they are perceived as less capable, and are thus called on less frequently in class discussion.

In most of the African countries where English is the second language (L2), children in public schools are exposed to learning through English, from the intermediate level of primary education so that they could acquire reasonable competence in

English and could use English as the medium of communication (Donato, 2012). Students in most of African countries that elevated English to a primary language of instruction in education and as an official language are expected to use the language competently but students' English proficiency continues to deteriorate (Eccles, 2012). Worse still, many African teachers teach English as L2 without seeking effective pedagogical strategies capable of maintaining a balance between the quality and quantity of teacher and learners' oral communication skills. Moreover, many teachers of ESL are more concerned with teaching the grammatical system, without regard to how learners can transfer that grammatical knowledge to meet real-life situation language-needs (Eccles, 2012).

Bas (2008) posits that the knowledge of second language (L2) grammar is not sufficient to communicate effectively. Richards (2007) reiterates that effective teaching of a language in school will enhance the teaching of other subjects. Richards further states that the way and manner by which teachers teach English in most schools do not engender the desired students' competence in language skills. Dougill (2009) also observes that traditional methods of teaching English are inadequate to achieve instructional objectives. In light of the Namibian context, Even (2011) states that one of the main causes of Namibian learners' poor performance in L2 has been pedagogical shortcomings which are extended to their academic performance when they enter university and after graduation.

According to Jones (2008), in support of Otaala (2006), Namibian teachers and learners do not place priority on the ability to understand, and use English in authentic communication, nor is it a priority to master the language for social interaction. Rather, English is taught and learnt in Namibian schools so learners can earn a satisfactory grade enabling them to the attainment of career advancement or educational placement. Jones further notes that, despite this, English has continued to be a source of pride in the Namibian education system. However, the issue of ESL teachers without the right instructional skills has been a substantial perennial problem to effective teaching of English in Namibia at the school level.

An expert in the ESL field in Australia, Emel (2010) argues that international students from non-English speaking countries found it difficult to contribute effectively in class discussions or tutorials due to poor grammar. Qorro's (2004) study in Tanzania also revealed that when students have a complete understanding of their specialized subjects, that knowledge gives them a firm ground on which to build the foundation for learning a second or foreign language. In this case, research in Tanzania suggest that challenges faced by ESL students in Tanzania have revealed that limited proficiency in the language of instruction was an overriding inhibiting factor in the learners' performance which leads to poor overall academic achievement (Qorro, 2004).

To unpack the theories in language acquisition, Krashen (2004) the foremost proponent of input hypothesis posits that the ability to speak in a second language involves several components that speakers need to acquire in order to communicate effectively. Echoing the same sentiments, is the socialist Vygotsky (1978) who argues that language development depends entirely on social interaction. He postulates that knowledge entails self-regulation and enables individuals to construct knowledge which is meaningful to them. Vygotsky further states that students should be provided with the learning environments where different forms of social interactions are simulated in order to acquaint themselves with a variety of linguistic forms and communication contexts like the use of drama in English classes.

Modern theories in English language instruction suggest that the teaching process should be learner-centred to be effective. In the traditional classroom, students do not demonstrate reasonable understanding of concepts while only a few dominate the instructional process because significant interaction is absent (Jackson, 2009). A strategy that promotes interaction between the instructor and learners is a pivotal tool to improving pupils' communicative skills in English (Jackson, 2009).

According to Vygotsky (1978), Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the difference between the learner's independent capacity to solve problems and capacity to solve problems under the guidance of a more competent person, namely a teacher and in collaboration with his peers. Socio-cultural theorists assert that cognitive development and language acquisition take place in a child as they interact with their environment (teacher, peers and others) through dialogue. Gomez (2010) describes

peer interactions and teacher-learner's interactions as facilitators of improved language skills. It is the latter that informed the current study to integrate drama techniques and strategies with the purpose of enhancing the students' communicative skills at the University of Namibia.

The role and effectiveness of drama in the development of oral communication among second language learners is the focus of this study. Although theoretical materials on drama in the English classroom exist and the premise of incorporating drama techniques in English lessons has been studied extensively prior to this study, there are uncertainties regarding the role and effectiveness of drama in the development of oral communication among second language learners. Another area of contention that exists in many reviewed literature, is that the use of drama to teach English is far from being a reality in many ESL countries as there are teachers who strongly oppose the use of drama in teaching and learning English.

In his studies, Stern (2008) reveals that most English teachers especially the L2 teachers are not familiar with or have false beliefs towards the usage of drama as a teaching method to enhance students' communicative skills. Thus, by virtue of the above stated, this study aims at adducing knowledge, agreements and disagreements of the use of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills. Stern's study also summarises critical theories of language teaching and learning



through drama to support its benefits in teaching English towards the enhancement of students' English communicative skills.

Bolton (2006) as the originator of several drama theories and practices, writes about incorporating different branches of educational drama in English language classes to enhance students' communicative skills. These theories and practices of drama in education are aimed at fostering the development of the person as a whole, often dealing with students' values and attitudes through teaching them a particular skill or subject. Nevertheless, there are considerable disagreements among writers and practitioners (Jackson, 2009; Kumaravadivelu, 2005; Stern, 2008) on the category that drama in schools or higher learning institutions should be placed. Their research results have proven that students with limited English proficiency or English Language Learners (ELL) can benefit from English drama oriented lessons in multiple ways.

Kumaravadivelu (2005) further states that the trend to use drama activities in teaching and learning English language today is such that every educator can choose their own direction and use drama activities according to their needs. However, there is an ongoing debate on the nature of drama in language when it comes to choosing between art education and drama as a learning/teaching medium. Kumaravadivelu further acknowledges that between the 1940s and 1950s, the idea of using drama in education, especially in language classrooms, spread all over the world, yet there are no sufficient and conclusive research findings on the benefits of drama in language teaching.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The SWAPO led government with the help of other international agencies at the dawn of Namibia's independence in March 1990, recognized English as an official language; yet poor English language proficiency remains a problem country wide. Namibia is one of many countries both in Africa and internationally whose students lack adequate English language communicative skills. African researchers such as Evert (2008) have investigated ESL research in their countries (South Africa) on the use of drama techniques and strategies in teaching English as a second language and have acknowledged the need for further research in the African context. Maley and Duff (2005) highlight that there is vast research carried out on the role of drama on students' English communicative competence and the incorporation of drama techniques in the curriculum and English textbooks. However, drama is underused in real classroom situations and its benefits are rarely explained to teachers and learners. According to (Jones, 2008) English is regarded as the primary poorly taught subjects in Namibian schools. Jones further argues that the teaching and learning of ESL in Namibia has been disappointing because instructional resources have been inadequate while many teachers lack English proficiency and creative teaching abilities to improve learners' communicative skills.

English is not only used as an official language among many nations, but it has been reported to have influence on many different cultures in a large number of countries (Jones, 2008). He further reports that English is the central language of

communication world-wide. Echoing the same sentiments Dinapoli (2009), clearly presents that the status of the English language has been elevated as the most influential language globally. The expansion of the English language has rapidly increased the needs to gain better communication skills, as the abilities to use English is crucial, globally for effective social and professional activities (Dinapoli, 2009).

A study carried out by Cheng (2010), reveals that the English language is generally used as an international language for communication among people from different language backgrounds. Furthermore, Cheng proposes that university students world-wide especially in countries where English is an official language, use English as the primary language for knowledge consumption; therefore, universities, irrespective of their geographic location need to include English language as one of their pre-registration academic requirements. Similarly, Murray (2010) states that English is often used as the medium of instruction in higher education but students' attitudes, limited exposure and opportunity to use English in their daily conversations continue to pose as deterrent from acquiring sufficient English competency.

Namibian students are similar to their international peers whose English proficiency is reported to be poor. Richards (2007) asserts that several factors such as weakness in the curriculum design, poor English aptitude among teachers, lack of qualified English teachers and lack of motivation to learn among students could be attributed

to students' poor English ability. Emel (2010) also derived the contributing factors of low English proficiency to different factors in different environments including: school resources, class size, quality of teachers, and the school attendance of learners. Murray (2010) observes that many students think English is only a school subject and they don't see its significance for their prospective employment in multinational or national companies where English is the primary language of oral communication. Donato (2012) also points out that the mismatch between the students' conceptual or cognitive capacities and the students' English proficiency level often cause problems for students because their learning style and the teachers' teaching approach contrast significantly.

Wolfaardt (2006) in her study on the Namibian language policy reports that Namibian students generally are comparably weak in English language learning just as their global counterparts. She further states that English has always played a key role in Namibia, but the English proficiency level of Namibian students is still far from satisfactory. The current instructional mode in most Namibian schools is the traditional "chalk and talk" method, which involves the teacher talking to students and writing notes on the chalkboard. This didactic method, based on rote learning, is characterised by students' low level of retention and passive learning (Jones, 2008). Jones reports that most Namibian teachers have learners to repeat lines of passages, followed by repeated prompted answers, leaving the learners with little or no opportunities to participate actively in class. The interest of this research is therefore to incorporate drama techniques and strategies in the teaching of the English Access

Course lessons with the purpose of gauging the gap in knowledge in the role of drama on students' English communicative skills. The English Access Course is housed in the Language Centre in the Departments of Communications and Study Skills at the University of Namibia.

All students studying at the University of Namibia have to do one or two of the courses offered in the Language Centre depending on their grade 12 English results. The Centre further offers an Academic Writing course for Postgraduate students. The Centre likewise offers a variety of foreign and Namibian languages, translation and consultancy services by offering tailor-made courses to the wider public and business community. This study made use of the English Access Course existing curriculum to integrate drama techniques and strategies with the aim of enhancing the English Access students' communicative skills.

The use of drama techniques and strategies in teaching L2 has been extensively researched and proven to be effective in improving L2 learners' language competence in many countries. (Bolton, 2006; Brown, 2010; Dougill, 2009; Fernandez & Coil, 2009; Hayes, 2010; Gaudart, 2010; Maley and Duff, 2005; Stern, 2008) have all used drama for language teaching studies. However, these studies focused on developing learners' intercultural, motivation and anxiety, social attitudes, long life skills, and early literacy development with little attention to the students' communicative skills. This approach has been under-studied across all

levels of global education. Therefore, it is fundamental for research to be conducted with a view of integrating drama techniques and the communicative approach in enhancing students' communicative skills.

Maley and Duff (2005) state that Educational Drama (ED) is an alternative method and an instructional tools that teachers and educators utilize in their classrooms to facilitate learning in any environment. ED has been increasingly recognized among educators as an effective teaching tool. As stated earlier, there have been alarming concerns regarding students' English proficiency globally. The latter suggests integrating drama techniques and strategies in the English Access Course lessons to improve students' English speaking skills. These improved skills can consequently improve challenges of students' English communication in social, familial, professional and academic interactions in a globalized world.

The current study is motivated by the need for the students at the University of Namibia to develop their speaking skills as they study the English Access Course. Upon completing this course, if needed, students will be able to register for their academic courses at the University. According to the researcher's observations before this study, Access students can hardly express themselves or communicate effectively in English. These students use English only in short, simple conversations based on dialogues they might have learned during their primary and secondary schooling days. It becomes evident that what they learned of English language was

not for communication, but for performing in tests and examinations. The researcher noted that when teaching the English Access students and other students, when they need to communicate, particularly on serious matters, they switch back to their native languages. Therefore, the researcher was motivated to investigate the role of drama in teaching English to enhance the students' communicative skills. In an attempt to alleviate these concerns the following research objectives were developed:

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

This study seeks to:

- Explore to what extent drama activities assist in improving students' English communicative skills.
- Analyse students' views on using drama activities as a tool in building confidence in their communication skills.
- Justify the incorporation of drama techniques and strategies in teaching English Access Course at the University of Namibia and in other English language courses at other institutions.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

There has been very little research conducted in the African context and Namibia, in particular, to explore the role of drama in teaching English to enhance student's communicative skills. Thus, the research is of great significance as it will add to an African repository of knowledge, best practices and lessons learned on the subject. Several researchers have attributed students' poor English proficiency level to multiple factors, however only a few have made feasible suggestions to improve the

academic underachievement schools in Namibia. The targeted interventions (drama activities) designed for this study have the potential of intervening positively in this problem and proffering significant contributions towards the enhancement of students communicative skills at any educational level. Furthermore, the research findings from this study are anticipated to provide guidelines to the English Access Course curriculum designers in the Language Centre at the University of Namibia to incorporate drama in the teaching of literature and grammar as the course main components.

The English Access Course curriculum provides very little direction for lecturers on how to teach speaking skills. In the study guide, the speaking unit is very vague in terms of teaching speaking activities to assess and evaluate those activities to enhance the students' communicative skills. Another shortcoming of the curriculum is in the area of evaluation. The curriculum does a poor job in providing evaluation tools in assessing the speaking activities. Some speaking exercises are provided; however, most are very ambiguous, inappropriate to meet the speaking objectives, therefore this study is vital and informative to the EAC curriculum designers.

This study is also informative to English teachers at all levels in terms of motivating learners to speak and communicate in English more frequently. The study may provide means for reviving students' interests and attitudes, as the drama intervention is received favourably by students who have participated in the intervention. Many students are less interested in speaking activities because they think they are difficult, boring and impractical. Findings from this study indicate that



drama activities provide students with opportunities to talk and make English more accessible and enjoyable therefore increased level of achievement may be observed over time.

Moreover, it is expected that the study will benefit lecturers; teachers and educators to understand the struggles, opportunities and the successes students encounter with language learning; especially their speaking skills. It is the researcher's intention to provide educators an opportunity to reflect on, and improve their teaching methods, and develop professional communities of practice. Furthermore, the study findings will potentially provide an opportunity for researchers, educators and policy makers in the English language teaching field to gain more insight knowledge on the role that drama plays in developing students' English communicative skills. This study, then, contributes to the knowledge-gain in English language teaching and learning regarding incorporating drama techniques to enhance students' communicative skills.

### **1.5 Limitations of the study**

Lack of literature on the role drama on students' English communicative skills in the Namibian context posed a major limitation to this study. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher used the available literature from several countries including: Nigeria and South Africa, America, Europe, Australia and Asia. The literature focused primarily on drama and its role on students' English communicative skills. It is noteworthy that the results from these studies cannot be generalized to the Namibian context. This study was carried out in 2014 in two phases. The first phase was the

first semester whereby the researcher observed subjects attitudes and participation in lessons. During this phase, the researcher did not incorporate any drama activities in the EAC Curriculum. The second phase of research was carried out in the second semester whereby the researcher incorporated drama techniques in the EAC curriculum. It is therefore noteworthy that the findings from this cannot be conclusively generalized that the drama strategies and techniques incorporated in the teaching of English Access Course resulted in the participants change in behaviour and attitudes within such a short period of time. Therefore, the study recommends further studies to be carried out over a longer period of time.

The participants' responses in the entry questionnaire are another limitation that would have provided false information in this study. This is because students might not have been serious the first day of drama subject matter introduction. However, they were fully aware that the questionnaires were meant for this study. In addition, the participants consisted of class of 45 students out of the approximately 210 students registered for the English Access Course. The results from this study might not represent the majority's attitudes and perceptions of the registered English Access students. The fact that participants were aware that they were being studied might have also created an unnatural atmosphere which might yield misleading research findings.

### **1.6 Delimitations of the study**

This research focused only on students registered for the English Access Course in the Language Centre at the University of Namibia. However, this was considered to be justified since the Language Centre is the flagship to most if not all students the registered students at the University of Namibia for their English Communication and Study Skills courses. Students from different educational backgrounds can be found amongst this student body, thus effectively representing the English language profile of the Access students in general.

### **1.7 The researcher's motivation to the current study**

This was a teacher-researcher study as the researcher taught the class investigated. The researcher is a doctoral candidate in the Faculty of Humanity and Social Sciences in the Department of English and Literature studies at the University of Namibia. The researcher is also a lecturer in the Language Centre at the University of Namibia. Although the researcher is not an English native speaker, she has lived and studied in an English native speaking country (The United States of America) for two years where she pursued her MA-TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages) which equipped her with high matrix of skills and experience to teach and carry out research of this scale.

The researcher first became interested in using creative drama with English Language Learners when she taught English Language Learners ELL from different

cultural and educational backgrounds (Chinese, Koreans and Arabs) in her final year teaching practicum as a requirement towards her MA-TESOL at Eastern Michigan University under the supervision of the lead teacher Professor James Perren. Her responsibilities included designing classroom activities, lesson planning and teaching ELL students with the assistance of her lead teacher. Most of the classroom activities for these students were aimed at encouraging student interaction with each other.

After the researcher completed her practicum, she received positive feedback from the students on how the interactive activities that she incorporated in the lessons during the classroom warm-up phases had positively affected their speaking and reading skills. The researcher has also noticed the emergent changes in the students' behaviour after employing the interactive activities in the English classes. Even though some of the activities integrated were not part of the course curriculum, the researcher incorporated the activities to have the students interact with each other more every 5 minutes of the warm-up phase. After this intervention, the researcher noticed that some of the English Language Learners, who were less reluctant in speaking English, reading out aloud and interacting with others, who do not speak their native languages, started interacting with others unlike the first two weeks of class when the students mostly grouped themselves according to their race and language.

When the researcher started teaching the English Access Course in the Language Centre at the University of Namibia in 2013, the situation was no different from the ELL students that she taught at Eastern Michigan University in 2012-2013. She realized that only a few students could respond to her questions and there was lack of interactions among the students. Students grouped each other as per their ethnic groups and one could only hear them speak up when they are outside the classroom as they speak their native languages such as Oshiwambo just to mention a few. The English Access students were not fully involved in speaking activities but writing activities. It is against this background that the researcher became interested in researching how incorporating drama in English lessons, specifically for students who hardly speak up in English language lessons class would enhance their communicative skills.

As the principal researcher, the role of the researcher was that of a reflective-practitioner. Taylor (2007) defines reflective-practitioner research as that in which the teacher collects and analyses data on his/her own practice of teaching. The researcher designed, implemented, and reflected upon the drama activities that she incorporated in the English Access Course curriculum and its effects on the participants. In addition, the researcher did as Taylor (2007) suggests, and allowed others to inform on her reflections by asking the students to reflect upon their experiences with the drama activities every second lesson.

In addition, the researcher also sought to accurately describe the participants' responses to all the activities. These descriptions are vitally important because it is not enough to empirically show an effect of a curriculum. As Way (2005) states, "what both the research community and teachers need are more richly detailed observations of teacher-led classroom drama, descriptions that capture the immediacy and power of the student's struggle to make meaning" (p. 235). Way's descriptions are more vivid and therefore accessible and convincing to classroom teachers and therefore can encourage change. It was the researcher's goal to not only incorporate drama in English lessons to prove its effectiveness, but to understand, illustrate and evaluate its effects on the students.

## **1.8 Definition of terms**

### **1.8.1 Drama**

According to Sun (2011), drama is a social art that operates at a real social level and at the symbolic level of the dramatic language. In addition, Sun defines drama as an "an improvisational, non-exhibition, process-centred art in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect on human experience" (p. 122).

### **1.8.2 Educational Drama (ED)**

Maley and Duff (2005) refer to ED as a framed activity where role-taking allows the participants to think or/and behave as if they were in a different context and to respond as if they were involved in a different set of historical, social and interpersonal relationships. They further clarify that in ED, there are lived-through

experiences which move along an educational continuum to embrace many forms. ED goes from simple role play, simulation and hot seating to fully-structured forms; but the focus remains on identifying opportunities for learning and how to organize these forms. In their definition of ED, they noted that educational drama is a pedagogy that utilizes play-like techniques to prompt students' communication, interpersonal, cognitive, self-advocacy, thinking and speaking skills.

### **1.8.3 Intervention**

The Oxford English Dictionary (2009) defines intervention as action stepping in, or interfering in any affair, so as to affect its course or issue. For this study and other related studies' purpose, interventions would be categorized in three main types: (1) comprehensive interventions representing new or restructured literacy programs designed for language students, (2) focused interventions for classes, subgroups, or individuals that supplement existing programs with skills or knowledge to facilitate children's development, and (3) comprehensive intervention designed for individuals and for subgroups of children who do not respond well to existing programs. The choice of the focused intervention in this study means using instructional strategy (drama techniques) focused on a particular skill (speaking) to complement the existing classroom program

### **1.8.4 Communicative Competence (CC)**

Hedge (2010) proposed the communicative competence concept as he defines it as what a speaker needs to know in order to communicate in a speech community. For

example, in the real world, not only is a speaker expected to produce a grammatical sentence, but he/she should also consider the situation or context in which the sentences are uttered. According to Hedge, competence should be viewed as the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language which the speaker-listener possesses which entails knowledge of the language and the ability to use the knowledge in context.

#### **1.8.5 Drama techniques / strategies**

Maley and Duff (2005) define it as an indicator of the way in which time, space and presence can interact and be imaginatively shaped to create different kinds of meanings in drama. The two terms are used in this study interchangeably.

#### **1.8.6 Learner-centred**

Learner-centred approach also known as child centred learning is learning that mainly focuses on the needs of the students more so than those of other involved parties such as administrators and teachers in the education system. In this approach, the teacher is placed to facilitate the learning, focus on the interests, needs, and learning styles of the students (Hall, 2002). Hall further states that this approach focuses on the learners' experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs. Learner-centred creates a learning environment conducive to learning and promotes the highest levels of motivation, learning, and achievement for all learners.



### **1.8.7 Teacher-centred**

Freeman (2001) describes teacher-centred learning as: “students passively receive information, emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge, and teacher’s role is to be a primary information giver and primary evaluator” (p. 72). He further argues that a teacher-centred approach is an approach in which the curriculum relies on the teacher to use their expertise in helping learners understand and make connections where the students take in a receptive role in the learning.

## **1.9 Organisation of the study**

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 presents a brief background of what inspired the English language to receive the status of high prestige in education, social, political and economic sectors over Namibian native languages. A brief background of the language policy and its implementation is provided in this chapter. Furthermore, the chapter outlines theories in language acquisition that are linked to Krashen’s language teaching approaches and the Vygotskian sociocultural theory, the use of interactive teaching approaches in instructional processes are succinctly explained in this chapter. This chapter also highlights the objectives of the study in accordance with the statement of the problem. Finally, the chapter outlines the significance of the study, limitations of the study and delimitations of the study, the researchers’ motivation to this study and definition of terms.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on the use of drama in English language teaching. It induces the theories in teaching English using drama for the purposes of enhancing

the students' communicative skills. Theoretical background is also provided in this chapter. Previous studies and practices regarding the use of drama in education specifically the drama techniques and strategies are discussed in this chapter. Chapter 3 discusses the methodological procedures used to collect data for this study. It describes the research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, collection and analysis of data and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 presents the interpretations of the research findings in accordance with the study objectives. Chapter 5 discusses the research findings concisely. Finally, chapter six presents summarises the study findings and recommendations for further studies.

### **1.10 Summary**

Chapter 1 is aimed at building the background and rationale of the study. The chapter further discusses the current situation of English communicative skills among Namibian learners and teachers. However most specifically, it targets University of Namibia students. Finally, the chapter highlights the research objectives, statement of the problem, significant of the study and limitation of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In the light of the overwhelming volume of literature related to L2 teaching and learning, this chapter focuses on the theories in language acquisition, drama in education, L2 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), teachers' proficiencies, students attitudes and anxiety towards English as a second language. Most widely acknowledged by experts in the field of drama in education goes back in ages as far as 1897 in the work of Finlay-Johnson (1911).

The main aim of this research was to carry out an in-depth investigation on the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills at the University of Namibia. The study reviewed the underpinning theories of second language (L2) speaking skills and how drama techniques and strategies could be incorporated into English as a second language lessons with the aim of motivating, enhancing students' communicative skills and boosting their confidence in the usage of their L2 in their daily lives. While there are numerous studies investigating the role of drama activities in education towards students' motivation and alleviating anxiety, early literacy development, social attitudes and long life skills among the L2 English speakers as mentioned in Chapter 1, relatively few of these studies have focused on the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills in an African and specifically Namibian context.

While it was essential to explore the most widely accepted views of scholars in this field, it was equally important to consider whether the views of leading scholars are applicable to the Namibian context. This study required the researcher to become familiar with various schools of thoughts on this topic, as well explore as widely as possible the role drama plays in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills. This requirement necessitated an extensive search of the literature, not only on the speaking skills, but also dealing with analyses of various theories regarding drama in education.

## **2.2 Theoretical background of the study**

Even though there is ample research conducted in this field to further our understanding of classroom participation and interaction, much of it emerges from the tradition of logical language acquisition theories. Since all research is carried out against a theoretical background, this study must be located within a particular research paradigm. Within the field of social and human sciences, this study is embedded in the positivist paradigm.

Culham (2010) views positivism as an epistemological approach which holds knowledge or what is observed in human affairs, as part of a natural order and is subject to objective investigation. It is influenced neither by human senses nor by social contexts. Research conducted within the positivist paradigm focuses on methods of natural science, and seeks to gain understanding of the social world

through identifying rules and laws which govern it, and through the generation of testable hypotheses (Allwright, 2005; Eccles, 2012; Gaudart, 2010; Mantero, 2002). Several criticisms relevant to this study have been levelled at positivistic social science, and these are mainly centred on the opinion that it fails to take human factors into account and ignores individual choice and intention (Cohen, 2012). For the researcher to grasp how participants in this study interacted with each other in a drama oriented classroom, the researcher entered the field as the lecturer for the English Access Course to teach, observe, record and analyse what the participants had done in the classroom.

Having reviewed related studies on second language acquisition, the theoretical background of this study is informed and grounded by language acquisition theories, especially English and other studies done in the field of drama in education and drama in English teaching and learning context.

### **2.2.1 Language Acquisition Theories**

It is important that one cannot ignore the theories of language acquisition when carrying out studies of this nature. This study is informed by three renowned researchers in language acquisition: Lev Vygotsky regarding educational psychology (1978), Stephen Krashen regarding cognitive theories (1985) and Jerome Bruner regarding second and foreign acquisition (1986).

### **2.2.1.1 Vygotsky theory of language learning and acquisition**

To begin with, Vygotsky (1978) introduces the concept of a zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the notional gap between the learner's current developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving ability and the learner's potential level of development as determined by the ability to solve problems under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

According to Vygotsky (1978), children's learning involves a form of mediation between the learner, social, cultural and historical context. In the days of Vygotsky (1978), educators were of the assumption that effective learning is learners' attainment of a level of threshold of development in the performance of tasks. However, Vygotsky argues that the understanding and the determination of the child's development level are best by identifying what such a child could do under the guidance of a more competent person within a sociocultural and historical context. The child learns, and increases knowledge, through interaction with the physical and social environment. Accordingly, a child develops mentally as he or she interacts with parents, siblings and other people. Learners learn a language better when they use it in social-interaction with adults and peers who are more knowledgeable in the language (Vygotsky, 1978).

Relating sociocultural theory to second language learning, Gomes (2010) mentions that since human cognition develops through social activity, L2 learning is a semiotic process linked with participation in social activities. Vygotsky (1981) asserts that the

starting point of a child's mental development is the social plane before advancing to his or her potential learning development. For Vygotsky, it is simply not a matter of acquiring knowledge or skills, but rather that which seeks to develop learners' ability to learn through critical thinking and communication of their ideas or understanding across to people in different ways through "cultural tools" (p. 56). The tools are artefacts created by people within the social and cultural setting and useful in solving sociocultural problems. Such tools include language, works of art, the computer, calendars, and symbol systems (Tan, 2007).

Tan (2007) asserts that the sociocultural theory claims that the human mind is mediated; hence "tools" (p. 38) are essential in human understanding of the world in which individuals live. Vygotsky (1978) emphasises that social interaction influences the child's thinking development and learning; hence the child's developmental growth progresses as the child interacts with people and tools in the immediate environment.

#### **2.2.1.1.1 Zone of Proximal Development**

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a vital component of sociocultural theory developed by Vygotsky (1978). In outlining the ZPD, he contends that the child's current level of development is not enough to measure his ability, but the potential development of the child should be considered; hence the learner's performance under an adult's assistance projects the child's future achievement.

Choice (2010) submits that “the ZPD represents a “metatheory” of more freedom for a student-centred interaction within education as opposed to the teacher-dominated instructional process” (p.30). Moreover, Vygotsky’s ZPD has become associated with scaffolding of learners (Guk, 2007). Guk postulates that scaffolding in education involves a transfer of tasks responsibilities from a more knowledgeable person to the learner in order to facilitate the child’s learning and development. When teachers understand learners’ mental abilities, they would be able to identify the relevant, appropriate and suitable tasks for the learners. Within ZPD, interaction is a key to construction of knowledge (Gardner, 2008).

#### **2.2.1.1.2 Zone of Proximal Development in the classroom**

There is the need to reconnect ZPD within the school processes and practices of teaching. The ZPD is a concept developed against a grammatical form of language teaching with a view of exposing learners to systematic thinking skills which gives attention to planning, goal setting, drafting and generation of ideas as strategies for teaching second language (Vygotsky, 1978). The idea of internalization presupposes that the teacher should drive learners into the abstract world so as to develop the ability to solve complex problems rather than learners relying on the teacher at all time (Tan, 2007). Tan also asserts that “generation of new knowledge is a product of dialogic social interaction” (p. 24). Therefore, social context and interaction with people and the environment influence learners’ internalization of thoughts, attitudes and beliefs.



According to Jones (2008), the Vygotskian ZPD brings the distinction between the explicit teacher who behaves as a dispenser of knowledge and the implicit teacher who acts as a facilitator of the learning process. They assert that “the teacher as a facilitator and coordinator of the instructional process provides linguistic guidance, and mediate between the learners and the learning environment” (p. 110). As the teacher guides the learners, he awakens a series of internal developmental processes which are operational only when learners socially interact with authentic artefacts (Goh, 2006).

#### **2.2.1.2. Krashen’s theory of language acquisition and learning**

According to Ellis (2011) Krashen’s input hypothesis is a comparatively comprehensive theory in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) research, derived from its earlier version, the Monitor Model. The monitor theory consists of five hypothesizes, namely, the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the Affective Filter Hypothesis. It is crucial to note that for the purpose of this study, the input hypothesis is much more significant than the other four. The input hypothesis has enjoyed considerable prominence in second language acquisition research. It has brought together research findings from a number of different domains, which is closely tied to recommendations for classroom practice and is readily understandable to second language teachers. Drawing on the input hypothesis theory, the researcher tries to apply it to the teaching of speaking skills of the EAC students to bring improvement in the English teaching.

Krashen (1985) argues that language students can develop their second language knowledge in two different ways: acquisition and learning. The term “acquisition” is used to refer to picking up a second language through exposure, whereas “learning” is used to refer to the conscious study of a second language. In other words, acquisition occurs subconsciously as a result of participating in natural communication where the focus is on meaning; learning occurs as a result of conscious study of the formal properties of a language.

Krashen (2004) states that acquisition of knowledge and skills occur as we participate in society through interacting with and receiving guidance from more capable persons. In outlining his language acquisition theories, Krashen devises a similar notion for language acquisition with his five hypotheses. He argues that for language acquisition to take place there should be meaningful interaction in the target language. He further posits that speakers should be involved in natural communication where speakers are not concerned with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding. Krashen also examines the kind of input that is one step beyond the ESL/EFL student’s current stage and which a student needs in order to make progress in acquiring English. He calls this gap  $i+1$ , where (i) is the current level of proficiency which means that when a student is exposed to comprehensible input, acquisition takes place.

Ellis (2011) states that the Input Hypothesis attempts to explain how a learner acquires a second language. A number of researchers see “comprehensible input” as a major causative factor in second language acquisition. Arguably, Ellis further

points out that Krashen's input hypothesis makes the following claims: learners progress along the natural order by understanding input that contains structures a little bit beyond their current level of competence. Three points are indicated in the above statement. Firstly, Natural Order Hypothesis is the theoretical basis of Input Hypothesis. Learners develop their language knowledge along the natural order. Secondly, in a sense, the most fundamental approach for a learner to acquire a language is to understand the language input. Only when the language input is absorbed or internalized by the learner, can acquisition take place. Thirdly, Krashen and Long point out that comprehensible input refers to those language materials "a little bit beyond" the learner's current level.

Indeed, Krashen (2004) maintains that comprehensible input is a sufficient condition for language acquisition. He suggests that natural comprehensible input is the key to designing a syllabus, ensuring in this way that each learner will receive some 'i + 1' input that is appropriate for their current stage of linguistic competence. However, Krashen further reports that no language will be acquired in the presence of the affective filter. This simply means that a student who is nervous, bored or distracted in class will learn neither subject content nor new language, even if the input is comprehensible.

### **2.2.1.3 Bruner language acquisition theories**

Another researcher, Bruner (1986) introduces the term "scaffolding" as a description for the kind of assistance given by the teacher or more knowledgeable peer in providing comprehensible input and moving the learner into the zone of proximal

development. Bruner (1986) defines scaffolding as the provision of appropriate assistance to students in order for them to achieve what they could have not achieved through their own learning efforts. Scaffolding includes all the tasks that teachers already engage in when they predict the kinds of difficulty that the class or individual students will have with a given task. With reference to the review of the ESL language acquisition theories, the researcher puts into considerations the following aspects when incorporating drama techniques and strategies in EAC in regards to the enhancements of the students communicative skills towards improving the students communicative skills:

- Learning through interaction and social involvement with the help of the teacher.
- Comprehensible input and agreeable conditions of learning.
- Motivation and the affective filter (Bruner, 1986, p. 230).

Incorporating drama in the EAC lessons is linked to various language acquisition theories that make acquiring speaking skills easier and more successful. Maley and Duff (2005) emphasise that the use of drama techniques in the language's classrooms requires communication skills and meaningful input. Specifically, they attest that drama techniques when employed in language classrooms have proven to reduce students' anxiety and increase their confidence and motivation towards learning the target language.

Maley and Duff (2005) thoroughly report that the use of drama techniques in language classrooms has a positive effect on students' interaction, academic

achievement, involvement, self-confidence and motivation towards learning English. Echoing the same sentiments is Gaudart (2010) who stresses that there is no desirable learning in the traditional teaching methodology as that classroom environment is rigid and limited to teacher talk and learner response when asked. Gaudart further argues that drama activities focus more on meanings and oral expression although extended to other aspects language learning as well. Gaudart (2010) builds on Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis theory, by asserting that L2 is successfully acquired under circumstances similar to those of L1 acquisition in which the focus of instruction is on meaning rather than on form and where there is ample of opportunity to use language meaningfully.

### **2.3 Language acquisition theories and drama techniques and strategies**

In accordance with the reviewed literature on language acquisition (LA) theories, the researcher considers the theorists as the pillars when utilizing drama techniques to enhance ESL students' speaking skills. Gomez (2010) argues that there is no doubt that learning a second language requires active training and practice. Gomez acknowledges the importance of instructions and defends the notion that students need to be exposed to English and practice their second language speaking skills. In order for successful language acquisition to occur, (Donato, 2012) calls for the need to express students' own ideas and opinions in the target language. Donato explains that students need opportunities to interpret and express real-life meaningful messages, negotiate meaning, and exchange information all of which can be attained through effective teaching methods. He further notes that traditional classroom practices often take the form of drilling and demonstrating the ability to ask and

answer. In contrast, the purpose of real communication is to accomplish a task such as obtaining information or expressing an opinion.

Mantero (2002) indicates the importance of authentic exchanges in the language classroom. He asserts that through dramatization, the employment of role play, simulation and guided improvisation, students at any level of their education receive constant scaffolding. To this, Dougill (2009) stresses that during drama activities, students shift from functioning at the lower limit of their ZPDs (performance without assistance) to the upper limit (a higher level of performance with assistance). Specifically, scaffolding enables students who had little understanding of what constitutes appropriate usage of speaking skills at the lower limit of their ZPDs- to communicate, interact and sustain conversation at the high ZPD level:

- Learning through interaction and social involvement with the help of the teacher.
- Comprehensible input and agreeable conditions of learning.
- Motivation and the affective filter (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 209).

Subsequently, the use of drama techniques and strategies share many of the language acquisition theories that make acquiring speaking skills easy and successful. It also emphasizes the communication skills and meaningful input required. Also, (Maley & Duff, 2005) have proven drama to be a successful method of ESL/EFL instruction. Specifically, they have indicated that drama reduces students' anxiety, and increase their confidence and motivation towards second language learning. In addition, a concise research conducted by (Jones, 2008), shows that drama is effective in

improving second language speaking skills; yet does not specifically address the needs of English language learners. This study uses these frameworks as a way to add to the literature on the uses of the role drama plays in English language instruction to enhance the students' communicative skills.

For this study, drama techniques and strategies focused on meaning and oral expression to enhance the students' speaking skills. This is supported by Krashen's (1985) theory that ESL is most successfully acquired under conditions similar to those of L1 acquisition in which the focus of instruction is on meaning rather than on form and where there is plenty of opportunity to use language meaningfully. Richards (2008) introduces twelve principles concerning the acquisition of ESL of which four are relevant this study; motivation, meaningful learning, self-confidence and risk taking as major pillars of a successful learning. Richards emphasises that as students experience meaningful learning, they are led towards better long-term retention than through rote learning.

#### **2.4 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

Communicative language teaching is one of the most significant paradigms for language teachers who are concerned with developing learners' communicative fluency. Although a number of authors have contributed towards explaining the meaning of CLT, Richards and Rodgers (2001) affirm that there is no universally accepted definition of CLT. In the fields of applied linguistics and English as a foreign language, Communicative Approach (CA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) have been interchangeably used to mean an approach that focuses

on the communicative needs of the learners (Dodson, 2010). For this study, it is impossible to successfully compose the research if the CLT theory in language teaching as the body that regulates communicates language activities is not visited.

There are several interpretation and definitions of CLT of which one of the CLT proponent Savingson (1997) refers to as a communicative language teaching tool for both process and goals in classroom learning and teaching. This means that there are different notions of learning and teaching to different people who practice CLT. Savingson states that in CLT classrooms, communicative competence (CC) is the central theoretical concept which Swain (1985) defines as the abilities to use strategies to compensate for imperfect knowledge of rules or performance limitations which comprises of four aspects : sociocultural, strategic, discourse and grammatical competence, whereas, Boal (1979) defines CC as the abilities to assess a communicative context and plan and execute responses to accomplish intended purposes in language teaching.

Jin (2008) defines CLT as a set of principles about teaching, including recommendations about method and syllabus, focusing on meaningful communication rather than language structure, use and not usage. Emphasising the importance of input, processing and output, Asher (2009) defines CLT as the engagement of learners in language learning through activities and events that would enable them to freely express themselves in the language being learned. In a communicative language teaching setting, attention is not focused on language forms, but on learners' ability to meaningfully express ideas, concepts and notions



within a context. Savingson (1997) also refers to CLT as a multidisciplinary approach that focuses on the elaboration and implementation of participatory communicative activities that will promote the development of learners' functional language ability.

Brown (2011) defines CLT as an “approach to language teaching methodology that emphasises authenticity, interaction, student-centred, task-based activities and communication for the real world and meaningful purposes” (p. 378). In his work, Brown outlines the four interconnected characteristics of CLT:

- Classroom goals are on all of the components of communicative competence (CC) and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
- Language techniques are designed to engage learners in pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes.
- Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable learners to accomplish these purposes.
- Fluency and accuracy are seen as complimentary principles underlying communicative techniques.
- At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
- In the communication classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively in unrehearsed contexts. (p. 380).

In this study, it is important to note that the target of CLT is interpreted as the methods aimed at the development of speaking skills, with less emphasis on reading and writing skills, so as to develop communicative-style teaching with a focus on authentic language use and real life communication among students.

Aski (2003) also asserts that (CLT) requires teachers to provide learners with the opportunity to communicate in the target language, and in real-life situations. Communicative language teaching and learning requires that learners engage in various communicative tasks, rather than focusing on linguistic forms. Linguistic forms inhibit learners from communicating in the target language naturally (Aski, 2003).

According to Gardner (2008), CLT provides learners in a second language classroom the opportunity to develop and experience the learning process by active engagement in communicative activities capable of improving their communicative skills. The implication of the above description of CLT is that frequent use caution must be exercised to ensure that interlocutors exchange the appropriate meaning of a message. The relevance of form and grammar in language learning should not be undermined as Dodson (2010) stresses that both fluency and accuracy are crucial to achieving useful communication of a language as a key to developing learners' communicative competence.

Dougill (2009) posits that in CLT fluency is not stressed as much as successful communication and it should not be the focus. He believes that teachers need to train

students to just communicate in the L2 and not be perfect in it. Cohen (2012) also comments that in the CLT classrooms, students strive to get their meaning across. In order to perform the task of effective English communication, communicative strategies (CSs) are a useful way to overcome communication difficulties. Cohen stresses that CSs supply students with the tools necessary to fill L2 gaps while they are communicating with native and non-native speakers.

Mantero (2002) views CLT as a crucial teaching method in providing students with authentic exchanges in the language classroom. Mantero further states that true dialogue stems from a negotiation of meaning, an attempt to understand, or convince someone of a point of view. As Allwright (2005) notes, understanding a problem is enough to create change. For this reason, Sari (2008) assures that speaking is the most difficult part in learning a second language because it involves the manifestation of either the phonological system or the grammatical system of the language and students feel uncomfortable talking in front of other students.

In the same vein, Lansen-Freeman (2012) affirms that “the ultimate goal of adopting the Communicative Language Teaching, in the language classroom is to help students become communicatively competent” (p.260). To achieve this goal, students have to master certain aspects of the learned language. In addition, they claim that participation in verbal interaction offers language learners the opportunity to follow up on new words and structures to which they have been exposed during language lessons and to practice them in context. Lansen-Freeman (2012) list four

characteristics of language to keep in mind in designing communicative instructional strategies:

1. Language is personal: it is inextricably part of the student's emotional and intellectual well-being.
2. Language is social: it is used to communicate to someone else.
3. Language is active: it is learnt through use, not study.
4. Language is functional: it is prompted by the need to say something worthwhile to someone who has a genuine need in listening (p.261).

With reference to the students' role in CLT, Nystrand (1997) stressed that it is important to recognise students as sources of knowledge and a crucial component in creating a classroom environment where language learners are empowered and offered significant opportunities to practice the language. Nystrand further asserts that when students work together, knowledge is generated and co-constructed. In support of Nystrand, Gaudart (2010) postulates that the teacher's role is to moderate, direct discuss, probe, foresee, and analyse the implications of student responses. Whereas, knowledge in recitation is prescribed, knowledge during discussion unfolds a process that values personal knowledge and accordingly promotes student ownership but not act as the bank of knowledge. Subsequently, Nystrand (1997) acknowledges the need for a curriculum which should be planned in response to students' needs and provide them with opportunities to interact and use the language authentically.

Donato (2012) emphasises the importance of instruction and justifies the notion that learners need to be exposed to and practice a second language if adequate learning or acquisition is to take place. In order for successful language acquisition to occur, Aski (2003) and Donato (2012) call for the need to express students' own ideas and opinions in the target language. Aski (2003) explains that "students need opportunities to interpret and express real-life meaningful messages, negotiate meaning, and exchange information" (p.120).

In addition, Asher (2009) outlines three learning stages in both L1 and L2/FL learning: a silent period, the development of understanding, and a readiness state. Therefore, any foreign language teaching strategy should follow the biological program. In other words, it should develop comprehension before making the student speak. Although studies indicate that some language learners undergo a "silent period" and (Krashen, 1985; Rodriguez, 1982) characterises it as a natural part of second/ language acquisition, and thus may be beneficial to the language learning process. In his study, Ellis (2009) highlights the disagreement that language students learn during the silent period. He argues that, even though he acknowledges the stages of language learning, in general they go through several processes in learning a language. Most importantly, classroom participation increases student confidence and avail opportunities to speak during lessons and not during the silent stage.

Wagner (2002) asserts that conversational interaction represents the basis for the development of syntax, and is not just for practice. In addition, Swain (1985) suggests that learners opportunities for meaningful use of their linguistic resources to

achieve native-speaker levels of grammatical accuracy. Swain further posits that when learners verbally interact with each other, it offers them the opportunity to follow up on new words and structures to which they have been exposed during language lessons and to practice them in context.

### **2.5 Communicative Competence**

Hayes (2010) coins Communicative competence (CC) as a significant theoretical framework underpinning CLT. However, Richard (2006) suggests that Wagner (1979) was one of the first to use the term “communicative competence” in 1979. However, irrespective of the origins or the proponents of communicative competence, its relevance and significance to language teaching cannot be overestimated. Information consists of conceptual, social, affective, and psychological elements (Richard, 2006). Different people possess varying degrees of ability and knowledge about language use; hence communicators often need to explore available opportunities to negotiate, judge, decide and have a holistic understanding of language concepts. The point of agreement and understanding between communicators is the point at which communicative competence is achieved (Canale, 1983). This implies that successful language use for communication is a reflection of the development of user’s communicative competence (CC).

Also, communicative competence can be interpreted as the ability to convey a message by using appropriate language in a specific context (Malik, 2008). The

definitions above seems to be more confined to a mere language use without giving due attention to the issue of meaningful interaction between interlocutors. Willburn (2011) portrays communicative competence as not only the learners' ability to know the language code, but also knowing what to say to whom and how to say it in a specific context. Willburn's definition seems more explicit than the ones earlier mentioned because of understanding the significance of appropriateness, social and cultural contexts in language use, as well as the social values attached. Literature shows that there is no consensus regarding a definition of communicative competence among scholars and educators. This has led to the development of different models of communicative competence.

## **2.6 Models of Communicative Competence**

The ability to communicate in both spoken and written forms is the goal of language teaching and learning; hence activities that revolve around communicative practice are essential aspects of language instruction (Hedge, 2009). According to Hedge, learners need to integrate themselves effectively into the world by having in-depth knowledge of language and its appropriate uses. The idea of competence began with Chomsky (1956), when questioning the audiolingual and situational language teaching methods on the basis that there is a significant distinction between performance and competence. Chomsky argues that structuralism and behaviourism were unable to account for creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences. Therefore, learners' production of sentences through imitation and repetition was not the best method of language learning. Rather, any measure of linguistic competence

should be based on an individual's knowledge of language in different settings and contexts.

Hymes (1972) criticised Chomsky's model, which focuses on linguistic competence without due consideration of socio-cultural factors in heterogeneous speech communities and different competence among language users. Hymes contends that, besides the linguistic competence (grammatical correctness), there is also the language users' need of sociolinguistic competence (the use of language in an appropriate context). The reason being, language structure and its acquisition are context-based (Hymes, 1972).

Ya (2008) criticises Hymes' (1972) model of communicative competence, as entrenched in the sociolinguistic view, which gives due consideration to L2 learners in the same learning environment, but with different "linguistic baggage" and cultural differences. Ya (2008) further states that Hymes' (1972) model does not emphasise language users' mastery and adherence to grammatical or linguistic rules, but gives language users the opportunity to search, select and use appropriate linguistic resources applicable to the context of language use. Hymes' description of competence is relatively vague (Ya, 2008). Canale and Swain (1980) added strategic competence to Hyme's earlier proposed linguistic competence and sociolinguistic competencies so as to make the model more applicable to language teaching and assessment than Hyme's (1972) model. Canale and Swain replaced linguistic competence of Hymes with grammatical competence, but Canale (1983) later added a discourse component of competence to the earlier model of Canale and Swain



(1980). Hence the components of Canale and Swain's model are grammatical, strategic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competencies. Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence considers communication, as a dynamic interactional process, achievable through language use.

Communicative competence models, developed after Canale and Swain (1980), emphasise the need for learners to negotiate meaning through interaction and appropriate use of language within a specified context. This highlights the relevance of the communicative approach in the present study. A communicative teacher should, therefore, teach learners the language needed to express and interpret different functions, which include requesting, describing, and expressing likes and dislikes (Richards, 2006). By so doing, learners are able to develop the confidence to use and understand the principles of appropriate language use to accomplish given tasks in different situational contexts (Canale & Swain, 1980; Richards, 2006).

## **2.7 Factors affecting second language learning**

An increasing attempt in research tends to relate features of teachers' and students' behaviour in classrooms to learning outcomes. The nucleus of the idea for this study was conceived through teacher discussion and reflection about teaching speaking. In general, as Kulawanit et al. (2005) confirms that large numbers of employers are looking for applicants who are proficient in English speaking and listening. Additionally some organisations are requesting that schools and universities focus on developing such skills. For this reason, Donato (2012) advocates that beyond an individual instructor's reasons for emphasizing oral proficiency, foreign language

departments are also increasingly requiring language students to demonstrate oral proficiency in order to graduate.

According to Brown (2010), speaking skills or oral language is not only an utterance, but also a tool of communication. He asserts that it occurs when two or more people interact with each other aiming at maintaining social relationships. Consequently, Brown states that it is of paramount importance for English teachers to find effective pedagogical techniques to help enhance students' speaking abilities. Among other English skills, students also need to develop speaking skills. Cheng (2010) also states that teaching speaking skills is perceived as a challenging issue which many English language teachers try to avoid. Cheng further argues that some language teachers think teaching speaking skills is like parrot-like drilling, neglecting the role teaching speaking skills plays in enhancing the students' communicative skills.

Like most researchers in related studies attributed to students silence in the language classrooms, Tan (2007), argues that students' silence in class does not mean that they do not like the lesson: the reason might relate to students fear of speaking or making mistakes, or the allotted time is inadequate for them to formulate their thoughts cohesively. Di Pietro (2008) finds that students are limited to passive roles because the instructor dominates the discourse approximately 90% of the time in the class periods.

Larsen-Freeman (2012) affirms that the ultimate goal to enhance students' speaking skills is by adopting Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This is crucial in

the language classroom to help students become communicatively competent. To achieve this goal, students have to master certain aspects of the learned language. In addition, Chauhan (1996) states, “the participation in verbal interaction offers language learners the opportunity to follow up on new words and structures to which they have been exposed during language lessons and to practice them in context” (p.59-60).

Apart from the theories of acquisition and learning considered when talking about second language learning, there are several factors that influence the learning of a new language. Some of those factors will be presented below. Such factors should be implemented in the classroom, so that an optimal learning environment occurs. Such practices are not only applicable to second language learning, but also to other classroom practices.

### **2.8 Styles and strategies**

Individuals have their own personality traits that affect their learning. Although sometimes people are not aware of them, these traits are important for learners to recognise different ways of learning, so as to benefit as much as possible from language instruction. Brown (2006) defines styles as the characteristics of learners, For example, more perceptive visually than aurally or more reflective in the process of the intake of information. Also Brown states that “styles affect the way we learn and it is very important for a teacher to be attentive to the diversity of the pupils” (p.140). Brown asserts that in the second language classroom, it is important to the learning of any subject to make space and time for the learners’ varying strategies in order to optimize the learning process. It can be considered as the teacher’s

responsibility to introduce different methods in order to touch all strategies and styles.

### **2.8.1 Affect**

Affect is a wide concept and can be interpreted in many ways; Krashen (1985) expressed his opinion on this in his research, the *Input Hypothesis*. However, before this, Bloom (1956) among others, developed a taxonomy that was related to education, where three key concepts were defined: *receiving*, *responding* and *valuing*. In the process of learning a second language, the learners have to be *receptive* to who they are communicating and to the language. They need to be *responsive* to the persons with whom they are interacting and to the context, and finally they must *value* the communicative act (Brown, 2006). Understanding how human beings feel, respond, believe and value is an exceedingly important aspect of a theory of second language acquisition states Brown. Within the affective domain there are some sub-factors that relate to second language acquisition.

### **2.8.2 Self esteem**

Self-esteem is one factor that can be referred to in general, as the learner's personality or certain traits of personality and it can also be identified in a specific task and specific situation. It is not yet clear if high self-esteem improves a learner's language skills or not (Brown, 2006). According to Brown, an optimal and successful learning situation is due to the teacher's attention both to "linguistic performance" and "emotional well-being" (p. 143). Brown also states that "it is also important to have high self-esteem so that inhibition does not hinder the trying of new hypotheses

and making mistakes for example in pronunciation or grammatical structure, because risk-taking is indeed another factor that a language learner cannot be without” (p.145).

### **2.8.3 Anxiety**

Brown (2006) asserts that students’ anxiety just like self-esteem can be defined on two levels; a general tendency or trait in personality or as a “state [that] is experienced in relation to some particular event or act” (p. 149). Brown states that the first level is difficult to detect in second language learning, the second one is bound to a certain situation and can be referred to as the “foreign language anxiety” (p. 151), has been investigated more. Most research results have identified that “there is a debilitating and a facilitative anxiety that either harms or helps the learning process” (p. 152). The explanation is that sometimes a bit of anxiety is positive or facilitative because it means that a process that is leading somewhere is taking place. It is a bit like nervous tension that drives the learners to push themselves. When it is negative anxiety or debilitating it can block the processes and hinder the learner from taking in and reflecting on the language. So a low anxiety level in the classroom is something to strive for as long as we are attentive to the facilitative anxiety that could actually help the student (Brown, 2006).

### **2.8.4 Motivation**

Brown (2006) states that discussions on motivation are not limited to the second language learning context but to learning in general. He suggests that motivation can

be “global, situational or task-oriented” (p. 154). In his research, Brown outlines the three types of motivation required in the language learning process: One is the motivation related to instrumental goals, such as good grades or better jobs. Another is the integrative motivation that comes from the learner’s desire to be involved in the second language culture. Yet another type of motivation is intrinsic motivation related to the “reward [of] the activity itself” as opposed to the extrinsic motivation that is related to success in a task and a reward beyond oneself. Grades, prizes and “behaviours to avoid punishment” (p. 155) are examples of extrinsic motivations.

### **2.8.5 Meaningful learning**

Brown (2006) refers to Ausubel’s (1963) meaningful learning theory that states that learning acquired in a meaningful context is remembered for a longer time. Brown postulates that in Ausubel’s terms, “rote-learning may not have a meaningful situation to be related to, neither for association with the learners cognitive structures, nor with anything else than performance results in the classroom” (p.157). Brown therefore asserts that there has to be a more integrative meaning to learning so that real knowledge can be constructed which speaks to the objectives of this research.

## **2.9 The English language status quo in Namibia**

### **2.9.1 Teachers’ English Proficiency**

This study explores the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students’ communicative skills. Noting that English is the official language and the language

of instruction, it is important for this study to visit research carried out on teachers' English proficiency. Most teachers in Namibia went through the old system in the pre-independence era when the medium of instruction was Afrikaans. Before independence, Afrikaans was the official language, and therefore Namibians did not have to use English in their everyday life as is the case today. About 20 languages are spoken in Namibia, 14 of which have a full orthography, but in 1990, upon independence from South Africa, Afrikaans, which had functioned as a lingua franca, was selected in favour of English though spoken by the minority (Evert, 2008). Evert further states that the adoption of English was seen by the new government as a break through from the colonial past and means of unifying the country.

Experts such as Wolfaardt (2005) states that most of the teachers if not all went through a Bantu education system. During this time Afrikaans was the language of instruction, and thus teachers in an independent Namibia, needed appropriate training in the target language. Wolfaardt concludes that the government has failed to provide adequate training to teaching staff for which English is a second and even third language.

The Ministry of Education has managed to increase the number of trained teachers to 80%. However 69% of this 80% do not have adequate English language proficiency (Totemeyer, 2010). He establishes that 69% of Namibian college students, who upon graduating, enter the teaching profession and are deployed to schools do not have the

required levels of English understanding to cope effectively in their teaching. Totemeyer further argues that the poor speaking and reading skills of teachers impacts all areas of teaching and learning, in Namibia.

Echoing the same sentiment is Wolfaardt (2005), who states that even though the language policy stipulated that children from grade 1-3 are supposed to be educated in their mother tongue, the policy was not explicit in its guidelines on how the different indigenous languages should be used in schools. Instead, the policy concentrated on how English as the medium of instruction should be phased in between 1992 and 1996. The implementation of the language policy was different from region to region, as those in charge of implementing the policy mainly preferred teaching in English rather than through the mother tongue (Wolfaardt, 2005).

Wolfaardt (2005) also reports that non-English speaking teachers were expected to teach through the medium of English and this meant that many learners suffered because the teachers were not fluent in English. This policy was written in 1992 to slight amendments in 2014. Wolfaardt states that the reasons of not changing the policy through 1992 -2014 include: the cost of implementing the existing or any new policy, fears of encouraging tribalism and lack of political commitment, despite the recognition of how language contributes to high levels of failure among learners.



Namibia's commitment to English as the main language of education has been undermined by revelations that 98% of the country's teachers are not sufficiently proficient in the language. Approximately 23,000 teachers were the first to sit an English language proficiency test as part of an Education Ministry strategy to identify further training needs (Kisting, 2011).

Leaked results of the English proficiency tests carried out in 2011 indicated that all but 2% of the nation's teachers needed to undergo further training in Basic English (Kisting, 2011). The test was compiled and evaluated by the University of Namibia. It assessed comprehension, grammar and writing skills. In the writing section, teachers were required to construct four complete sentences. Results from the report indicate that more than 70% of teachers in senior secondary schools cannot read and write Basic English. Among junior secondary teachers, 63% have a poor grasp of English, which is jeopardizing their teaching. Kisting reports that even the 18% of teachers who scored between 75% and 92% made mistakes with capital letters and punctuation, subject-verb agreement, singular and plural forms and articles as per the leaked test's results. Another unfavorable finding was that "some teachers struggled to fill in personal data required on the front of the answer sheet including basic biographic information" (Kisting, 2011, p. 1).

Wolfaardt (2005) states that most teachers do not have any problems with pronunciation, vocabulary and giving instructions, but the problem areas are

grammar, elicitation techniques, the use of non-verbal support (resource materials), and explaining concepts in English. The use of English as the medium of instruction is a problem for teachers whose English proficiency is lacking. She further states that teachers' pronunciation and vocabulary do not pose immense challenges, as it will not affect the learners acquiring English, but when learners are taught through the medium of English of which the use of grammar is incorrect, it is potentially detrimental to the learners' development. In addition, Wolfaardt asserts that many teachers, especially those teaching in the rural areas, have poor teaching qualifications, and hardly hear or use English in their communities. One must remember that teachers in the lower primary phase whose English language proficiency is believed to be the worst, have to prepare learners for English as medium of instruction from Grade 4 onwards.

Kisting (2011) reports that retired teacher and former politician, Andrew Matjila, indicated that the language policy, in place for over 20 years, had failed to deliver widespread competence. Kisting further reports that, Matjila indicated that public figures, such as politicians also struggle with the language and that the limited language skills of teachers had "poisoned" thousands of children. Kisting reports that Matjila called for the immediate provision of training for teachers, saying that without intervention "the danger that is coming to Namibia is unimaginable if the government does not put its acts together" (p.8).

In the same report, Kisting (2011) asserts that Adolf de Klerk, another commentator on education, said there was a direct link between the low English language skills of teachers and students' exam results. Nearly 50% of 16-year-olds failed the junior secondary school certificate in 2010. The medium of instruction used in schools is a major cause for concern which the government has overlooked (Evert, 2008).

The decision to use English as the national language still deeply affects the levels of success in education. Evert (2008) as lead researcher on the Urban Trust of Namibia (UTN), a local NGO, engaged in a programme to improve learning outcomes of grades 1 to 4 for all learners in Namibia, and is highly critical of the current language education policy, refers to the language in schools in Namibia as “the missing link in educational achievement” (p. 23). UTN is an NGO Evert (2008) reports that a meeting between NIED and UTN on 23 September 2010 about language policy discussed the problems that hamper learning in schools; teachers' language proficiency was one of the issues raised during that meeting. The latter is termed to be the contributing factors to learners' low English proficiency and poor academic performance. Harris also reported that it is the results of the meeting that had the Ministry of Education (MoE) planning training courses in English for teachers.

Evert (2008) asserts that the policy in place since 1993 was essential to drive the strategic decision for English in education. “This massive decision was made without

the required resources being in place. Teachers were not ready, could not express themselves and were not trained in English” (p. 139). Evert also states that the curriculum, syllabuses and materials linked to a successful outcome were not made available. Harris further points to the higher success rates of schools in South Africa and Botswana, and Namibia could have learned from her neighbours, where learners are taught in their home languages. Evert also cites evidence of poor results in English in classes taught by older teachers who have low English levels, compared to classes taught by younger teachers whose competence in English, a result of better training, however language barriers stands out throughout the research as a major problem (Evert, 2008). Evert recommends that learners should be allowed to be taught in their mother tongue until at least the end of primary school.

### **2.9.2 Students’ English language proficiency**

Low English language proficiency has been considered a barrier to learning and academic success at the post-secondary level. Students seeking admission to universities are often required to obtain a grade in English language proficiency tests indicating that they have adequate English proficiency to be academically successful. Several studies have evaluated the predictive power of tests of English language on students’ academic success in college (Burgess, 2007; Chang, 2010). However, at the University of Namibia (UNAM), students do not register for their academic programs based on such tests but rather their grade 12 results. The university’s requirements are that students attain 25 points in 5 school subjects including English with a C or better symbol. When students register in their respective faculties, they are then registered in the Department of English Communications and Study Skills in

the Language Centre dependant on the English symbol they obtained from grade 12. Also, the Language Centre as mentioned in Chapter 1 offers the English Access Course (EAC) for students who obtained 25 points in five subjects and a D symbol in English.

This study does not necessarily focus on the role of English proficiency and students' academic performance. It should be noted that the students in the EAC are university aspiring students. It is therefore crucial to stress how they will cope in their academic careers based on their English language proficiency.

Accordingly, a number of studies have examined the correlation between language proficiency and performance on content assessments (Butler & Castellon, 2005; Lin, 2009). In their research findings, they indicate that English language proficiency scores are significantly predictive of academic performance. The level of English language proficiency needed to be reviewed in this study demonstrates content knowledge on academic assessments given the state of the students English proficiency level. To do so sensibly, the relationship between students' English language proficiency and academic achievement must be reviewed. Although the latter is not the focus of this study, the research findings from this study would provide crucial revelations on English language proficiency and academic performance as areas of concentration for future research.

As the focus of this study is to explore the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills, it is important to stress that the

communicative skills being enhanced in this study are those of the students, though it is inevitable for students to learn English skills such as reading, writing, speaking or listening in isolation. Guida (2007) view speaking skills as abilities to speak in the target language to communicate with others accurately, fluently and comprehensibly.

The target language in this study is English as a second language. According to Brown and Yule (2010), language teaching had been concerned with teaching written language. They point out that teaching speaking skills has been ignored and was not seriously considered in language teaching classrooms. In their discussions, they distinguished between the difference between teaching writing and speaking skills. They argued that written language is characterized by well- formed sentences which are integrated into highly structured paragraphs whereas spoken language consists of short, often fragmentary utterances, in a range of pronunciations. Brown and Yule (2010) also drew a useful distinction between two basic language functions. These are the transactional function, which is primarily concerned with the transfer of information, and the interactional function, in which the primary purpose of speech is the maintenance of social relationships.

In addition Way (2005) clarifies that oral expressions is not only about using the right sounds in the right patterns of rhythm and intonation, but also the choice of words and inflections in the right order should be considered for the purpose of conveying the right meaning. Way therefore defines speaking as an act of

communication intended for sharing meanings through social interaction. In his writings Way classifies the functions of speaking as: communicative, functional, interactive, receptive and evaluative. Meanwhile, Jones (2008) outlines the general contributing factors to ESL low level of English proficiency as follows (p. 102).

- Lack of knowledge on the part of school graduate when they join the university
- School and English language curricula
- Teaching methodology
- Lack of the target language environment
- The learner's motivation

The above mentioned points contribute to university students making basic and frustrating errors in pronunciation, spelling, morphology and syntax. The students cannot express themselves comfortably and efficiently when dealing with academic topics or daily discussion topics. Speaking in L2 has occupied a peculiar position throughout much of the history of language teaching, and only in the last two decades has it begun to emerge as a branch of teaching, learning and testing in its own right, rarely focusing on the production of spoken discourse (Bygate, 2002). Bygate suggests that, in particular, learners need to develop skills in the management of interaction as well as in the negotiation of meaning. Bygate further asserts that the management of interaction involves such things as when and how to take the floor, when to introduce a topic or change the subject, how to invite someone else to speak, how to keep a conversation going and so on.

According to Nunan (2005), one can apply the bottom-up top- down distinction to speaking. Nunan explains that the bottom up approach to speaking has speakers start with the smallest unit of language, i.e. individual sounds, and move through mastery of words and sentences to discourse. The top-down view, has speakers start with larger chunks of language, which are embedded in meaningful contexts, and use their knowledge of these contexts to comprehend and correctly use the smaller elements of language. To support his arguments, Nunan outlined that for oral communication to be successful, the following development should take place:

- Skills in the management of the interaction;
- Skills in negotiating meaning;
- Conversational listening skills (successful conversations require good listeners as well as good speakers);
- Skills in knowing about and negotiating purposes for conversations;
- Mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation patterns; an acceptable degree of fluency;
- Transactional and interpersonal skills;
- Skills in taking short and long speaking turns; sing appropriate conversational formulae and filler the ability to articulate (p. 67).

Adequate English proficiency in the academic language of learning is imperative for students. Cummings (2011) views academic language as the language used in education and is needed to function at the university level and beyond. In contrast, The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign languages ACTFL (2012) views language proficiency as the ability to use language in real world situations in a



spontaneous interaction and non-rehearsed context and in a manner acceptable and appropriate to native speakers of the language.

Bailey (2007) also views academic language as linguistics used in reading texts, writing and speaking classroom discourses that are characterized by academic text structures and grammatical complexity. Furthermore, he states that academic language exhibits what a language user is able to do regardless of where, when or how the language was attained. Research on academic skills needed by ESL students to function effectively at English-medium universities have focused on reading and writing skills, classrooms practices, pedagogy and others (Jones, 2012). It is important to further consider these concepts of academic speaking in detail to understand the multiple variables that converge to make academic speaking complex processes and daunting activities respectively.

Spoken discourse plays a central role at all levels of education because it is one of the basic mediums of interactions and it is through talks that students actively engage in the pedagogic enterprise while lecturers constructively assist students to dynamically participate in different levels of discourses (Cohen, 2012). Echoing the same sentiments, Cummins (2011) argues that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Cummins terms speaking as a form and meanings that are dependent on the context

in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking.

In agreement to the latter Bailey (2007) asserts that speaking is crucial to increasing students' intellectual development and to deepening student learning through sustained conversation. It has its own skills, structures, and conventions different from written language because learners actively construct knowledge and develop understandings from their shared experiences via interaction with others. Good speakers synthesize the range of skills and knowledge to succeed in given speech acts. Speakers' skills and speech habits have an impact on the success of any exchange (Eccles, 2012).

As per Bailey's (2007) theories, speakers in a learning environment should discretely manage the elements such as turn-taking, rephrasing and providing feedback. Bailey further proposes that students need skills and knowledge such as using grammar structures accurately; selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, using gestures or body language; and paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement. Regarding many Namibian students' proficiency, the latter puts a lot of pressure on them. Their limited proficiency levels would not allow them to use the

English language appropriately to; actively participate in classroom, deliver meaningful oral presentations and to meet academic content standards of spoken discourse without an intervention. Hence the integrating of drama techniques in the English Access Course (EAC) lessons to enhance the students' communicative speaking skills.

Related research about classroom practices to enhance students' communicative skills in various parts of the world (Cummins, 2011) has revealed that speakers of English as a second language who use the language for learning face various challenges in accessing the curriculum. Cummins argues that performance in the language of instruction results in poor performance not only in other subjects, but also in overall inadequate performance in the second or foreign language. Supporting Cummins' arguments is Burns (2000), who in his research report on ESL students in Australian universities, suggest that international students from a non-English speaking background found it difficult to contribute effectively in class discussions or tutorials due to poor grammar. Qorro (2004) affirms that when students have a firm grasp of their specialized subjects, that understanding gives them a stable ground on which to build a foundation for learning a second or foreign language. Heinrich-Jones' (1998) study about academic speaking challenges faced by ESL students in Namibia, revealed that limited proficiency in the language of instruction was an overriding inhibiting factor in the learners' performance. This ultimately leads to poor overall academic achievement. This study concentrates on integrating drama techniques in EAC lessons at the University of Namibia to mitigate English speaking challenges faced by students. The study aims to be a substantial

contribution to the body of knowledge on curriculum issues and best practices in the area of improving students' learning.

### **2.9.3 Language teaching style**

For many years, the traditional teaching style or specifically, teacher-centred instruction has been dominant in academia. Thus, it is vital for the researcher to visit literature that speaks more to teaching methods appropriate for drama strategies and techniques employed in this study. Teaching style as described by Guida (2007), are those enduring personal qualities and behaviours that appear in how educators conduct their classes. Cole (2009) defines the term teaching style as the distinct qualities exhibited by a teacher that are consistent from situation to situation regardless of the content being taught.

### **2.9.4 Teaching oral Communication Skills**

A review of literature and studies in teaching oral communication provided perspective to the moral and practical considerations of this study. Often times when people ask one can speak English; they want to know if you can carry on a fluent and reasonably comprehensible conversation. Brown (2011) states, "the benchmark of successful language acquisition is the demonstration of an ability to accomplish pragmatic goals through interactive discourse with other speakers" (p. 30). The goals and the procedures for teaching conversation are extremely diverse, depending on the student, teacher, and overall context of the class.

The ability to speak in a second language involves several components that speakers need to acquire in order to communicate effectively (Richards, 2008). For this reason, Richards confirms that communicative skills must include not only the linguistic form of a language but also knowledge of when, how and to whom it is appropriate to use this form. In support of Richards' postulations, Nunan (2008) as an ESL assessor sets the following criterions to be considered when teaching speaking and assessing speaking skills.

### **2.9.5 Fluency**

Nunan (2008) defines fluency as the ease and speed with which a student is able to formulate and generate speech in the target language. It comes mainly through contextual speaking practice, not drilling with isolated words. It includes:

- Producing connected speech occasionally disrupted by hesitations as students search for correct form of expression.
- Elimination of translation and omission of filler words (reduction).
- Speaking fluently and talking for an appropriate length of time.
- Responding and showing basic competencies which are needed for everyday life communication (p.231).

### **2.9.6 Pronunciation**

Pronunciation is defined as the sound of speech; which is often a contentious issue in language teaching and assessment. Nunan (2008), states that the above is the case

because people tend to judge native/non-native speaker status on the basis of pronunciation. Although most language students learn to pronounce in a fully comprehensible and efficient manner, very few learners are capable of achieving a native like standard in all respects. In a sequence, comprehensibility can be the criteria to be used in judging speaking skills Nunan (2008).

### **2.9.7 Grammar**

Nunan (2008) proposes that students' progress is often tracked according to the grammatical forms that they produce accurately. In general he asserts that, students proceed from knowing a few structures to knowing and utilizing more complex ones with making fewer mistakes. However, the grammar that is evaluated in assessing speaking should be related to the grammar of speech. Another factor that affects the grammar of speech is the level of formality of the speaking situation. Situations involving planned speech tend to be relatively formal which require more written language with more complex grammar, whereas unplanned situations range from formal to informal (Nunan, 2008). Nunan advises test designers to design tasks by merging the kinds of speaker roles, role relationships and planning time.

### **2.9.8 Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is defined as “being able to express oneself precisely and providing evidence of the richness of one's lexicon” (Nunan, 2008, p. 16). However, Nunan states that using very simple and ordinary words naturally is likewise a marker of

highly advanced speaking skills. In additions, Nunan argues that spoken words contribute to the listener's impression of the speaker's fluency and keep the conversation going. Therefore the use of vague words such as 'thing' help the speaker go on regardless of the missing word and at the same time they appeal to the listener to understand and supply it if they can.

### **2.9.9 Increasing speaking skills in the ESL classroom**

According to Richards (2008), speaking skills are a set of skills that have influence on what is said in a speech event and how it is said in the social and situational context. He clarifies that speaking skills deal with communicating for specific purposes. Echoing the same sentiments is Jones (2008) who states that situations can be deferred as the physical setting and the nature of the event, i.e. greetings, giving advice, agreeing or disagreeing and so on. Jones further argues that effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social setting or interaction. Sari (2011) calls for teachers to play the role of talk facilitators at all learning levels. Also, Sari asserts that students need to learn enough vocabulary and expressions to practice the language. Sari however cautions that students' communicative skills would not be accomplished without the teacher being involved in classroom interaction and discussion.

Students need to have multiple turns in talking and opportunities to express themselves if they are going to produce extended discourse which is a marker of an

advanced speaker (Donato, 2012). Donato clarifies that students' participation shapes the ways in which they use language for classroom learning. Glisan and Donato (2010) also stress the importance for students to reach an advanced level of proficiency. He asserts that students should be provided with sufficient opportunities to engage in meaningful and pertinent discursive interactions, if they are to have multiple turns in talking, and develop strategies for self-expression. Practice and risk taking are keys to developing the ability to communicate, and this can be enhanced through the following:

- Developing a classroom environment which creates a positive learning atmosphere.
- Display posters relevant to the students' language needs.
- Encourage students' work to stimulate interactions and to foster ownership.
- Use English as frequently during class and insist that students do the same.
- Provide students with a list of useful expressions to initiate sustain and/or conclude a conversation.
- Provide opportunities for students to hear authentic speakers of English from a variety of sources (e.g., guests, television or radio excerpts).
- Work with the students to develop scenarios for short role plays, simulation and hot seating or other communication activities linked to each theme.
- Write the topics on cards and set aside time each week (or each class) for practice.



- Keep a video-taped bank of sample conversations and other oral activities so students are able to see examples and discuss the necessary elements to produce a good activity.
- Discuss criteria and elements of an ideal spontaneous interaction: a good speaker, who questions, responds, reacts, rescues, adds, sustains or embellishes (Donato, 2012, p. 240).

Donato (2012) affirms that those guidelines are crucial in building a roadmap for teachers to conduct speaking classes because they focus on involving students in their learning and being aware of the standards to be evaluated accordingly.

### **2.10 Students' attitudes towards speaking English**

Students' attitudes towards speaking English as a second language are generally referred to the state of emotion and thoughts relating to the English language and the culture of English speaking people (Susanti, 2007). Susanti clarifies that the attitude towards the English language may include students' feelings, prejudice, or fears about learning English as a second language. To add more value to Susanti's definitions of attitudes towards English, Brown (2010) asserts that "attitudes, like all aspects of the development of cognition, develop early in childhood and are the result of parents and peers attitudes, contact with people who are different, and interacting affective factors in the human experience" (p. 169). Brown argues that attitudes form a part of one's perceptions of self, of others and of the culture in which one is living.

In addition, Brown (2010) postulates that L2 learners benefit from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and in all likelihood, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency due to decreased input and interaction. Therefore, Brown urges teachers to be aware of the fact that every learner has both positive and negative attitudes towards English. As for Ellis (2009), he encountered a problem in defining attitudes and motivations because he thinks that the two cannot be directly observed, but have to be inferred from what the person actually does. To understand the latter, Ellis adopted Spolin's (1963) definition, who defined attitudes, as a social factor influenced by variables such as size of learning group and factor alongside culture shock.

Ellis (2009) also defines motivation in terms of L2 learners' overall goal of orientation, and attitude as the persistence shown by the learner in striving for a goal. Gardner (2008) views attitudes towards speaking English as a result of motivation to learn a second language which is based on positive attitude towards the second language community and upon a desire to communicate with valued members of that community and to become similar to them. It is important to note that the current study also analysed the students' attitudes and motivation towards speaking English. This is purposively done, so that the study yields conclusive results that inform readers on the crucial aspect of the students' attitudes and motivation towards speaking English as a second language.

### **2.11 Defining drama**

The general definition of drama according to the Oxford English Dictionary (2009) means the action of intervening, stepping in, or interfering in any affair, so as to affect its course or issue. Interventions in accordance to this study could be structured into three main sorts: (1) comprehensive interventions representing new or restructured literacy programs designed for classes of any level, (2) focused interventions for classes, subgroups, or individuals that supplement existing programs with skills or knowledge to facilitate individuals 's development, and (3) comprehensive intervention designed for individuals and for subgroups of students who do not respond well to existing programs (Maley & Duff, 2005). The choice of the focused intervention in this study means using instructional strategy (drama strategies and techniques) focused on a particular skill (speaking) to complement the existing classroom program.

Building on the meaning of drama derived from the Oxford English Dictionary to contextualise it into the educational arena, Maley and Duff (2005) argue that drama in education is a lived experience which moves along an educational continuum that embraces many forms. They describe it as a teaching tool that goes from simple role play, simulation and hot seating to fully-structured forms; but the focus remains on identifying opportunities for learning how to organize these forms. In addition to Maley and Duff's sentiments, Heathcote (2008) proposes that educational drama is a pedagogy that utilizes play-like techniques to prompt students' communication, interpersonal, cognitive, self-advocacy, thinking and speaking skills.

An obvious concern of this study is to know the role of drama in a language classroom. Drama can be defined in a multitude of ways; however, with respect to learning and teaching a language, drama is defined as an activity in which the student is asked to portray either himself in an imaginary situation or another person in an imaginary situation (Heathcote, 2008). In other words, Heathcote asserts that the student would be asked to pretend; to project himself imaginatively into another situation, outside the classroom, or into the persona of another. He may do this alone, or more usually, he may do so in conjunction with one or more of his fellow learners. He may act in a controlled way, following linguistic and organizational guidelines laid down by the teacher, or he may be independent to work out his own parameters (Heathcote, 2008). In either case, Heathcote argues that students would be interacting with other people, and reacting in some way to what they say and do, drawing on his own personal knowledge of language to communicate meaningfully.

### **2.12 Drama techniques and strategies**

Drama techniques are defined as strategies to communicate or convey the intended meaning which involves a wide range of activities (Heathcote, 2008). Wagner (2010) affirms that they are the everyday tools used to develop enquiry skills, to encourage negotiation, understanding and creativity. Wagner further claims that drama techniques can enhance performance skills such as character development and storytelling and be used across the curriculum to actively involve students in their

own learning. Therefore, it is worth noting that these two terms (techniques and strategies) will be used interchangeably throughout this study.

Several studies on the use of drama in teaching English have proposed that, for drama activities to be effective, the teacher should design effective drama techniques. Drama techniques proponents such as Maley and Duff (2005) state that drama activities accord students to use their own emotional contents such as personalities, past experiences and imaginations that are usually neglected in the traditional way of teaching the language as a tool to conceptualize the language. In this light, Gaudart (2010) terms drama techniques as problem solving activities that offer learners situational settings and roles which allow them to practice the target language meaningfully.

Drama techniques are defined in detail in Maley and Duff (2008) as situational and instructional settings that allow learners to be themselves and practice the language meaningfully. In addition, in explaining the aspects of drama techniques, they provide additional insight on how drama techniques allow learners to focus on their imaginations, memories and natural capacities to bring to life parts of their past experiences that might never otherwise emerged. This study combined drama elements and types of drama techniques: (role play, simulation and guided improvisation) into an arrangement of instruction for Literature and Grammar components in the EAC in order to broaden students' opportunities for nourishing their speaking abilities.

### **2.13 Types of drama techniques/strategies**

Drama strategies may include: role plays, teacher in role, forum theatre, conscience alley, hot seating, tableaux, still image, freeze frame, thought tracking, storytelling, spotlight, cross-cutting, soundscape, dance, games, and simulations and guided improvisation. Each dramatic genre is distinct with different purposes and learning outcomes. Meanwhile, drama techniques utilized in language classes have generally been divided into seven types, including games, mime, role playing, improvisation, simulation, storytelling, and dramatization. Out of the mentioned drama techniques, this study employs 3 of the seven drama techniques for the purpose of enhancing students' communicative skills.

#### **2.13.1 Role-play**

Maley and Duff (2008) postulate that role-play is a drama techniques with misunderstood concepts by some language teachers. They indicate that teachers believe that role-play is selecting a dialogue, having students read aloud in front of the class, while correcting learners' pronunciations errors. In Davies (2006), role-play is defined as an activity involving imaginary people and situation where learners are free to decide how to develop the dialogue further. Also, in expanding the definition of role-play, Richards and Rodgers (2001) define it as a role that learners and teachers are expected to play in carrying out learning tasks as well as the social and interpersonal relationship between participants. Richards and Rodgers assert that role-play as an activity is exploited by different approaches to language teaching. Furthermore Cheng (2010) affirms that role-play as a drama technique is one way

learners can have the opportunity to practice improving a range of real-life spoken language in the classroom.

It is noteworthy to mention that there is a considerable body of literature in applying role-play and its strategies for teachers and learners. For example, Maley and Duff (2008) studied the interpretation of role-play by two different groups. In their study, one group simply carried out the instructions in a mechanical fashion. Another group reconstructed the task in accordance with their own goals. They managed to show that the discussions produced by two groups differed greatly, with far more meta-talk evident in the second. Also, in a study on the effect of role-play technique on the acquisition of English language structures, O'Neill (2009) concluded that role-play as an activity for bringing real language situations into the classroom was considerably effective in improving subjects' acquiring the foreign language structures.

In another study on the effect of task-based activities on the acquisition of structures, O'Neill (2009) illustrated that learners' language structure improved through utilizing role-plays activities much more than structural techniques. Emphasizing on the merits of role-play, Kao (2010) encourages English teachers to make use of this perspective of language teaching tool in high schools so as to develop learners' communicative competence. Comparably, Royka (2012) states that role-play tasks are effective tools for applying the principles of CLT which represents the starting point of a new movement in language teaching. Also, Asher (2009) prioritizes role-plays for learners at the level of high school since it goes through negotiation of

meaning present in every communication as the key factor rather than forms. Asher strongly recommends teachers and practitioners to take into account some important considerations of how to effectively apply role-plays as drama techniques in their language classrooms.

### **2.13.2 Simulations**

Jones (2008) suggests that simulation is a drama technique where learners become participants in an event and shape the course of the event. Jones further states that learners have roles, functions, duties, and responsibilities within a structured situation involving problem solving. In addition, Jones asserts that simulations are generally held to be a structured set of circumstances' that mirror real life and in which participants act as instructed. He further outlines that a simulation activity is one where the learners discuss a problem within a defined setting whereby the students are either playing themselves or someone else. Furthermore, Jones states that simulation activities are also interactional activities with various categories of dialogues: One category would be social formulas and dialogues such as greeting, parting, introductions, compliments, and complaints.

Jones (2008) also maintains that simulation exercises can teach students how to function in a social situation with the appropriate social niceties: for example, students could practice how to turn down a request for a date or a party. Another category of simulated interaction activity is community oriented tasks, where students learn how to cope with shopping, buying a ticket at a bus stop etc. This sort



of simulation, Jones argues that it helps students' communicative participation in the community and at the very least helps them in the task of collecting important information. A clear line cannot be drawn between role play and simulation (Jones, 2008). These two drama activities overlap as per Jones assertions.

### **2.13.3 Guided Improvisations**

According to Maley and Duff (2005) improvisation is an unscripted, unrehearsed, spontaneous set of actions in response to minimal directions from a teacher, usually including statements of which one is, where one is, and what one is doing there. The focus is thus on identifying with characters, enacting roles and entering into their inner experience of imagination and fantasy. Whereas, Malik (2008) states that the focus of improvisation is on helping learners to discover their own resources from which their most imaginative ideas and strongest feelings flow. This way, Malik posits that participants gain freedom, self-discipline and the ability to work with others.

Hodgson and Richards (1974) in their book 'Improvisation,' define the term as a spontaneous response to the unfolding of an unexpected situation. They further outline that improvisation is an excellent technique to use in the EFL/ESL classroom, as it motivates the learners to be active participants in authentic situations thereby reducing their self-consciousness. Also, Hodgson and Richards assert that at the beginning, students will be hesitant and shy to participate in activities, but after a few sessions they will become more enthusiastic and there will be a phenomenal

improvement in their confidence level. Dialogues in improvisation are apt to be brief at first, but with practice words begin to come and the players discover the possibilities of character development when oral language is added (Hodgson & Richards, 1974).

Simulation's implementation is aimed at improving the EFL/ESL learners' confidence, therefore is important for teachers to involve the establishment of a context which serves to inform the participants where they are and what is expected of them in portraying their inter-relationships with other characters at the beginning of its implementation (Hodgson & Richards, 1974). Furthermore, they urge that since simulation is an unscripted, unrehearsed drama exercise, the participants are at liberty to make their own spontaneous contribution as the play unfold. This entails that they have the freedom to add their own words and develop their characters in the ways which they would like to. Thus one of the advantages of improvisation is the level of freedom that the participants are able to exercise during the execution of the creative session.

### **2.14 Drama in Education**

Drama in education remains controversial in regards to the role it plays in teaching and learning English. Drama in education discussions have now shifted and linked to the question of how drama relates to communicative skills and language learners 'confidence. Even though there is vast interest in the usage of drama in contemporary language classrooms, many educationists still use traditional methods

of teaching drama for entertainment, but not to enhance their English communicative skills (Bolton, 2006; Brown, 2010).

Research has suggested that recently, the increase of interest towards drama is high but the approach or actual practice seems to be at an impasse (Bolton, 2006). He advances that there is a niche to develop creative drama materials that give students the opportunities to acquire adequate communicative skills and substitute traditional drama practices introduced by traditional theorists and experts in the field. Bolton further acknowledges that there is a lack of developed drama material for different students' needs, and there is a need for additional research on various types of drama practices in education; specifically those that look at the role of drama on students' English communicative skills.

The process of reviewing research for this topic revealed substantial evidence which affirms that using drama in second and foreign language classrooms can significantly increase students' confidence and self-esteem (Chauhan, 2011; Culham, 2010; Dodson, 2010; Hayes, 2010; Stern, 2008).

Research shows that learning activities based on drama increase students' confidence (Gaudart, 2010; Stern, 2008). Literature on communicative language teaching (CLT) commonly describes language as fluid, dynamic and spontaneous. This supports the underpinning theories of CLT, which emphasise authentic communication in the L2 learning and teaching arenas. Drama activities, while providing a kinaesthetic

learning process, allow teachers to accomplish the goals of CLT (; Eccles, 2012; Chauhan, 2011; Culham, 2010; Stern, 2008).

In addition to increased confidence and accomplishing the aims of CLT, drama in the language classroom provides various opportunities for students to negotiate their own meaning with language (Dodson, 2010). In her study, Susan (2006) presents research findings from a psycholinguistic perspective. She presents her assumptions of how drama works in language teaching. In her presentations she made use of quantitative and qualitative empirical research designs to assess how drama works in language learning and teaching and why it works. Susan specifically cites self-esteem, emotions and kinaesthetic components involved in CLT. She further addresses the attitudes of both students and teachers and thoroughly examines drama techniques in L2 and EFL classes from the psychological perspective. Susan's study revealed a dramatic increase in self-esteem and an increase in motivation and spontaneity.

Further assumptions related to drama in education are reported in Culham (2010) in his action research on Drama-based EFL teaching: A Nonverbal Approach; Culham began from the assumption that the 3 underpinning of all language learning are nonverbal through identifying the nonverbal language aspects as a recurring point of miscommunication for his classes of intercultural students. Culham assumes the latter that in CLT nonverbal communication, silent interactions and manual symbols are essential. In his study, he identifies common problems for CLT, within the specific context of using drama in cultural classes with adult learners. Culham also

writes that CLT is often not respected as a valid learning and teaching method. He remarks that students who are not familiar with the student-driven classroom have more problems becoming adjusted in the drama oriented lessons.

Heikkinen (2005) asserts that many people think of theatre and plays when they hear the word drama. He remarks that drama as an art form coincides with what drama in theatre customarily is. Whereby in a theatre, actors play roles and their performance is viewed by spectators. However, Heikkinen argues that drama does not remain between the four walls of a theatre but it is extended to education domains with the aim of enhancing skills.

The variance of descriptions of drama in Heikkinen's study unveils that drama is more than merely a theatre bound aspect as it can be specified. For instance, drama can be viewed in a form of playing games and activities, seeing or making a play, forum theatre, Theatre in Education (TiE), process drama and improvisation. To the latter of the foundation of this study, Heikkinen draws attention to the concept of drama in education specifically in English language teaching and learning domains. Thus, as Heikkinen asserts that in contrast of drama merely being known as a part of an institution, drama is a part of everyone's world. For this reason, drama could be cherished by all and can therefore be used in teaching students in a multitude of subjects.

Several scholars also suggest that drama in education is a broad field that is increasingly becoming the centre of various international discussions (Eccles, 2012; Chauhan, 2011; Stern, 2008). The trend of drama usage in contemporary language classrooms has opened doors for researchers to conduct inquiries on the role of drama on students' English communicative skills. According to Stern (2008), drama has been used for language teaching since the 1940s but many teachers used to scoff at the idea of using drama to teach English as a second or foreign language. In his studies, Stern unveils common reasons why teachers are hesitant to incorporate drama activities in their classrooms, namely, fear, motivation, time constraints and lack of appropriate skills.

In agreement with Stern's sentiments regarding the teachers' negative attitudes towards the use of drama in teaching English is Gaudart (2010). In his study findings on overcoming the fear of using drama in English language teaching, Gaudart indicates that teachers overwhelmingly expressed their inadequate skills to teach drama, time restraints and fear looking foolish in front of learners. Similarly, Gaudart's research findings show that many teachers felt that the drama oriented lessons are not to be viewed as serious learning lessons but merely as forms of entertainment and relaxation. Furthermore, Gaudart argues that covering the syllabus is also one of the main concerns mentioned by the teachers when asked why they were reluctant to integrate drama activities in language lessons. In his conclusion, Gaudart outlines the benefits of using drama education specifically in teaching English as a second or foreign language:

- The acquisition of meaningful, fluent interaction in the target language.
- The assimilation of a whole range of pronunciation and prosodic features in a fully contextualized and interactional manner.
- The fully contextualized acquisition of new vocabulary and structure.
- An improved sense of confidence in the student in their abilities to learn the target language (p. 240).

Gaudart (2010) further highlights the complexity of the nature of drama in education as a phenomenon that entails motivation, class size and abilities, teachers' experience and qualifications. In his long-term study conducted in Malaysia involving over 300 teachers and learners, he suggests that such a proper definition of drama and its meaningful purpose in teaching and learning English should be well explained to both parties involved in the language curriculum: What should encompass what fluent speakers when they speak, what processes they use, and how these processes work together to build a general notion of motivation in speaking either English as a second or as a foreign language. In his study, drama techniques and strategies were employed as an intervention and the study reports definite increases in motivation and ease of holding the students' attention. The change in attitude towards the use of drama in language teaching is reported to have been realised due to a greater emphasis on meaningful communicative activities instead of mechanical drills.

### **2.14.1 Drama in education: affective filter**

According to Jones (2008) drama has the potential to lower English language learners' affective filter, helping them lose their inhibitions and overcome their fear, shyness and anxiety. Agreeing to this are Burke & O'Sullivan (2010) who profess that educational drama is an engaging activity that can increase motivation and cause students to be so involved in the action and forget that they are actually learning: By sharing in educational drama strategies, students' motivation, self-esteem, the realistic appraisal of themselves and willingness to become gamblers in the game of language plays a role to go beyond their absolute certainty. This has also been proved in (Coleman, 2010; Stern, 2008; Stinson & Freebody, 2006) studies that drama helps ESL students gain self-confidence and eventually have them feel less nervous speaking English in front of groups.

Based on Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis, second language is best acquired when students receive input that they can understand, but is slightly beyond what they already know. The input hypothesis suggests that speaking skills may lag behind comprehension and understanding. There may be a "silent period" between when a second language learner is exposed to the new language and begins to speak it, but it is vital to his language development that he continues to be exposed to meaningful communication. In relation to the latter, the affective filter hypothesis as mentioned in Jones (2008) affirms that a second language learner's attitude can affect his language development. In addition, Jones argued that language learners who are more at ease have a lower affective filter that allows acquisition to take place.



The discussion related to effective filters in language acquisition had Krashen (2004) outlining in his natural approach to language acquisition as the primary focus in developing the student's ability to communicate in the second language. Krashen's natural approach does not emphasize grammar, for it is assumed that grammatical accuracy will come naturally with time with fluent speeches developing gradually, and is preceded by comprehension and fractured speech. Krashen urges that the activities should focus on creating meaningful input for the learners to comprehend and use in a relaxed environment in order to lower the affective filter and allow acquisition to take place.

#### **2.14.2 Drama in education: learning as a social activity**

The literature on drama as a learning activity is essential to unpack the theoretical knowledge based on Vygotsky's (1978) as the father of sociocultural theory. Vygotsky asserts that learning that occurs through interaction is meaningful to students as it helps them to learn from each other. Vygotsky proposes that communicative (task-based) activities should be adopted in order to provide students with 1) varying degrees of linguistic support, 2) consensus building and interdependent group functioning and promoting the active participation; such activities should address the shortcomings inherent in a classroom dynamic born out of the restricted definition that communication amounts to question & answer.

Studies of (Lim, 2010; Zhou, 2012) have revealed that when students participate actively in class through educational drama, their academic achievement increases

more than that of those who are passive in class. To this effect Krupa- Kwiatkowski (2009) summarizes in her study that “interaction involves participation, personal engagement, and the taking of initiative in some way, activities that in turn are hypothesized to trigger cognitive processes conducive to language learning” (p. 133). Schmitt (2002) notes that languages can be unconsciously acquired through conversation and exposure to ‘comprehensible input’, based on the notion laid out by Krashen (1985) and other SLA theorists.

Expanding on the comprehensible input notion is Hedge (2011) who argues that for one to be a competent user of a language, concentration should be on genuine interaction of language. Hedge further maintains that explicit or direct focus on form is unimportant for language learning. In agreement with Hedges’ sentiments, Brown (2006) states that “for the genuine interaction, language learning requires individuals (teachers as well as students) to appreciate the uniqueness of other individuals” (p. 124). Brown also asserts that students need to interact during language classroom and they should have a teacher who can understand their special needs –not one who manipulates, direct them or decide for them how they should learn: but one who encourages, guide and build self-confidence and create enjoyment while learning the language.

### **2.14.3 Drama in education: learning as a scaffolding activity**

The discussions on the use of drama as stated by Peregoy and Boyle (2008) led to detailed explanation that drama activities provide students with a variety of

contextualized and scaffolded. McCaslin (2006) clarifies that drama is a learning scaffolding activity as there is a direct relationship between language learning and that of the implementation of drama techniques which would improve vocabulary acquisition, fluency, communication, pronunciation and get rid of shyness.

Drawing back to Vygotsky postulations (1978), he raises the awareness on the value of socially shared activities that are environmentally enriching as a means of promoting higher mental functioning. Vygotsky argues that it is the teachers' responsibilities to enrich the children's environment by designing age appropriate drama activities that are socially embedded. To this McCaslin (2006) presents strong arguments in relation to drama as a scaffolding activity that promotes language development and speaking skills. McCaslin further contends that learners involved in drama activities are constantly experimenting with different ways of talking, which leads to a higher awareness of the variations in language. McCaslin underlines that through dramatization, the students in class receive constant scaffolding as they shift from functioning at the lower limit of their ZPDs (performance without assistance) to the upper limit (i.e., a higher level of performance with assistance).

In the same context, O'Gara (2008), Cunningham (2009) discusses their findings which suggest that drama provides an excellent platform for assessing students' general language skills and for teaching language. Cunningham (2009) asserts that, the communicative activities of the classroom and their resources, the particular participants and their histories, and the processes, by which the participants conjointly use the resources to accomplish their lives as members of their classrooms

or other learning contexts, become the fundamental units of analysis. Chinn et al, (2010) are also of the opinion that learners must be active agents in their own learning and instructional parameters and decisions affect discourse features such as the amount of teacher talk and student talk, the frequency of interruptions, the character of teacher and student questions, and the cognitive processes are manifested in the students' talk.

The studies on ESL classes (Donato, 2012; Mantero, 2012) investigate the role of drama in teaching English to provide platforms for upper-primary school learners in advanced speaking functions. Their studies prove that L2 learners hardly engage in communicative exchanges unless forced to. They further asserts that L2 learners prefer lessons that are traditional with questions only one right answer with learners not being able to consider alternative points of view. Thus, the second language teacher's goal should be to create a sense of reality or facilitate situations of real communication by following the communicative approach.

### **2.15 The Value of Drama in Education**

Stern (2008) views the value of drama in education in second language learning from a psycholinguistic point of view. Stern asserts that drama heightened self-esteem, motivation, spontaneity, increased capacity for empathy, and lowered sensitivity to rejection. All these facilitate communication and provide an appropriate psycholinguistic climate for language learning. In spite of the research showing the positive benefits of drama on attitudes for second language learning, there are few studies examining its effectiveness. Stern found five studies showing how helpful

drama is in improving oral language skills in second language learning (Baker, 2006; Kao, 2009; Planchat, 2009; Spanda, 2007; O'Sullivan, 2011). Most of these, with the exception of Planchat (2009) and O'Sullivan (2011) were observational studies.

The study by O'Sullivan was a quasi-experiment comparing an eight-week drama based ESL program to a traditional ESL instruction program that emphasized oral drills. Although both groups showed improvement in oral English language skills, the drama group scored significantly higher in total verbal output and mean length of utterances than the control group. Results of Coleman's (2010) quasi-experiment of Korean EFL students showed significant pre-post-test gains in English speaking skills after participation in a 5 day intensive drama-based program. Stinson and Freeman (2009) study of EFL students in Singapore also showed significant pre-post-test gain in English speaking skills, while control groups showed no significant change.

A further consideration of the value of drama in education is interaction. Olsen and Kagan (1992) offer the value of drama in education as a phenomenon that promotes cooperative learning: a more relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere compared to traditional classrooms. A relaxed, positive learning environment can result in increased achievement for all students as per Olsen & Kagan's assertions. They argued that cooperative learning contributes to language development through increased active communication. Furthermore, they affirm that through cooperative learning, students are given more opportunities to speak than is possible in a

traditional classroom environment. This eventually leads to an increased complexity of communication, and increased comprehension.

It is noteworthy to mention that Olsen and Kagan urge that high achieving students perform to their level best in cooperative learning environments than they do in traditional classrooms, despite being grouped with weaker students as the weaker students benefit from working with the high achievers. This is an important aspect in the context of second language learning in the sense that Richard (2008) warns against fossilization effects with beginning and intermediate second language learners. He quotes Wong-Fillmore's (2004) study which reports that high achieving and weaker students could be good models for each other, because students with a lower English proficiency will gain the most by communicating with more proficient students because they are receiving comprehensible input than grouping students as per their language proficiency.

The value of drama in education is also highlighted in Heathcote (2008) who believes that drama is an effective technique for learning because it isn't something that is unfamiliar to learners across the curriculum. Heathcote notes that most ordinary people use drama to cope with new or unsettling experiences. For example, if a person has a job interview coming up, they will rehearse it in their minds beforehand to mentally prepare themselves for success. Also, if something traumatic happens, we may replay the scenario in our minds to help us explore the experience, gain better insight, and decrease our anxiety and consequently increase our control

over it. One of the most significant advantages of using drama in an ESL classroom is its potential to limit boredom and lack of effort on the learners' part.

Heathcote further cautions that traditional oral activities do not allow students to experience features which are present in real conversations outside the classroom. By using drama, role-play in particular, the teacher provides the students with oral activities that require them to be active participants for the entire activity. This is accomplished because the learners' responses will depend on what the other participants say and do which unlike traditional oral activities, are not predictable. Therefore, even if the learners are not speaking, they have to be listening attentively to their peers in order to respond accordingly (Heathcote, 2008).

Heathcote assertions are reported to have inevitable implications for classroom management. Heathcote reports that students who are asked to engage in activities which seem irrelevant or not interesting will certainly lead to issues of classroom discipline, often leading to students getting off-task and not participating in the activity, which will then affect the entire group. Heathcote says that these types of problems may lead many teachers to rely on activities that require little movement and interaction between students themselves.

The notion of oral communication is then replaced by oral presentations and teacher-student interaction which do not allow the learners to get sufficient practice in oral communication, posits Heathcote (2008). She adds that using role-play that has been chosen to suit the students' interests, experience, and needs, the relevance and

importance of the activity is obvious to the learners and encourage greater and more authentic participation.

Another critical value of drama in education, according to Bolton (2006) is that, drama enables the language learner to contextualize the language in real or imagined situations, both in and out of the classroom setting. Bolton further argues that drama allows the learners to explore, and practice language in meaningful situations while reinforcing the language structures they have already learned. It also helps to extend, retain and reinforce the vocabulary and grammatical structures that have already been taught. Although Maley and Duff (2005) believe that appropriate use of language and meaning are more important than form or structure, typical language classrooms still emphasize the learning of correct grammatical forms before meaning (Bolton, 2006). Drama can therefore reinforce the most critical aspects of language learning and allow students to focus on meaning and language forms simultaneously.

The appealing aspect of using drama according to Stern (2008) is the fact that it allows the teacher to prepare exercises that suit the various abilities in class; not only based on language skills, but also the strengths and weaknesses of the learners as students. For example, major roles that require a lot of speaking and strong decision making abilities can be assigned to students who not only have a better grasp of the target language, but also like to talk and lead the group. Students who are shy and/or do not have a good grasp of the language can be assigned the smaller, but equally important roles. Stern does not believe that a student who is by nature a quiet person should be required to do as much talking as the others. "If the student does not say



much in his mother tongue, then there is little point in trying to make him a chatterbox in the foreign language without any intervention (Stern, 2008, p. 123). The task of the teacher is to improve performance in the foreign language, not alter personality, states Stern.

### **2.16 Drama as useful methods in teaching English as a Second language**

Growing interest in using drama techniques and strategies as methods to teach English as a second language has increasingly been of interest to teachers and practitioners, from primary to tertiary level. Such increasing interest is also evidenced by the emergence of new scholarly conferences (e.g., International Association of Performing Language), workshops within conferences (Conference of the German Association of Foreign Language Research, 2011), journals specific to the field of drama and L2 education (e.g., Scenario: Journal for Drama and Theatre in Foreign and Second Language Education, which commenced in 2007).

Building on earlier resources of teaching L2 through drama (Di Pietro, 2008; Maley & Duff 2008; Schmitt, 2002; Wessels, 2012), the last two decades have witnessed a continuous proliferation of teaching resources in response to a growing pedagogical interest to the questions of how to integrate drama into L2 learning. Ting (2005) collection of practical dramatic activities and strategies as part of the *New Way* series published by TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) has initiated over a decade's worth of growing interest in using drama in L2 classrooms, and this is evidenced by numerous online teacher resource websites.

Despite widespread studies using drama by teachers who strive for more contextually situated, engaging, and communicative language use in the classroom, ironically drama does not seem to be widely implemented in language classrooms (Even 2011; Dinapoli 2009; Kao, 2009), as transmission models of language learning remain prevalent in many educational contexts. Even when integrated, the use of drama has often been limited to decontextualized scripted role-plays, memorization of superficial dialogues, and warm-up games that fall outside the curriculum (Culham, 2010; Dinapoli, 2009; Dodson, 2010). Most importantly, Kao (2009) distinguish process-oriented educational drama from a less contextualized plays that are part of drama. They assert that through language, people can share their opinions, cultures and worldviews. Furthermore, (Bolton, 2011; Cummings, 2011; Gilmore, 2007; Lauer, 2008; Ellis, 2005) claim that drama activities can help students learn language effectively and offers great opportunities for students to communicate with others even when they have limited vocabulary for as long as students can use their body language and gestures to express themselves.

In a study by Schiller (2008) about the function of using drama for at-risk students, he states that some at risk students are low level learners. He posed a question of how to motivate such students to be engaged in learning and that only drama games or activities could encourage them to communicate with others and express themselves confidently. Gaudart (2010) in his study also found that drama could be used to introduce or conclude lessons as it stimulates students' interests and creates their

enthusiasm for English learning. He adds that through dramatic work, students' imagination could be developed to make the learning process meaningful.

On the other hand, Chauhan (2011) claims that using drama in English as second language classes reverse the conventional English education and it explores students' potential to learn and improve their linguistic performance to which Schiller (2008) argues that most drama activities lead young people learning about social life actively, and it also fosters their conflict-resolution abilities and improves human relations.

Echoing the same sentiments as Schiller is Brown (2010), who asserts that drama makes students inevitably immersed in a social milieu and creates more experience for students learning interpersonal skills. Thus, the value of drama lies in the creative process and its effective opportunity for working with others. In his drama class observation report Ting (2009), found that children enjoyed learning language through drama activities. Ting further reports that most learners were inspired and motivated to adapt to new English learning skills through drama activities. Ting thus concludes that children can develop their intelligence to learn language through drama. Another benefit of drama is providing a context to practice listening and speaking for learners and it makes language practice more meaningful than mechanical drills states Ting. In support of Tings' claims is Chauhan, (2011) who states that using drama to teach English as second language is also an effective pedagogy for literacy in English second language classes.

In his study Gomez (2010) indicates that students are normally bored if the English class is tedious and monotonous. He adds that drama activities combine action and entertainment for students while achieving the teaching goals. Students don't only have fun but also learn a variety of components from acting the story, like how to make an English accent or imitate voices and intonations claims Gomez. Drama helps the teachers to elicit target content and attract students' attention or conclude the new lesson (Gaudart, 2010). Gaudart argues that "the use of drama as a teaching tool is based on the premise that an involved child is an interested child, an interested child will learn, and drama directly involves the child" (p. 31).

Gaudart (2010) supports Gomez claims that during drama activities, students use their prior experience to understand the roles and give their response, just as the reader and writer of the novel conceives of the image or response therefore it is an effective way to master language in the English as a second language classes. Gaudart cautions that the conventional teaching system focuses on the teachers and textbook which should be the focal point but with drama, the roles are changed.

Conversely, Hedge (2011) asserts that drama is an instructional and powerful strategy which gives students a platform to exercise their imagination and creativity. Hedge further postulates that drama provides an opportunity for students to undergo an imaginary experience and it affects students' thinking and their way of looking at the world. Brown (2011) also agrees that students are amazed by their performance in drama activities and that they have the courage to stand in front of the class and

express themselves as they become more confident when using English by experiencing the language in operation.

Shedding more light on the types of activities that students participate in; Brown (2011) says that group work is an effective form in drama activities, which takes every student's initiative to process the learning. Furthermore, Brown states that students who have strong linguistic aptitude can take important roles while the low level students also can be engaged by taking the subsidiary role to which Bolton finds the nature of drama flexible, plastic, and continuous, which needs no fixed and constant models for drama activities. Bolton also argues that students can be actors to perform the story that they like or they can compose a song for the story by themselves as drama gives them chances to create a new plot and characters for the story.

Chauhan (2011) makes another convincing case for using drama in English as a second language classroom in his article, which provides the positive aspects of using drama in the ESL classroom. Chauhan asserts that drama activities provide opportunities for authentic communication and can build learners' confidence in speaking English outside the classroom. He recommends teachers to include drama activities to their portfolio of teaching practices. Additionally, Chauhan highlights the nature of language itself, that it involves emotions, feelings, appropriateness of situation, and most importantly, adaptability. In his article, he reasons that English language learners, even after years of classroom learning, fail to master the nuances of colloquial English. Chauhan covers the most common reasons why teachers are

sceptical of using drama in the classroom and recommends teachers to start small with “one-off” activities for inexperienced teachers.

In agreement with Chauhan’s (2011) arguments, Lim (2010) affirms that lack of experience, interest and training leads to the fear of integrating drama activities in language teachers. Lim refers to her experience teaching drama workshops for ESL teachers. She covers the most prevalent fears and concerns that teachers have when it comes to integrating drama into the classroom. She reports in her survey that teachers indicated that they feel inadequately equipped with the right drama teaching skills. Furthermore, Lim reports that most teachers indicated that they fear looking foolish in front of their students therefore they prefer not to integrate drama activities in their lessons. In addition, Lim states that many teachers felt that drama activities do not manifest serious learning but merely promote entertainment. Time constraints and covering the syllabus were mentioned as well. Lim offers practical solutions, advice, and evidence to confirm this. She states that fear is the factor that most hinders the use of drama to reach the aims of CLT. She identifies motivation as a factor, not only for students, but for teachers as well.

To address the issue of teacher motivation, Lim (2010) reports in her long-term study conducted in Malaysia involving over 300 teachers that class sizes and abilities, as well as the teachers’ experience and qualifications are extremely varied. The study reports definite increases in motivation and ease of holding the students’ attention. Her study’s objectives were to integrate writing, reading, and pronunciation skills, as well as to negotiate meaning from difficult texts such as Shakespeare. Lim notes

positive responses from learners; with most reporting that self-confidence has improved. Lim outlines detailed information on various types of activities. The sample was small (six students), and the results should be reviewed in this light. The researcher was able to give much individual coaching to every student, which is rarely a reality in the ESL classroom.

Eccles (2012) provides substantial support for the use of drama in the ESL classrooms. Eccles narrates about the nature of the English language and the learning mechanisms involved in learning the language. He agrees with (Culham, 2010; Chauhan, 2011) that language is not isolated but embedded in a situation. Apart from involving context, language has implications that every teacher should be aware of. Eccles postulates that learners can benefit greatly by using drama to create a “semi-real context” in which knowledge is constructed from and built upon learners’ previous and intrinsic knowledge of language. Unlike other authors on the subject, Eccles gives advice and recommendations on how to incorporate drama and reading of English. He particularly addresses using drama to act out parts of a novel or role-play certain characters to deepen learners’ understanding and appreciation of the written word.

In English as a second language lessons, role play is very common with teachers but it also encourages teachers to explore the different types of role play, such as dramatic plays, storytelling and interviews. However, with the variety of forms, there are many challenges for teachers. It is worthwhile to apply different types of role play according to different levels and demands for students (Gaudart, 2010). Role

play and simulation are popular activities in class. A realistic setting is the key concept in simulation while role-play is defined as “an activity which requires a person to take on a role that is real or imaginary” (p. 230). Gaudart (2010) considers simulation as another effective device to incorporate students’ lived experiences with language learning as it gives them an opportunity to express their own opinions and practice their language skills.

Miming is also appropriate to use for warming-up. “Its strength lies in that although no language is used during the mime, the mime itself can act as a catalyst to generate and elicit language before, during, and after the activity” (Gaudart, 2010, p. 235). Gaudart asserts that miming makes charade games more effective. Teachers divide students into teams; one member of the team shows the picture of the word or expressions, and the volunteer of the team has to mime without saying any words for his own team members. The members of the team have to guess the words by the actor’s miming. The atmosphere of such classes will become relaxed and also facilitate learning activities with dramatic techniques. Chauhan (2011) recommends that in English as a second language classes for older students, teachers can ask them to create a skit to deeply comprehend the vocabulary term or encourage them to make a story by using a list of new vocabulary items. Teachers are as well advised to help students extend and reinforce new vocabulary through relevant literature pieces.

O’Gara (2008) argues that drama motivates students to be involved in the language class emotionally and cognitively. He suggests that it is essential for students to work together and interact with others during opportunities to be involved in task-based



learning. In addition, O’Gara states that drama activities contribute to improving students’ integrated linguistic competence. As for reading practice, he says that a number of students are encouraged to read the story, act it out, and draw the conclusion about the story. In the process, it helps the learner understand the images and plots more comprehensively.

O’ Gara (2008) provides a good example of dramatizing literature. He states that it gives students the chance to explore the meaning and purpose of the writer and act out the role of literature. He further clarifies that dramatization literature enhances students’ reading, writing and listening skills. Summarily, he states that even some students who don’t have confidence to speak up in public are willing to join in drama activities. They seem to enjoy, become creative, and often able to speak naturally.

In his study, Sun (2011) illustrates how drama activities function in writing classes. For example, teachers ask students to study a topic about immigrants. They ask students to read literature about this topic, and then encourage them to create the scenario to perform immigrants’ experiences. As a result, Sun states that students can use their experience to describe and write the topic from various perspectives. Through this drama activities Sun affirms that students develop a firmer understanding of the role and the relevance which writing can have in their lives.

Although drama activities bring a lot of entertainment for students, at the end of class, some parents may complain that their children learned nothing from the drama activity (Gaudart, 2010). Furthermore, Gaudart also mentions that not only do

parents have a problem with drama activities, some teachers are also afraid of using drama activities. He states that teachers do not feel confident using the techniques in class. It is therefore difficult to persuade teachers to reverse the traditional style of teaching language. Gaudart asserts that teachers are worried about how to build authority and organize the class when employing drama activities in lessons. If the teachers can better understand the effectiveness of drama activities, it may become easier for them to accept this methodology and effectively use it in their lessons, states Gaudart.

Another researcher who believes in using drama as an efficient way to make students communicative and sociable is Stern (2008). According to him, drama is one technique that aims at stimulating learners' imaginations and practices of their communication and listening ability in an enjoyable process. Thus, he cautions teachers not to solely have students as the leaders of drama activities. Stern urges teachers to act as guides who direct students' action and help them to not deviate from the intended activities. Stern adds that, as soon as teachers have a good command of drama techniques, "they will find it easy to prepare the actual lesson and class materials which are often tedious will become alive with drama activities" (p.112).

Stern (2008) also argues that there might be some constraints for teachers: the proper drama activity does not encourage teacher to be the major role in the class. Teachers should not control students' thoughts and behaviours. Teachers should be clear about their role and what the relationship is between the teachers and students. Good

relationships can make the whole class vigorous. Minimum instructions are necessary for teachers in the class, as the teachers are just directors. He urged that it is essential for teachers to give students freedom to make their choices concerning character, situation, and body language.

During improvisational process-oriented drama, learners are engaged in numerous moments to understand and be understood by others (Hernandez, 2010). Even during product-oriented scripted theatrical activities, growth in fluency in the target language occurs as learners experience the complex nature of authentic communicative aspects of language (i.e., hesitation, intonation, repetitions, incomplete sentences), as well as engage in rehearsals and performance, which calls for collaboration, negotiation, and meaning exchanges at personal and public levels among participants (Burke & O'Sullivan, 2010; Fukushima & Fujimoto, 2009).

In his article, Gaudart (2010) presents some specific examples on how teachers use drama activities in English as a second language classes. He states that teachers should make a model of pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and oral expression in order to help students to understand vocabulary, idioms and cultural aspects. He further notes that significance of the assessments should not be neglected in the process.

Gaudart (2010) argues differently from other practitioners that drama activities are for learning and that evaluation about language accuracy and fluency becomes necessary after the activities. He adds that if students are easily distracted, then an effective assessment makes students not only to concentrate on others' performances

but also improve their abilities of self-learning. Through the drama activity, some teachers ignore the student's grammatical mistakes, because students often feel frustrated when they make errors. But the purpose of the drama activity is to help students to use the language accurately and appropriately.

Gaudart (2010) strengthens his views that evaluation is an essential process of the drama activity. Evaluation builds students' confidence to use language effectively rather than to critique the students' confidence. Teachers should not make students feel they are taking tests all the time. Otherwise, they will never develop fluency. Here are some considerable issues for teachers while using drama to teach English as a second language: "In teacher training, there is a need to show teachers how these techniques fit into an overall plan into their curriculum and even more than that, show how these techniques can answer students' needs effectively" (Gaudart 2010, p. 231). First, selecting teaching materials which suit students' interest is vital preparation for drama activities. There are some considerations.

- Are the students familiar enough with the material?
- Will the material satisfy their interests?
- Can the teacher explore the useful drama material from the material?

It encourages the teachers to select meaningful teaching materials which students like and creates a free environment which makes students more comfortable. It can motivate students' interests to learn language (Davies & Pearse, 2012).

Davies and Pearse (2012) highlight that there are some problems with using drama activities: some students like acting, but some are reluctant to be involved in the activities. Second, the teachers should pay attention to students' age, different language levels and different personalities. Students' interests are more important for the teachers to be informed. They further state that teachers should choose materials or design activities which can express students' real experiences. Students like to create the stories and plays on the basis of their real life. Cultural bias can as well disturb drama activities. It is effective for teachers to give students more cultural knowledge as well as to choose materials which are similar to students' real life. Video drama is widely used in the English class, which helps students comprehend new language and its cultural experience. Students can directly experience target language speech through video drama. Group work or task-based learning is encouraged in drama activity. It can increase the individual practice and develop students' autonomy (Davies & Pearse, 2012).

Gaudart (2010) argues that although the power of drama is limitless, many teachers don't expect drama techniques to be effective in teaching English. Gaudart states that it is hard to persuade some teachers to change their traditional teaching styles into creative ones. He therefore recommends that besides teaching strategies, teachers need more courage to accept and implement drama techniques in teaching English.

A well-known practitioner in the field of English language learning Heathcote (2008) claims that drama in the language classroom is ultimately indispensable because it offers a lens for students to use their imagination. It draws upon students' abilities to

imitate and express them and, if well handled, it should arouse interest and foster personality development. Heathcote also notes that drama activities encourage adaptability, fluency and communicative competence. Furthermore Heathcote asserts that drama activities put language into context and, by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations; it should arm them with the confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom.

Heathcote (2008) offers insights as to how and why the application of drama fosters learning in multiple ways, in multiple contexts, and with multiple learners – including second language (L2) learners. L2 is used as an umbrella term that refers to any language learned in addition to one's first language. A sub-set of scholars have focused some of their thinking on ways that drama can support L2 learners (Hall, 2002; Kao & O'Neill, 1998; Ulas, 2008; Willburn, 2011). Their work points to ways that educational drama supports L2 learners develop expertise in a second language as they “actively imagine and process information through the use of language and other symbolic forms” (Fleming, 2006, p. 33).

### **2.17 The benefits of using drama techniques in ESL classrooms**

In light of the benefits in using drama techniques, Bolton (2006) affirms that using drama in the ESL classroom can be of great benefit, especially for students who may have already received years of English instruction in school. Bolton argues that while students grasp the language, they have trouble understanding when and where to use different forms of the language, e.g., formal, informal and nonverbal language,

sarcasm, and language in an emotional context. This is especially relevant in Iceland, since students often assume that informal language such as slang, cursing, and addressing authority figures and teachers with first names, is appropriate in English because of a language transfer between Icelandic and English. Bolton states that Icelanders have adapted English swear words for their own use so that it is not uncommon to hear some words spoken by small children. Eccles (2012) states that “drama provides an infinite variety of situations which will require specific language uses, thus providing situations that will demonstrate to students when particular forms of the language are appropriate or not” (p. 3).

A second factor as mentioned in Eccles (2012) may be that Icelandic students are exposed to English mostly from movies, music, television, and video games. While an American student may realise that one does not write a scholastic paper in the same tone used by a movie villain or address her teacher with the same language as a rapper, these variations in language are generally not addressed within various curriculums elsewhere in the world. This creates a divide between what students learn in the classroom and the register they are regularly exposed to through the media. Drama exercises address the difference between formal and informal English and their appropriate uses. Subtlety and nuance, including body language and emotional inflection, are also addressed, giving students a more complete picture of the English language (Eccles, 2012).

In her book, Hayes (2010) notes that “through drama the student learns to perceive and identify different situations, to assume an appropriate role, to understand different functions and points of view and to manipulate language accordingly”

(p. 8). Instead, drama is extended over time and it is built up from ideas, negotiations, and responses of all the participants in order to foster social, intellectual, and linguistic development. Though as noted earlier, such approaches to educational drama have not yet secured a meaningful place in L2 classrooms. However, a number of scholars share a conviction that drama can be a benefit in different aspects of L2 learning.

In L2 classrooms where language is treated in a decontextualized manner, students are seldom provided with opportunities to experience an essential part of actual spontaneous communication. As such, engagement with cooperative and dialogical learning experience is needed (Dinapoli, 2009). Dinapoli argues that, “learners need to be involved in discourse at a more personal level and the efficient and effective use of language in conversation” (p. 3). With its learner-centred and multi-modal nature Dodson (2010) notes that drama can create an environment where L2 learners communicate with one another meaningfully and purposefully by means of verbal and non-verbal signs in a social context. Dodson states that dramatic activities invite L2 learners to experience language “as a system of communicative choices” (p. 2) where they negotiate and exchange information and ideas in a make-believe setting. As such, drama-based L2 pedagogy facilitates opportunities for L2 learners to use language, experience it contextually, and develop their intercultural communicative competence (Dodson 2010). He emphasizes that language learning involves



developing one's intercultural communicative competence which encompasses elements such as open, curious, and critical attitudes, knowledge in sociocultural practices, skills of relating and making sense of cultures, abilities to discover and perform knowledge/attitudes/skills in and through interaction, and critical cultural awareness. In these processes of interaction, scholars suggest that drama pedagogy may be one of the optimal ways to foster and realize communicative language teaching (Even, 2011; Di Pietro, 2008; Wessell, 2012).

### **2.17.1 Fostering Imagination**

L2 learners should not be viewed as passive information processors, but rather as astute “thinkers and language users” (Hausfather, 1996, p.121), inquirers (Hudson, 1996), meaning-makers (Baker, 2006), capable experts (Heathcote 2009; Bolton 2010), or “active goal-oriented hypothesis-generating symbol manipulators” (Gaudard, 2010, p.17). In this light, it is important that imagination and creativity be regarded as an integral part of the art of learning and teaching (Brown, 2006). A number of scholars call for more attempts to be made to transform L2 classrooms to where imagination comes into play in the process of language learning through dramatic exploration (Even, 2011; Chinn, 2010; Hall, 2002; Lim, 2010). While allowing for ample opportunities to reflect on social, affective, and linguistic experiences in and through drama, a dramatic engagement with language and communicative situations can evoke learners' imagination to an extent where they may step out and move beyond the confined walls of the classroom.

### **2.17.2 Authentic Language**

The principles of CLT call for language teachers to use authentic language. The same successful students who receive good grades and find filling in the blanks of their workbook relatively easy may show difficulty in generating spontaneous language and discerning the social and emotional context embedded in everyday language (Nunan, 2008). Nunan echoes this sentiment in his book, *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. He writes: “learners are required to put language to a range of uses, to use language which has been imperfectly mastered, to negotiate meaning, in short, and to draw on their own resources rather than simply repeating and absorbing language” (p. 86). The spoken language used in drama activities mimics more closely actual authentic language. The website, Drama in the ESL Classroom, makes its case for improvisation: In improvisation, students do not necessarily know what comes next. The scene is created as they go. Participants must pay attention to their partners in order to react appropriately. This forces them to listen carefully, to speak clearly, and to use language in an authentic way.

### **2.17.3 Motivation**

Because drama exercises can be presented in a way where students feel like they are playing, as opposed to working, the learning process becomes more positive and enjoyable, knowledge will be more readily retained and students will be more motivated learners (Hall, 2002). Gaudard (2010) argues that increased motivation results in increased learning for both ESL and EFL learners. In his study he reports

that motivation is “seen to be the major affective individual-difference variable contributing to achievement in learning another language” (p. 129).

#### **2.17.4 Self-Confidence**

Several studies (Fleming, 2006; Mantero, 2002; Way, 2005) repeatedly indicate that motivation is linked to self-confidence. Fleming (2006) argues that a student in a role-playing situation has the opportunity to use the target language as someone else. He postulates that this removes the pressure on the students and in turn builds their self-confidence for the using the target language in real life. Additionally, he recounts that removing the right answer/wrong answer format of the traditional classroom lesson allows learners to take risks and build their self-confidence.

#### **2.17.5 Facilitating Contextually-Situated Interaction**

Since language and context cannot be separated and interaction plays a central role in language learning ( Gibbons, 2004; Jackson, 2009), another important benefit from using drama in L2 classrooms would be that drama can create an environment where language is presented, learned, and used in and through interaction situated in social contexts. Educational drama invites learners into contexts where they are encouraged to spontaneously interact with their environment in meaningful ways (Lin, 2009), experience different registers, styles, and discourses (Dodson, 2010; Even, 2011), and develop skills of discovery and interaction (Byram, 2007), while collaboratively constructing imaginative worlds.

### **2.18 Teacher's and students' roles in the English drama oriented lessons**

The communicative approach is a departure from traditional second language teaching methods (Richards, 2006). With this new strategy of language teaching, the roles of the teacher and the students change during the instructional process. Littlewood (2011) points out that, in adopting drama techniques in language instruction, the teacher has to redefine his initially assumed traditional roles while learners also assume new roles that are different from what they experience in the traditional language learning classroom.

The communicative classroom, unlike the traditional classroom, is a learner-centred learning environment which places much emphasis on the activities of the learners, rather than that of the teacher (Maley & Duff, 2005). Learners in the communicative approach classrooms are expected to participate, and cooperatively control classroom learning activities while attempting to accomplish tasks in groups or in pairs (Richards, 2006). Richards states that in a classroom where drama techniques are employed, learners communicate more and develop the confidence of language use when they are at the centre of communicative activities than they would be in a traditional classroom. The active engagement of learners in classroom tasks triggers interaction among one another and brings out the creative ideas and knowledge (Yule, 2007).

In his study, Willburn, (2011) states that in drama oriented lessons, teachers provide learners with communicative tasks that enable them to interact and negotiate meanings. In the process of negotiation, the teacher overlooks immediate and direct

correction of learners' errors. The teacher's roles in a drama oriented lessons include that of a facilitator or coach of a team who has the responsibility of providing an enabling environment for learners' uninterrupted expression and communication, engendered by interaction, collaboration and negotiation of meaning while being engaged in communicative tasks (Richards, 2006). Elaborating the teacher's role in a drama oriented lessons in enhancing students communicative skills, Littlewood (2011) notes that the teacher only offers experience and stimuli that serve as the motivators to learners' communication. Littlewood emphasises that while learners are in control of the learning activities, the teacher should neither stay out of the classroom nor assume the position of participant-observer, but act as a facilitator of learning.

In addition to teacher's roles mentioned above, Guk (2007), remarks that the teacher should resume the roles of a needs analyst. That is, he or she should formally or informally identify and determine the language needs of the learners, through needs assessment. The need assessment should be collaboratively carried out with the learners, rather than needs identified based on teacher's assumptions and speculation. According to Gaudard (2010), some teachers are afraid of using drama activity and don't feel confident using the techniques in the class. It is difficult to persuade them to reverse the traditional style. Teachers are worried about how to build authority and how to organize the class when carrying on the drama activities, states Gaudart. He further asserts that if the teachers can better understand the effectiveness of drama activities, it may become easier for them to accept this methodology. Drama techniques aim to stimulate learners' imaginations and practice their abilities of

communication and listening in an enjoyable process. Thus teachers should use appropriate drama activities aimed at enhancing students' communicative skills (Royka, 2012).

Royka (2012) further argues that the teacher is like a tour guide who directs students' action and helps them not to deviate from the authors' intents. Even though Royka agrees with Gaudart (2009) arguments, Royka cautions that teachers should avoid detailed instruction for students. To the latter Royka (2012) added that as soon as teachers have a command of drama techniques, they will find it easy to prepare the actual lesson. Class materials which are often tedious will become alive with drama activities. However, teachers are like guides who give clear and simple instructions to their students, and make sure that every student understands how to do activities clearly (Royka, 2012). Royka urges teacher not to control students' thoughts and behaviours. Furthermore, Royka also states that teachers should be clear about their roles and what the relationship is between them and their students.

Guida (2007) in his study provides some specific examples representing how teachers use drama activities in English as a second language. Guida made a model of pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and oral expression in order to help students understand vocabulary, idioms and cultural aspects. Gaudart (2009) argues that even though drama may be seen as fun activities, it is important that teachers are aware of how to assess students during drama activities. Gaudart asserts that assessment and evaluation are significant in drama oriented lessons but most if the teachers might neglect them. Supporting the latter Davies and Pearse (2012) argue that evaluating

students' language accuracy and fluency during or after the activities help students to not deviate from the process, as many students might conclude that drama activities are just for fun. They further state that assessing students will not only concentrate on others' performances but also improves their abilities of self-learning. It becomes easy for teachers to manage the class. Through the drama activity, some teachers intend to ignore the student's grammatical mistakes, because students often feel frustrated when they make errors.

Davies and Pearse (2012) strengthened their opinion that evaluation is an essential process of the drama activity. Evaluation builds up student's confidence to use language effectively rather than to critique the students' confidence. Teachers should not make students feel they are taking tests all the time. Otherwise, they will never develop fluency. There are some considerable issues for teachers while using drama to teach English as a second language. "In teacher training, there is a need to show teachers how these techniques will fit into an overall plan into their curriculum and even more than that, show how these techniques can answer students' needs effectively" (Davies and Pearse, 2012, p. 231).

## **2.19 Theories and approaches to drama in L2 teaching and learning**

### **2.19.1 The Heathcote's Approach**

Traditionally, drama involved having students reading a play, memorizing lines, perfecting actions and facial expressions, and finally presenting the play to a group of people. Although such use of drama has its merits, Heathcote (1989) developed a

method than can be much more beneficial in a language classroom. This method begins by presenting the learners with detailed conflicts. These conflicts must be appropriate in content based on students' age and language ability. The students are then grouped together in teams so that each student plays one character. As a group, students must decide on the characterization of each character, the plot and the resolution to the conflict. Once that has been discussed and decided upon, students should practice how the scenario is going to play out, but they do not have lines to write or memorize and have no script to adhere to. They are simply practicing to familiarize themselves with the characters they are portraying and to decide if the resolution they have decided upon is appropriate based on the conflict. "Heathcote lets children decide what the play is to be about, when it is to take place, where the scene is to be, and in most cases, roughly what happens" (Bolton, 2006, p. 43).

Finally, the students act out the scene in front of their classmates. A self-evaluation or classroom discussion may follow. Based on her method, language learners can benefit in many ways and each step requires a multitude of skills and therefore ample opportunity for learning and development Bolton asserts that in England, even as (Slade, 1954; Spolin, 1963, Ward, 1963;) approaches were contributing to community, classroom, and developmental success. Heathcote (1989) as a pioneer in drama in education was just beginning her career in drama education at Newcastle University. She moved away from Ward's (1963) use of narrative drama. "Drama is not stories told in action but it is about human beings confronted by situations that change them because of what they must face in dealing with those challenges" (Bolton 2006, p.48). Thus, Heathcote's (1989) approach, rather than dramatizing



already written scenarios, encourages students to devise their own scenarios together in a step-by-step process wherein they would have to make decisions for the direction in which the drama would flow acting as characters from within the drama they were creating.

### **2.19.2 Paulo Freire: Drama Pedagogy to Pedagogy of the Oppressed**

In the pursuit of the major drama in education innovators of the middle of the Twentieth Century on how educational theory in general was affected, the revolutionary theorist/practitioner, Paulo Freire came to light in 1968 with “Bursting upon the world scene” and gave birth to “Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed” which stood the educational community on its head and galvanized progressive educators into re-evaluation of the status quo. Not since John Dewey’s ideas first appeared in the early 1900s had there been such a response. In fact, Freire owes influence from Dewey and indeed, there exists a through-line from (Dewey, 1974; Holden, 1983) to Freire. Paulo Freire was born in Recife, Brazil in 1921 of a middle-class family. Due to the early death of his father and the worldwide depression of the 1930s, he knew poverty and became aware of the many ills around him. He grew up in a situation where he and many of his friends knew hunger. However, his mother was able to convince the director of an elite private school to offer Paolo a scholarship for his high school studies. He later returned to the school to teach Portuguese. Invigorating the world scene in 1968, Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed galvanized progressive educators into re-evaluation of the status quo. Not since John Dewey’s ideas first appeared in the early 1900s had there been such a response.

Paulo Freire studied law at his home town University of Recife in Brazil. However, “He attempted only one case before abandoning his career as a lawyer” (Freire, 1972, p. 14). His greater interest was in the study of Philosophy, Linguistics, and Sociology of Language. During the 1940s, he read widely and worked with the Catholic Action Movement and later with the Basic Church Communities. In 1947, Freire started work as the Director of Education at SESI (The Social Service of Industry: an employer’s institution set up to help workers and their families). His work in the popular education program supported his emerging ideas on education which he incorporated into his 1959 Ph.D. thesis, “Present-day Education in Brazil.” He accepted the position of director of the Cultural Extension Service at the University of Recife soon thereafter (Bolton, 2006). Bolton reports that it was there that Freire began his work with illiterate adults and developed the “culture circles” for which he became famous when 300 farm workers were taught to read and write within forty-five days.

As Freire creatively taught people to read and write while simultaneously increasing their awareness of oppressive social conditions, he was exiled by the Brazilian government and spent fifteen years in exile. During that time he taught at the University of Santiago (Chile) and educated extension workers for the Chilean Agrarian Reform Corporation, states Roberts. He continued to lecture and work internationally with Harvard University, the World Council of Churches, and adult literacy programs in Guinea-Bissau, Sao-Tome, Principe, Nicaragua, and Grenada.

During the 1980s, Freire returned to Brazil where he wrote and became involved in politics, serving as Secretary of Education in Sao Paulo in 1984 (Bolton, 2006). He resigned from the Municipal Bureau of Education in 1991 and continued writing till his death in 1997. Freire's pedagogy ideas are important because he integrates the social domain with the work of language development, and this approach is integral when teaching language through drama activities. . His approach is the opposite to what he describes as the "banking concept" of education. In the banking concept:

- a. The teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- b. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- c. The teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- d. The teacher talks and the students listen – meekly;
- e. The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- f. The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- g. The teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who are not consulted) adapt to it;
- h. The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority which he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
- i. The teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the students are mere objects (Freire, 1972, p. 59).

Freire, (1972) implies that in an effective education, the following model should apply:

- a. The teacher and the students learn together;

- b. The teacher and the students share their knowledge with each other;
- c. The teacher and the students exchange in intellectual dialogue;
- d. The teacher and the students listen to each other;
- e. The material being learned and the learning process discipline both teacher and students;
- f. The teacher and the students make decisions together as outgrowth of dialogue;
- g. Teacher and students act together;
- h. The students have a voice in choosing the program content;
- i. Both teacher and students subordinate themselves to the authority of knowledge;
- j. The students are the subjects of the learning process while the teacher is a guide (p. 59).

Bolton (2006) states that early practitioners of drama-in education's echo could be heard in such propositions that the moral force of Freire's approach stems from the following principles: As all aspects of reality are always changing, so also are human beings incomplete and engaged in the process of becoming. Unlike animals, humans are conscious and have the ontological vocation of humanization. Thus, social evolution goes hand in hand with individual evolution. Social structures reflect the growth of individuals as in turn individuals impact society. No group, institution, or organization should impede the pursuit of humanization.

For Freire, Bolton (2006) states that education implies an ethical, moral, and political consciousness on the part of the teacher, not to be applied in any authoritarian fashion, but communicated through inductive reasoning and dialogue with a purpose. The purpose was to be “liberated (p. 60) and by this, Freire meant liberating the learner from being only a passive receiver of the dominant culture, but an active participant in changing it. In order to achieve this, Bolton states that Freire believed in problem-posing where students would examine problems through dialogue.

In support of Freire’s approach to drama in language teaching, (Slade, 1954; Spolin, 1963; Ward, 1963) echo the same sentiments that Freire’s approach to literacy is a dialectical relationship between human beings and the world, on the other hand, and language and transformative agency, on the other.

Within this perspective, literacy is not approached as merely a technical skill to be acquired, but as a necessary foundation for cultural action for freedom, a central aspect of what it means to be a self and socially constituted agent. Most importantly, literacy for Freire is inherently a political project in which men and women assert their right and responsibility not only to read, understand and transform their own experiences, but also to reconfigure their relationship with wider society (Bolton, 2006).

Another practitioner who could not merely conform to Freire’s theories is Wallenstein (1984) who posits that in “Problem-Posing Education: Freire’s Method of Transformation” (p.79) the approach is particularly meaningful for some ESL/EFL populations. Problem-posing is particularly applicable to immigrant and refugee

English as a second language (ESL) students, or workers with little control over their lives. Wallenstein states that the majority of ESL students come from low socioeconomic backgrounds with restricted access to education in their home countries.

“In the United States, they work primarily in unskilled or low-skilled jobs; they often experience social or emotional barriers to learning English, cultural conflicts, lack of self-esteem and a feeling of vulnerability in their new society” ( p. 34). In his discussion the challenge of evaluation in a Freirian classroom, Wallenstein argues that the evaluation of student’s progress with a problem-posing curriculum demands a different approach than other teaching methods. Wallenstein further points out that the curriculum constantly evolves from student issues; teachers can’t measure fulfilment of predetermined objectives or test outcomes. Problem-posing evaluation concerns a broad spectrum of student’s abilities to articulate their issues in English, generate their own learning materials, redefine their views of the world, and take risks to act in their daily lives.

### **2.19.3 Augusto Boal and the Theatre of the Oppressed**

In the mix of the matrix of classroom projects and community concerns as described above beginning in the 1950s, Boal (1979) developed the concept of Theatre of the Oppressed. As the name suggests, his approach to theatre was derived from the ideas of Paulo Freire and he approached work in literacy in the same fashion. According to Boal, the development of a theatre for literacy should start with an examination of

the problems within particular communities. “In order to understand this poetics of the oppressed, one must keep in mind the main objective: to change the people – ‘spectators,’ ‘passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon – into subjects, into acting transformers of the dramatic actions” (p. 110).

The poetics of the oppressed focuses on the action itself: the spectator delegates no power to the character to think in his place. On the contrary, he assumes the protagonists’ role, changes the dramatic action, tries out solutions, discusses plans for change – in short, trains himself for real action” (Boal, 1979, p. 122). To accomplish his goals, Boal starts with the body of the ‘spectator’ and works outward from that beginning.

The plan for transforming the spectator into actor can be systematized in the following general outline of four stages: First stage: Knowing the body: a series of exercises by which one gets to know one’s body, its limitations and possibilities, its social distortions and possibilities of rehabilitation. Second stage: making the body expressive: a series of games by which one begins to express one’s self through the body, abandoning other, more common and habitual forms of expression. Third stage: The theatre as language; one begins to practice theatre as language that is living and present, not as a finished product displaying images from the past: First degree: Simultaneous dramaturgy: the spectators “write” simultaneously with the acting of actors; Second degree: Image theatre: the spectators intervene directly, “speaking” through images made with the actors, bodies; Third degree: Forum theatre; the spectators intervene directly in the dramatic action and act. Fourth stage:

The theatre as discourse: simple forms in which the spectator-actor (the spect-actor) creates “spectacles” according to his need to discuss certain themes or rehearse certain actions” (p. 124). Boal outlines the approach extensively in his book, *The Theatre of the Oppressed* and in the latter, *games for actors and non-actors*.

In Boal’s theatre, the subject, the learner is actively seen participating in building the scenario through writing, imagining, signalling visually what the progression of the action might be, and through acting, participating in forum discussion of possible options and alternatively demonstrating these actions on a stage. The theatre of Boal serves to strengthen the dialectic toward social/cultural change as it strengthens the subjects in whose hands the theatre, and the socio/cultural environment around it, evolves.

#### **2.19.4 Vygotsky and Psycholinguistics in using drama to teach a language**

Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky, who has been called “The Mozart of Psychology,” was born in Orscha in Belorussia in 1896 and became well known as the originator of Soviet developmental psychology. However, his work, published in Russia in the 1920s and 30s, only became available in the West in the 1960s. A major work, *Thought and Language* (in Russian, *Thinking and Speech*) was first published in English in 1962, but *Mind in Society*, published in 1978, received greater attention by psychologists and linguists. Since then, Vygotsky’s ideas and concepts have supported a whole complex of psychological and pedagogical orientations, not least of which involve those of second language acquisition. Bolton (2006) posits that in order to do justice to the theories of drama in language teaching one would not



discredit Vygotsky's work as his theories to language teaching and learning bear more relevance to drama in language teaching.

Vygotsky grew up in a time of great upheaval in the USSR. He supported the revolution, his work and writing influenced by Hegelian and Marxist theory. His approach has been termed a sociocultural approach because development, both cognitive and linguistic, is seen to occur through the process of social interaction. The space or area where learning occurs during such interaction was labelled by Vygotsky the "Zone of Proximal Development" (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky defines ZPD as the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. He then went on to differentiate between human learning and the behaviour of other primates showing that "Children (learners) can imitate a variety of actions that go well beyond the limits of their own capabilities, something that animals are incapable of doing" ( p. 88). He adds, "That the only good learning is that which is in advance of development" (p. 89).

Vygotsky as outlined in Cole and Ward (2007) through the process of internalization, social activities developed to become mental activities. Much of the process of internalization is achieved through play. Play is based upon needs. When needs are not met, "the preschool child enters an imaginary, illusory world in which the unrealizable desires can be realized" (p. 99). It is the essence of play that a new

relation is created between the field of meaning and the visual field – that is, between situations in thought and real situations (Vygotsky, 1978).

Into this field of play and learning, the factor of cultural mediation is paramount. Following earlier Russian cultural-historical psychologists, Vygotsky believes that the “special mental quality of human beings is their need and ability to mediate their actions through artefacts and to arrange for the rediscovery and appropriation of these forms by subsequent generations” (Cole, 2009, p. 210). Such mediation is argued to occur through socially meaningful activity and indeed, that meaningful activity serves as a generator of consciousness. “The role of mediator is played by psychological tools and means of interpersonal communication”. Psychological tools “usually has a semiotic nature” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 87). These included “such psychological tools as gestures, language and sign systems, mnemonic techniques, and decision making systems – for example, casting dice” ( p. 90).

Bolton (2006) states that Vygotsky focused on how the symbolic psychological tools and social relations are internalized and especially in the development of language in its relation to thought. His most popular book, *Myshlenie i rech – Thought and Language*, was the result. It is to this book especially, that practitioners’ of drama in second language teaching are drawn. Vygotsky’s analysis of the process whereby thought generates speech drew upon literature and theatre, as well as from his own analysis of language acquisition in children.

The impact on pedagogical method implied by Vygotsky's illuminating studies has been slow to be realized, however much educators understand Vygotskian's theory. Bolton (2006) further explains that: traditionally, schools have not promoted environments in which the students play an active role in their own education as well as their peers. The Vygotsky's theory, however, is said to require the teacher and students to play untraditional roles as they collaborate with each other. Instead of teacher dictating her meaning to students for future recitation, a teacher should collaborate with her students in order to create meaning in ways that students can make their own (Hausfather, 1996). Adding to this in his PhD thesis conclusion Heikkinen (2005) points out that:

“Drama based language learning serves as further support for a Vygotskian view of learning and development. By capturing the essential process of expansive learning through recursive internalization and externalization language performance demonstrates the validity of Vygotsky's thought. Embodied language performance reveals the social nature of teaching and learning and how meaning is expressly co-constructed through activity. With this realization, the language teacher can engage the learners in a seemingly endless variety of situations through the creative use of learning interventions. Activity becomes both the medium and the result for teachers and learning” (p. 151).

#### **2.19.5 Cecily O'Neill's Approach and Process Drama**

O'Neill (2009) another practitioner and time advocate of drama in education, has extended Heathcote's (1989) approach to what she calls “process drama”. O'Neill became interested in Dorothy Heathcote's methods when working with Liz Johnson in collecting the writings of Heathcote, (now housed at the University of Durham in

England). She has published widely on drama-in-education and conducts workshops internationally. Her books, which include *Drama Structures: A Practical Handbook for Teachers*, (written with Alan Lambert), *Drama Worlds: a framework for process drama* and *Words into Worlds* (with Shin-Mei Kao) explain the concepts of teaching through process drama in great detail.

Bolton (2006) writes that O'Neill (2009) has exploited the Heathcote's methods and strategies to add to the learning process. "The potential for 'living through' drama expands, making a cascade of possibilities if the present embraces the past and the future, if the pain of an event 'yesterday' or the implication of an event is 'tomorrow'" (O'Neill, 2009, p. 54). In other words, events can be examined not only as they occur in the present, but the roots of the present can also be examined through the prism of the past and the implications seen for the future emanating from the present. O'Neill emphasizes the factor of tension, introducing plot twists as teacher-in-role that will add to increased dramatic tension within the unfolding series of events. Finally, O'Neill applies more traditional theatre terminology to define the characteristics of process drama as a genre of theatre.

In her book, O'Neill (2009) turns her attention toward teaching language through process drama. She writes that: "(process drama) refers to drama activities that aim to go beyond short-term, teacher-dominated exercises. Instead, the drama is extended over time and is built up from the ideas, negotiations, and responses of all participants in order to foster social, intellectual, and linguistic development" (O'Neill, 2009, p. 58). She points out that most classes that use drama activities to

teach language do so in limited ways, engaging in dialogue role plays or improvisations, but failing to take advantage of the long term benefits of acting in role the process drama over an extended period of time. For language teachers, O'Neill asserts that it can easily be seen that involvement in process drama should increase speaking fluency by offering students opportunity to communicate within an authentic context and negotiate meaning as they proceed. Student bonding occurs by alternating whole class activities with small group and pair work as the drama unfolds she adds.

The teacher joins in the process by introducing new developments in the drama to which the students react. To react, students must reflect, express opinion, negotiate, make decisions, put feelings into words and take action. In doing these things, O'Neill suggests, "The use of process drama in L2 is essentially a liberating one. "Its qualities relate closely to characteristics of liberating education advocated by Freire (1972)" (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 17).

In developing a plan to execute process drama, Kao and O'Neill (1998) suggest that the first thing to consider is the issue of context. Context is characterised as the theme or framework upon which the drama is based. The authors point out that "this starting point should rapidly enlist the students' language and imagination in creating the functional world that will emerge through the drama" (p. 22). Thus, the initiation of context must be drawn from the students rather than a superimposed curriculum design. The authors remind teachers that students' imaginations can be stimulated by current events, novels, short stories, or "real life experiences of participants" (p. 22).

In process drama, the role of a student, or the roles that students play, can begin in a generic fashion. As in Heathcote's mantle of the expert approach, they may all be members of a certain classification or group, i.e., members of an architectural team, a group of museum curators, workers in a particular unit of a company and so forth. Once having established the generic classification, students are free to embellish their characters depending upon the development of the scenarios. Most of the work in process drama, however, requires students to "adopt particular attitudes and perspectives and to respond appropriately" (Kao & O'Neill, 1998, p. 26).

To do this, students need to reflect upon the situation and the ethical perspectives involved. They are constructing the drama based not upon "if" but rather upon "What should we do" (O'Neill, 2009, p. 45)? O'Neill emphasizes that the teacher in this role is one of the most effective ways of beginning process drama. By working from within the drama, teacher and students are able to create a fictional world together, establishing imaginary situation, modelling appropriate behaviour and language, assigning roles, directing scenario direction, and maintaining tension. The teacher's role brings the "students into active participation in the event" (p. 47).

Tension is seen as another key characteristic of process drama. "It exists between the situations as it appears at any one moment and the complete action" (O'Neill, 2009, p. 48). The teacher asking questions, posing problems, and, when in role, introduces issues that may obstruct the goals of the group members. "Tension may arise from direct confrontation, as a way of harnessing the energy or resistance of the class; it

may appear more subtly as a dilemma, a veiled threat, a pressure posed by an outside agency, or by such factors as a time pressure which demands immediate response” (. p. 50).

The paralinguistic elements of gesture and movement are other features of process drama, Kao & O’Neill (1998) list as non-verbal activities. Through movement, students need to take on the behavioural characteristics of the target culture, rehearse and experience the proxemics related to the environment of the fictional world within which they move and speak. They also suggest that the use of tableau, freeze frame, and slow motion effects can excite verbal expression and inspire reflection. Referring back to Heathcote (2008), they note that the explicit educational aim of her work in drama is to build a reflective and contemplative attitude in the recipients. This is important, as students always need to know what they are learning and its significance both socially and linguistically. It is a period where students and the teacher can reflect on what has been done, discuss the implications of what has occurred, negotiate for the next series of events, sort out student feelings about the experience and generally review the action to prepare for future events.

Bolton (2006), in *Acting in Classroom Drama*, notes that many writers have compared this process as being similar to the theatre aesthetic of Bertolt Brecht. He writes in connection with Heathcote’s use of episodic drama:

“With these continual teacher interruptions, the ensuing drama can at best be episodic, but this is to be one of its strengths, not a shortcoming to be regretted. Heathcote’s aim is to construct a series of ‘episodes’, not a through-line of the Naturalistic dramatist but the episodic presentation of Epic Theatre. Whereas Stanislavski appeared to aim at a seamless flow of events, Brecht writes as follows:

The episodes have to be knotted together in such a way that the knots are easily noticed. The episodes must not succeed one another indistinguishably but must give us a chance to interpose our judgement” (p.180).

Deducing from the voices of the earliest drama in language teaching practitioners and theorists, it is clear that there is a call for democratic classrooms, wherein the students and teacher become collaborators, the students learning from one another, developing responsibility and self-reliance, operating as active builders of projects that require imaginative and cognitive, physical as well as emotional, engagement.



## **2.20 The current state of drama in L2 classrooms**

Certainly, the distance travelled from the era of (Brooks, 1960; Finlay-Johnson & Harriet, 1911; Freire Paulo, 1972; Heathcote, 2008; Vygotsky, 1978) right from the beginning of the drama-in-education movement. It is evident that there are a number of themes or pedagogical principles that remain the same: “learners learn from learners as well as teachers, learners become responsible and self-reliant through work on the drama, learning becomes a ‘habit of mind,’ the teacher is always a ‘fellow worker’ and friend” (Bolton 2006, p.11).

Much of the imaginative and creative work flows from the premise of the class being an alternative culture, a ‘little state’ to use Brooks’ (1960) term. It is also an underlying method that drama works structures for engagement by “refocusing the task away from the main goal of study to a connected, but subsidiary goal, which becomes the focal task of the pupil. Thus, much learning occurs unintentionally as a result of the engagement” (Bolton, p. 17).

Haight (2005) confirms that drama work teaches indirectly and has long been the premise of the drama-in-education movement, as well as of those language teachers who use drama in their classes. Indeed, since drama seems to facilitate learning indirectly, it can be seen to operate in a way similar to ‘desuggestopedia,’ the method of the Bulgarian psycholinguist, Hernandez (2010) who claims that learning

can be accelerated by release of the sub-conscious. It may also be viewed as the 'Natural Approach' par excellence as language acquisition occurs through the process of negotiation in the target language.

Other researchers, including Jackson (2009), continue to criticize the traditional method of teaching English. He reveals that students could spend several years learning the language and not gain the confidence of using the language inside and outside the class, whereas drama could. To shed more light on the latter, Jackson states that many students prefer to keep quiet in class out of fear that when they speak, they will commit grammar and pronunciation errors which would be detrimental to their communicative skills. This fear is even present amongst learners who are in real world situations and e career individuals such as teachers, news readers, psychologists, and public relations officers, etc. Jackson draws attention to students' image of self. He claims that drama activities can gradually affect a students' understanding of their possibilities through learning about and also build their confidence as individuals. Jackson further claims that traditionally, drama was secluded as a separate subject of pleasure during students/teachers' spare time and suggests using drama as a tool in teaching English to build a continuum of the different aspects of the English language.

In support of Jackson's views, Bolton (2006) states that the use of drama in English classrooms, enables students to use what they are learning with pragmatic intent,

something that is difficult to learn through explanation. By using drama techniques to teach English, the monotony of a conventional English class can be broken and the syllabus can be transformed across the curriculum into one which prepares learners to face their immediate world better as competent users of the English language. This is due in large part, because they get an opportunity to use the language in operation. Sterns (2008) is of the opinion that using drama in teaching English fulfils students' socio-affective needs; as drama helps teachers to move from the traditional way of teaching English to a modern learner-centred approach which makes the syllabus more personally fulfilling.

Dougill (2009) also views the use of drama in teaching English as a powerful language teaching tool which can enhance students' English communicative skills. He states that the use of drama in teaching English involves students interactively developing language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening through suitable contexts which many educators overlook. Fernandez and Coil (2011) reveal that effective communication involves ideas, emotions, feelings, appropriateness, and adaptability. Their argument suggests that conventional English classes provide students minimal opportunities to use language in real life situations. Furthermore, they state that using drama in teaching English offers students a context for listening and for meaningful language production, leading or even forcing students to use their own language resources, and thus, enhance their linguistic abilities.

Dougill (2009) and Di Pietro (2008) state that the use of drama in teaching English prepares students to face their immediate world better as competent users of the English language because they get an opportunity to use the language in operation. Dougill (2009) further argue that drama improves oral communication as a communication method, and the opportunity to use language meaningfully and appropriately. Adding to the latter, Heathcote (2008) states that drama returns forgotten emotional content into language and that meanings are more important than the form or structure of the language. This helps students restore the totality of the situation by reversing the learning process, beginning with meaning and moving towards language form to make language learning more meaningful which prepares students for real-life situations.

Stern (2008) states that communicative activities should conform to s principles, which ensure that students know what, and why they are participating in specific activities. Stern further argues that in communication, it is necessary to work in the context as a unit where drama can be considered a communicative activity since it fosters communication among students and provides different opportunities to use the target language in imaginary, which results in the learner having something to talk about and, most importantly, knowing how to express their ideas.

Brown (2011) outlined a drama model he used to teach English to Chinese language learners. Brown's drama model consists of six areas which help teachers to find their

own thresholds and keep the drama activities under control. These thresholds are decision taking, noise, distance, size of group, teaching the actual content and status as a teacher. Brown outlines that the thresholds allows teachers to use drama activities readily. The model also helps teachers to step aside from the leading role and classroom Brown cautions that teachers should be careful when using this model, so as not to lose control and authority over the class. This model allows drama proceedings not from a pre-written scenario or scripts but rather based on pre-text scenarios. The model is created from improvised, composed or rehearsed episodes that stretch over a time span.

Bolton (2006) also states that the model allows the whole group in the same enterprise and there is no external audience as participants themselves provide the audience within the drama. The proceedings in Brown's drama model are described in retrospect but the planning and putting the process drama in practice is a unique open-ended process. This drama model can be adapted to any classroom situation and with adjustment to suit the setting, context, content and students' needs.

At this juncture, there is much that remains to be done to encourage greater use of drama in language teaching curriculum. Numerous studies (Di Pietro, 2008; Haight, 2005; Nunan, 2008; Kao, 2009; Wilburn, 2011) support the effectiveness of teaching language through drama, but more empirical research is needed to persuade administrators to structure more learner oriented programs and accreditation teams

to recognize alternative means of assessment.

### **2.21 Critical reviews of series of empirical studies related to this study**

To offer a critical perspective on the landscape of recent scholarship in drama and L2 learning, this study reviewed and synthesized published scholarly work and research studies in English within the last 20 years. The reviewed literature, largely North American-based, along with some European and Asian studies, extends the work of key studies that gathered research in areas closely related to educational drama and the current study. The majority of the literature encountered for this review was either position papers or teacher resources; nonetheless, few empirical, data-driven, classroom-oriented research studies concerning drama in L2 education have been identified, most of which are descriptive case studies.

#### **2.21.1 Italian classrooms**

Ryan-Scheutz and Colangelo (2004) undertook a case study exploring the feasibility of engaging in a full-scale theatre production for Italian learning. The eleven participants in the research were part of a 10-week Italian language workshop at the post-secondary level. In preparation for a theatre production taking place at the end of a term, the participants were grouped into one of three roles: actors, designers or stage managers. Over the course of 27 rehearsals and the performance, participants became naturally engaged in various interactions and communicative tasks. During the process, not only actors but also stage managers and designers demonstrated

linguistic growth because of a constant need for meaningful interactions among all participants for a common goal of performing the play on stage.

### **2.21.2 German classrooms**

Similar findings were evident in German language classes. In Lauer' (2008) study, a group of advanced German learners at Georgetown University participated in the dramatization of a German novel. Lauer's observational data reveal that throughout the process of rehearsals and performances, the participants appeared to improve their language abilities while enjoying drama based learning experiences. Ammar and Spada (2006) reports on another case study of German learners in an experimental three-week improvisational theatre workshop. This anecdote-based descriptive research study demonstrate how novice German language learners benefitted from using improvisational drama exercises and physical enactment (of a short story) that investigate intercultural foreign language situations. For her part, Lauer (2008) thesis study found that the integration of drama in the German language classroom positively impacts a range of language learning from oral language competence, affective, cultural and social learning.

### **2.21.3 EFL classrooms**

Contributions of various dramatic approaches to L2 development are further evidenced in numerous English language learning contexts. For instance, Miccoli's (2003) case study explored the value of using drama to help 37 EFL students

develop their oral linguistic competence in a conversation-based class at a Brazilian university. Instead of a conventional transmission model of language learning, the class prepared for a theatrical production and during the process the students kept reflective journals to document their learning. Findings gained from student self-report suggest that they experienced an improvement of oral skills, and an increased confidence in speaking in the target language. Miccoli explains that it was because drama created a purposeful and meaningful context where learners used language while jointly making cultural and linguistic analysis of their characters.

#### **2.21.4 Reader's Theatre**

In addition to engaging in theatrical productions, Readers Theatre (RT) was also found to be conducive to ESL development. Liu (2006) conducted an action research study with an intermediate ESL writing class in an American university to explore the possibilities of RT in L2 classrooms. Students in Liu's research were invited to share their favorite part of the reading, write responses to the RT, and create their own alternative ending to the story. Liu points out that, throughout these RT activities, "everyone was legitimate participants trying to contribute to the success of this creative reading" (p. 357). Based on the analysis of data gathered through multiple sources such as researcher's 5.7 playwritings dramatic engagement using playwriting has also been found to benefit ESL learners. Silverman (2005) addresses the efficacy of playwriting activities in English language development for her intermediate-level students within a Teaching English to Speakers of Other



Languages (TESOL) program. In her action research project, she found that when students engaged in playwriting, rich opportunities for intensive language practice involving language skills were generated as well as a sense of ownership and accountability about their own play texts. This resulted in enhanced student motivation.

Stinson (2006) conducted a study aimed at discovering how the use of drama might improve students' oral (listening and speaking) English communication skills. Participants of this study involved groups of 16-year-old Singaporean students from four schools participated in the study, each providing a class of approximately forty students for the drama intervention programme. The participants were divided into a comparison and an intervention group. Two of the schools provided classes at the same year level and stream for pre-and post-test comparison. The research intervention involved the students participating in ten hours of process drama classes, pre-planned by the researchers and facilitated by local drama teachers, in both the intervention and comparison classes' examination. The results indicated that the pre-test, the comparison and intervention groups had similar scores while the post-test, the intervention group performed consistently better in each of the criteria of clarity, vocabulary, relevance to the topic, interaction with the examiner and, the need for prompting.

A pre- and post-tested using the standard Namibian Ministry of Education Oral Communication Related to the purpose of the previous study, Kyriakopoulos's study

(2008) investigated the effect of improvisation and drama in improving oral communication skills of ESL learners. The researcher concluded that using drama in teaching had many benefits since it provided learners with a supportive environment. The participants that took part in the study were all native speakers of French and were learning English as a second language in a secondary school in Montreal. The researcher used questionnaires, observation, interview, and recorded material of the learners' work as instruments of this study. He viewed the taped segment multiple times, each time taking detailed notes on the participant's vocabulary use, use of grammar forms, use of English expression, and fluency. After analyzing the results which were obtained from the multiple instruments, it conveyed that participants were able to use the English language with more effectiveness, fluency, and accuracy. They were also able to use the target vocabulary and English expressions appropriately.

Sari (2011) carried out a study aimed at improving student's speaking ability at the eleventh grade level. The main research question involved exploring if socio drama could improve grade eleven learners' speaking skills. The researcher used socio drama as an intervention because it was the suitable method by which a group of individuals select to spontaneously enact a specific social situation common to their experience. Furthermore, the researcher affirms that it was effective to use socio drama in attempting to clarify values, develop social skills, solve problem, diagnose, organize, develop and rehearse action plans or improve personal effective

awareness. The population of this study included one English teacher and all her 28 grade eleven learners at Pan Iran Secondary School. The sample of this research was randomly selected with the purpose of getting specific information about the socio drama method and the students' responses towards the method. This study employed questionnaires, interviews and observation as data collection instruments. In her findings, the researcher reported that socio drama can be an effective teaching method, particularly in teaching speaking skills. The researcher concludes that the use of socio drama techniques in teaching had a positive effect in developing the learners' speaking skills.

Closely to Sari's study, Nia (2011) engaged in research to determine if drama could improve learners speaking abilities. The study was aimed at providing a general description on the implementation of drama and related activities in the classroom. The sample of this study consisted of second graders of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Surakarta. The research method was action research, whereby the researcher taught speaking English, using drama techniques with the purpose of improving the learners' speaking skills. Data was collected using techniques of qualitative and quantitative data collection. These methods included: observation, interview, pre-test and post-test. This classroom action research was concerned with solving problems by identifying, planning, implementing, and observing the action, reflecting the result of observations, and revising the plan for the next steps. The result of the research revealed that drama could improve students speaking ability.

Consequently, the study findings revealed that learners' test achievements during the research was better than their scores before the actions were implemented.

In the same vein, Tsou's (2005) study aimed at improving students speaking skills through drama activities in oral classroom participation. The drama activities entailed several forms of students' actions such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, and body language or physical movement. The subjects of this research were first year students at the Southern Taiwan University and their English teacher. The researcher purposively selected 35 students from the freshman English class, a required course for all first-year students. The participants were divided into two groups: experimental and control group.

The researcher designed a course that depended on Participation Instruction (PI). PI is a method of instruction which depends mainly on using drama techniques in teaching. Therefore, the initial hypothesis of this study was: will PI increase Taiwanese students' oral participation in class? The study employed both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected through questionnaires, tests, and observations. Qualitative data was gathered through passive participant observation, survey responses, and an interview with the teacher. In order to examine differences between the experimental and control groups before the onset of the experiment, preliminary tests were done. At the end of each semester, every student was required to fill out course and teacher evaluation forms.

These completed forms were then analysed and their average scores were calculated. The experimental group had consistently higher mean scores than the control group. As a result, the researcher recommended teachers to use the PI in developing students' speaking skills.

Related to the previous study, Naqeeb (1997) attempted to answer the question about the role of role play strategy in enhancing and developing speaking proficiency. The population of this study consisted of all the eighth graders in UNRWA schools in Nablus .The sample consisted of (60) students randomly selected from 150 students. The role-plays were used as the intervention for the experimental group. The control group was taught by traditional methods of teaching English. Interviews with the students were used as a tool for the study. According to the statistical treatment, it was concluded that role play strategy was effective in developing the students speaking proficiency. The study also revealed that during the experimental lessons, none of the subjects reached the level 3 or beyond in the speaking proficiency.

Similarly to the latter, Susanti (2007) embarked on a journey to prove if students' speaking skills would improve through role-plays as drama techniques employed in English lessons . Furthermore, the researcher's aim was to gauge the impact of role-plays on students speaking skills. The population of this research was the students of ninth grade in the Islamic Junior High School Soebono Mantofani Jombang, Ciputat.

There were three classes in this grade and the number of students was 104. The researcher employed a cluster random sampling methodology with 1 class consisting of 30 students as the sample to observe.

To infer the effectiveness of teaching spoken English, by using role play, the researcher conducted an oral test for students. Because the test was an oral, the researcher divided the skills into five criteria: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. The researcher collected the data by teaching and observing the subjects within seven steps: greeting, pre-test, presentation stage, practice stage, production stage, post-test, and finally the closure. Having analysed the data of pre-test and post-test by using t-test formula, the results showed that the coefficient is 13,420. This means that there was a significance increase in teaching - speaking by using role play. Moreover, from the research findings, it was proven that the students' score of speaking taught by using role play was better. It means that the use of role play in teaching speaking was quite effective. Additionally, results revealed that the use of role play made the speaking and learning activity more enjoyable and interesting.

Similar to the study of Stinson (2006) is Miccoli's study (2003) aimed at making changes in the classroom dynamics. This study was more impactful to the current study, as the researcher derived more insights from this study in terms of research methods and designs. In her study, Miccoli aimed at investigating the value of using

drama in a Brazilian university classroom. She applied the “English through Drama” course in a Brazilian university to see the effect of drama on developing oral skills. The researcher and the participants met twice a week for 110 minutes. The researcher asked the participants to use portfolios to record their reflection about using drama in developing their oral speaking skills. According to the researcher, the portfolios were a record of best performances or productions. In this study, the portfolios were used as evaluation tools for using drama in the classroom. The researcher encouraged participants to use portfolios while participating in the course since it recorded learners’ experiences, and promoted reflections and change. Results from portfolios indicated that using drama in classroom had a high effect on developing oral skills.

Moreover, Emel et al (2010) conducted a study to examine whether creative drama, integrated with communication skills, had any effect on the communication skills of the students in the Child Development and Education Teaching Department. The participants consisted of 48 students divided into two groups: the experimental group with 24 students and the 24 student control group. Those participants were from Selçuk University, Faculty of Vocational Education students. Both pre and post-test were used with both groups. The experiment group students participated in a communication skills education program that was integrated with 90 minutes creative drama for 8 weeks. A pre-test was applied to the experiment and control groups before the implementation of the educational program. At the end of 8 weeks

both groups completed a post-test.

Evaluating Communication Skills Scale (ECSS) was used as a data gathering tool to measure the communication skills of the students. The pre-test scores showed that the experimental and control groups are equal in understanding. However, when the researchers examined the post-test score average of experiment and control group; it was discovered that the post-test average of experiment group was higher than the post-test point average of control group. The result also showed that the communication skills that were given through creative drama education increased the communication skill scores of students.

Additionally, the purpose of the study, Schiller (2008) was to highlight the impact of using drama in teaching on the proficiency and fluency of the students studying English. Moreover, it was important to discover its impact on student's social and academic life. With the hoping that this may lead to an increased use of drama in teaching English for Palestinian students.

The students of seventh and eighth graders in Herman Gmeiner School/ SOS and Talitha Kumi School in Beit Jala were the participants of the study. There were 31 students from Herman Gmeiner School and 26 students from Talitha Kumi School. The sample of the impact of using drama study was chosen randomly from these two



schools. After exposing fifty-seven students from seventh and eighth grades to drama-in-education techniques, they filled out the specifically designed questionnaire, which was given to all students in order to know their views during the drama lessons. Moreover, they took a test after being exposed to the two drama pieces. At the end of exposing them to drama for twelve weeks practicum, an assessment was carried out of every student in the two schools.

Results indicated that using drama in learning English makes students more enthusiastic and had more impact than traditional approaches. The researcher explained the positive effect of using drama in enhancing students' confidence, self-esteem and oral communication skills. Finally, the results indicated that the use of drama in education made students active participants rather than passive recipients in class.

Ramos (2002) conducted a study to find out students' perception about role-play and the effectiveness of using role-play activities in improving interactions outside the classroom. The participants in this study were nine students enrolled in an intensive English program at a State University in North Central Appalachia (USA). The group consisted of three Arabic speakers, four Spanish speakers, and two Japanese speakers. There were five male students and four female students, with age ranges between 18 and 32. Since the focus of the research was on their 'perceptions of learning experiences, and learning strategies, the interview consisted of 13 open-

ended questions. These questions focused on the participants' perceptions of role play activities. The participants were observed over a seven-week period of time and the results indicated that role-play activities improve participants' interaction outside the classroom.

Cheng (2010) also investigated the effectiveness of role play and grammar translation instructional methods on oral performance, motivation toward learning and social skills "communication skills" for Taiwanese college students learning English. The participants in this study were 100 college students in southern Taiwan. Participants were divided into two groups. The control group that received the grammar translation teaching method and the experimental group that received a role play teaching method. Both pre and post-test were conducted in this study as the main instruments for gathering data. The total experimental period involved 8 weeks of instruction, with two hours of instruction per week. After analyzing the data, results showed that implementing the role play instructional model would improve students' learning attitudes towards English learning, social skills ability, and oral performance.

In Shand's study (2008) he intended explore how drama could reduce anxiety and increase confidence and motivation towards speaking English. Moreover, the researcher aimed to reveal the responses of the student participants to the drama-based curriculum. The participants of this study were a sample from sixth and

seventh graders from Arizona. Participants' response to the drama curriculum was measured by pretest-posttest, observations, and interviews with participants and their teachers. Results of the study revealed that drama was successful in reducing the third grade participants' anxiety and increasing their confidence and motivation towards speaking English. There was evidence of positive benefit of the drama with the sixth and seventh graders, but there was little change in participants' anxiety, confidence and motivation towards speaking English.

In his study, Baranowski (2010) concluded with the same results as Shand's in his qualitative study which was conducted to examine the lived experiences of non-francophone FSL teachers in Manitoba, their relationship with French, and how a process drama-based workshop might boost the teachers' linguistic self-confidence. The participants of this study were five students and their teacher who were elected to take the course. Process drama according to the researcher consisted of thematically based improvisations, which are used to explore a topic and, at the same time, to invite self-exploration. It possessed unique characteristics, and had been successfully used in the second and foreign language classroom. The researcher imagined that process drama might enable teachers to extend their communicative competence by lowering the affective filter and creating a safe zone for linguistic risk-taking. The researcher observed the participants and their teacher when they took the course. At first, the researcher observed them when conducting the course without using drama process techniques. After that, the researcher

attended the course for the second time but with using the process drama techniques.

After the pre and post observation, the researcher conducted an interview with the participants to gather their opinions about process drama. Findings from this study indicated reduced oral anxiety as related to French language competency, reduced —performance anxiety, and increased agency in terms of voice, identity, and self-understanding. For some participants, engaging with experience of process drama led to self-transformation.

Role play activities, a qualitative research design seemed more appropriate in this study. The three data gathering methods used in the study included a questionnaire, teacher and student interviews, and class observations. The questionnaire included twenty-four questions which included structured response and open-ended questions. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit information about the learners' prior knowledge.

Dodson's (2010) study with Classroom interaction in the drama classroom has also received some scholarly attention as a topic of investigation. For instance, Kao & O'Neill (2009) share their research on classroom discourse when educational drama is used within a Taiwanese university EFL classroom. Through a descriptive and quantitative investigation focused on student interactions, this systematic study provides insights as to how drama-based pedagogy can encourage participants to

become more active language users while maintaining equal participation status.

A similar study by Wilburn (2011) found that the nature of classroom discourse and teacher talk shifted significantly with his elementary Spanish immersion class when drama was used. Specifically, he found that, when educational drama was implemented, students were naturally inclined to play a bigger role in participating and constructing classroom dialogue.

Nassaji (2007) conducted a study to discover to what extent drama and questioning techniques could enhance students' speaking achievement. In their study, they wanted to know students' attitudes towards English instruction employing the integration of drama and questioning techniques. The study was conducted with a group of 15 students, three males and 12 females, who were second-, third-, and fourth-year students enrolled in an elective course offered by the university as a seven-week English through Drama summer course. Four teaching steps were designed by using the integration of drama and questioning techniques to enhance the students' speaking abilities. These four steps are (1) working on a drama script, (2) drama rehearsal, (3) drama production, and (4) drama evaluation. The four teaching steps were validated by a panel of experts and piloted with ten students to ensure their validity and minimize unforeseen flaws. To collect data, speaking achievement tests were administered before and after exposing students to drama and questioning techniques. An attitude questionnaire, arranged in a five-point Likert scale, was utilized at the end of the experiment. Data was collected using

students' journals and teacher's diaries to supplement the questionnaire data. The results showed that drama and questioning techniques help enhance students' speaking abilities and their positive attitudes towards EFL learning.

In addition, Al-Mohanna's (2011) study aimed at developing Saudi students' English listening and speaking skills. To achieve this purpose, the study investigated classroom practices of English language teachers and students with special focus on listening and speaking skills. For the purpose of this study, nine intermediate schools spread throughout Riyadh city were randomly selected from nine supervisory directorates (currently, offices of education), that was, one school from each office. The study adopted the qualitative inquiry approach to assess people in natural settings with classroom observation employed as an instrument for collecting data.

The researcher depended on an audio tape recorder and on written field notes for later analysis. The tape recorder was used to record the teacher-student interactions as it was physically impossible to record everything that happened during the teaching period. The researcher also took notes, as some events which happened in a classroom could not be captured by audio recording.

The examination of data revealed that the EFL classroom communication was extremely centred on the teacher. The EFL teachers initiated the talk, asked questions, decided who was going to participate and evaluated the answers. They were in control of the learning period from beginning to end. The students were left

with limited or non-communicative options. As a result, the researcher at the end of this study introduced some recommendations for improving the teaching of language listening and speaking. These recommendations included using drama, story-telling and games in teaching listening and speaking skills.

Burgess (2007) attempted to discover the efficiency and effectiveness of using drama techniques in teaching English as a foreign language. The population of this study were 36 six students (age 18 to 21) from the English Communication Teaching degree at the Universidad Austral de Chile. . The participants of the study were divided into two groups. The first one was the control group which learned English by traditional formal methods, and the second was the experimental group which learned English by using drama techniques such as role play, simulation, improvisation, dialogues and interviews.

After using traditional approaches with the control group and drama techniques with the experimental group, a test was administered in order to determine the effectiveness of using drama techniques in teaching English. Results showed that retention was significantly higher for the experimental group. This study strongly suggested that drama techniques improved speaking and learning English.

Al Nashash (2006) conducted her study to determine the influence of drama education on the empathetic skill level of university students. The participants were from Gazi University, Faculty of education of whom there were 73 students, 36 of

whom "33 females, 3 males" were in the experimental group, and 37 of whom "31 females, 6 males" were in the control group.

Data was obtained through the use of empathetic skills scale. The empathetic skills scale was administrated to both groups of students as a pre-test to determine the empathetic skill level of students. After that, drama education was provided once a week for 14 weeks for the experimental group, no procedure was applied to the control group during the same period. The same scale was applied again to the experimental and control groups as a post-test one week after the drama education was completed. The data was analysed by using a covariance analysis "ANCOVA". The results showed that drama education had a statistically significant effect on the empathetic skills of students in the experimental group.

Creech and Bhavnagri (2002) discussed how drama could be used as a teaching tool to teach elements of story among children between the ages 6 – 10. They stated that students often in this age had difficulties in reading and writing simple stories. Moreover, they assumed that using drama in teaching would overcome these challenges because drama depended on many activities, such as role play, miming, and puppets. Thus, children could learn by using these different learning models. Results indicated that using drama in teaching could improve their abilities in retelling the stories and writing simple sentences about the story they had heard or seen without adults' assistance.



Related to previous studies reviewed, Asher (2009) investigated the perceptions of students at Gaza universities, whose first language was Arabic, toward the drama and short stories areas of English literature with respect to (a) specific problems, (b) benefits, (c) reasons for studying literature, and (d) teaching approaches and related strategies. They were candidates for a B.A. degree in English. The study examined the effects of area of concentration and classification on the perceptions of student study participants about English literature. It aimed to identify more efficient and meaningful ways to teach foreign languages to secondary and university students in developing countries.

The researcher used Learning Difficulties of English Literature Survey (LDELS): a questionnaire with five major sections, and Oral English Literature Survey (OELS): seven open-ended questions to efficiently collect data for several variables. The population included both (500) male and female students, similar in terms of cultural and educational background, who were enrolled in the second, third, and fourth university levels. The study targeted 147 student participants, 21 to 24 years old male and female students. The researcher emphasized that when English literature was taught effectively, students attained a greater understanding of the English language. He also reported that the most effective teaching approaches and strategies should have included communication where teachers interact with students and where students were able to discuss work and act out the various roles.

Close to Shamim (2011) investigated whether standards-based instruction in drama

had a measurable impact upon student mastery of language arts, theatre arts, and cognitive skills. The study participants were second grade students and their teacher. One second grade class participated as the treatment group, while another class in the same school served as the control group. In this study, a series of theatre lessons were implemented over a nine-week period. Three trained artists presented one lesson to the treatment group each week, during a 50-60 minute instructional block. The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. While Qualitative data included student surveys, student focus groups, and pre and post teacher interviews, quantitative one measures included performance on two language arts assessments (the Paced Standards Assessment and the DIBELS Reading Assessment).

The researcher observed each of the nine drama lessons, paying particular attention to three identified target students. At the conclusion of the nine lessons, a survey was completed by both treatment and control group students. A focus group was held with the treatment group students only. The qualitative findings suggested that treatment group students experienced a slight benefit in the listening and speaking areas of the Language Arts standards, as well as growth in vocabulary. Treatment group students also showed growth in meeting the theatre arts standards. The qualitative data suggested some changes in cognition, especially in higher level thinking, as well as enhanced oral language skills and more active student engagement. No significant difference was found between the control and treatment groups on the quantitative measures.

Even though there is no research done in the Namibian context directly linked to drama in education, the researcher reviewed Uusiku's (2012) study on English as a medium of instruction and its impacts on English low proficiency among Namibian school learners. She purposefully sampled 80 out of 150 grade 10 learners at Nuuyoma Senior Secondary School. The researcher employed a both qualitative quantitative research design to collect data. Furthermore, Uusiku used questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation as her research instruments. In classroom observations, she reports findings which reveal that an English-only instruction was used in the English lessons but the language of instruction varied in other content subjects except for Oshiwambo lessons.

She reports that, it was interesting to see pupils' behaviour during lessons. During regular content subjects held in English, pupils were very passive. She further reports observing that it was mostly the teacher who held the floor; lecturing about the subject and then posing questions to learners. The only time when there was actual interaction between both parties was when students answered teacher questions. In these moments, Uusiku reports that the teacher usually gave response depending on the student's performance. When answers were satisfying, feedback was often shown with positive comments and smiles. However, when a pupil could not answer, the teacher did not show understanding but rather blamed the individual

for not paying attention.

Uusiku also provided useful insight relevant to this study, in her classroom observations she noted that learners would be punished should they attempt to speak erroneous English. It would appear as if the debilitating anxiety level of the learners was quite high, when considering there is corporal punishment involved in teaching. In addition to this, Uusiku reported that one can speculate whether pupils followed teaching instructions. The researcher reported that there was limited comprehensible input and no space for teacher-to-learner or peer-to-peer interaction. Such interactions can provide a basis for shared knowledge construction, rather than simply receiving information. She argues that it seemed that the input-, the interaction- and the output hypotheses were not practiced in the classroom when compared to the classes of Oshiwambo.

Another interesting revelation from this study is the use of native languages and how students responded in classroom with Oshiwambo instruction. Uusiku asserts that Oshiwambo classes were closer to the output hypothesis than the classes in English. She reported that the Oshiwambo lessons were much more dynamic and when the teacher asked open questions or expected certain answers from the students, they were much more involved in classroom activities. The researcher reported that some of the teachers she interviewed indicated that they strictly use English in their

classes, partly because the concepts in their subjects were easier in English and according to them, the vernacular was poor in words in most of the content subjects. The respondents also revealed that they choose to use English because some learners do not listen when they know the teacher is going to give an explanation in Oshiwambo after the English explanation: If they learn that their teacher will only use English, they pay attention so they don't miss anything. Nevertheless, some teachers indicated that often students show little feedback when addressed in English. The study finally revealed that learners' low proficiency in English was a result of lack of language understanding, lack of exposure to the English language as a medium of instruction, and learners and teachers' attitudes towards English.

In the study of Akdağ and Tutkun (2010), the authors aimed to determine the effect of drama as a teaching method on the English language achievement level of fourth grade students. The participants were 50 students from two separate classes whose gender, socio-economic conditions and the previous year academic success were similar. Those participants were randomly divided into a control and experimental group. The research method consisted of a pre-test-post-test experimental design. Data was collected via an achievement test that consisted of questions concerning knowledge, comprehension and application levels including: subjects of weather conditions, seasons, food and drinks developed by the researcher. Research findings revealed that the teaching method based on drama was more effective than the traditional teaching because the drama methodology gave every individual an

opportunity to actively and naturally in the teaching-learning process. Finally, the researcher recommended that English teachers be trained in drama methods aimed at increasing cognitive proficiency, affective features, and behavioural skills.

### **2.22. Challenges to using drama in teaching English as a second language**

In addition to the positive impact of drama on L2 learning, it is important to note that there are pedagogical challenges around the implementation of drama-based language instruction, as discussed in several intervention studies (Bolton, 2006; Berends, 2006; Gaudart, 2010; Stinson, 2006). These studies speak to issues to be taken into account when implementing drama-based L2 instruction (e.g., a need for teacher training; skepticism from teachers and students; product-driven or examination-oriented circumstances; cultural differences in learning styles among others).

It is evident from the case studies discussed above, that positive outcome and effects for L2 learners are taking place when drama based interventions are applied. The integration of drama in L2 curriculum yields benefits for language learners in language skills, intercultural understanding, attitudes to language learning and use, content learning, and connection to literature. Also, the studies suggest that significant pedagogical and research attempts have been made in a range of second language learning contexts to explore the affordance of drama-based L2 instruction.

Finally, our review reveals that there is a need for more empirical evidence in the literature on this topic. Literature available over the last two decades consists of few empirical studies that are systematic in methodology and their reporting of the analysis and findings. Despite the range of contributions on this topic the majority of studies reviewed are limited to descriptive reports based primarily on personal anecdotes, observations, and intuitive interpretations of researchers.

### **2.23 Summary**

This chapter provided theories underpinning the field of language acquisition, specifically second language learning. The chapter further examined the theories and benefits in Drama Education (ED) and the use of drama in teaching English as a second language and as a foreign language. The researchers and practitioners quoted in this chapter have emphasized the importance of the usage of drama in teaching English with the emphasis on the use of the Communicative Language Teaching. Considering, the limited amount of research on the use of drama to enhance student communicative skills the present study affirms the necessity to deliberate on the use of drama to achieve this goal. It is against this background that the present study intends to build on the use of drama to enhance students' communicative skills.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research empirical phases of the study methodology. The chapter outlines the research design and explains the relevance of quantitative and qualitative approaches in addressing the research objectives. Based on this orientation, the choice of specific methods employed in each phase of the research is presented, and research methods used in the study are outlined. The discussion includes a description of the population, sample and research instruments, data collection procedures, data analyses and the ethical considerations of the study.

#### **3.2 Research design**

As propounded by Almond (2005), a research design is a plan and structure for investigations to obtain answers to research questions and may be compared to a blueprint for collection, measurement and analysis of data. In addition, he states that the research design includes all the procedures selected to answer a particular question. Schinder views the research design as “a mental plan of the research that highlights basic strategies applied to obtain relevant data to the research” (p. 231). To Gay (2009), a research design is a detailed description of a study proposed to investigate a given problem.

The design for this study is a practical action research as per Creswell (2003) “action research aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate



problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework” (p. 65). It is the genesis of the latter that necessitated the action research. It is notable that Creswell talks about “an immediate problematic situation” (p. 68), which means that general practical relevance is explicitly considered in this study that aims at incorporating drama activities in the teaching of the English Access Course (EAC) to enhance their communicative skills.

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. According to Neuman (2006), the qualitative research approach relies on the collection of non-numerical data, while for Gay (2009) it is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual data to gain insight into a particular phenomenon of interest. In addition, Neuman describes the quantitative approach as the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomena of interest. Employing quantitative and qualitative research approaches was necessitated by the fact that this research demands a comprehensive narrative analysis and the numerical data analyses.

It is worth noting that although the study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study was primarily a qualitative study with a quantitative data set to statistically help inform the descriptions of the of the participants responses to the entry and exit questionnaires. The topic of this study is not widely researched especially in Africa and to be more specific in Namibia. For a study on a topic that has received little attention, the qualitative approach is most appropriate (Freeman, 2009). Specifically, this study is a concurrent nested design. A concurrent nested

design is a mixed methods design in which both quantitative and qualitative data are collected at the same time, but one type of data is predominant over the other (Creswell, 2003). In the concurrent procedures, the researcher converges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

Based on the researcher's evaluation of the available literature, it is evident that much of the research undertaken is quantitative in nature which only provides quantifiable evidence to support assertions of the impact of drama and learning. The researcher therefore decided to employ a concurrent nested design with qualitative design being the dominant one to help the researcher dig deeper into the role drama plays in teaching English to enhance the students' communicative skills. The researcher explored the impact of drama on speaking skills to try to determine the effectiveness of this approach over traditional methods. According to Bryman (2008) educational drama is one of the alternative methods and instructional tools that teacher and educators utilize in their classrooms to facilitate learning and effectively enhance the students' communicative skills. This calls for improving English speaking skills to handle the growing challenges of international communication in a globalized world, hence the need for a concurrent nested study.

The aim of the mixed design was to research a specific situation within the university setting in order to improve the traditional norms of teaching English in the Access Course towards students' communicative skills. Although the problem of students not being communicative in the English lessons affects many students under different

educational settings, the aim of this study was to improve the methods currently being used in the Language Centre for the EAC to develop students' oral skills in their second language. The purpose of the study investigated how students respond to this new method of integrating oral communication in their second language classroom. Based on their feedback, the researcher, the management of the Language Centre and the lecturers responsible for the EAC, could make the necessary changes to the current EAC curriculum.

### **3.3 Research Population**

The population for this study from which the sample was drawn comprised of 210 students enrolled for English Access Course (EAC) students in the Department of the Language Centre at the University of Namibia in 2014.

### **3.4 Sample**

Sampling is the process of selecting units from a population of interest so that by studying them one may generalize the results back to the population from which they were chosen (Williams, 2001). He further outlines that usually, the population is too large for the researcher to attempt to study all its members, so a small but carefully chosen sample can be used to represent and reflect the characteristics of those from which it is drawn. This research employed the purposive sampling procedure to select 45 students out the 210 students enrolled for English Access Course in the Language Centre, at the University of Namibia, Khomasdal Campus 2014.

The EAC students registered for 2014 were divided into four groups. The EAC is taught by 4 lecturers teaching each of these groups. The researcher's aim was to draw a larger sample from the 210 EAC students, but the other 3 lecturers were not willing to employ the drama techniques in their classes and also be part of this research. Another reason why the other 3 lecturers were reluctant to be part of this research is that; they are all part time lecturers and felt that employing drama techniques in their lessons would waste their teaching time as they only have few hours on campus.

The researcher is a full time lecturer in the Department of the Language Centre, therefore the only option she had was to make use of her own EAC group for this research since the objectives of this study were strictly focused on the EAC students. Furthermore, out of the 45 participants, the researcher randomly selected 10 participants who were the sample for the focus group interview.

In order for the findings of the study to be generalizable to the wider population of the English Access Course students, a criterion for selection of the sample was necessarily that they should be all English non-native speakers who have been learning English as a second language from grade 1 to grade 12. The 45 participants indicated that they hail from 4 different Namibian native languages (35 Oshiwambo, 2 Rukwangari, 2 Otjiherero and 1 Lozi) speaker respectively. The study comprised of 26 female and 19 male participants ranging from 17 to 21 years old.

The participants had just matriculated from grade 12 and have registered for the English Access Course for a year in the Language Centre at the University of

Namibia (Khomasdal Campus). The EAC is a prerequisite for the students who have not attained the minimum English language requirements (C symbol) to register for the academic degrees of their choices at the University of Namibia. Most of the participants attended their primary and secondary schools in the remote areas where English is only used during the English lessons but rarely outside the classroom or at home. Although they have an average grasp of the English language due to their exposure to it, they still make errors in vocabulary use, grammar use and most importantly in their oral skills, hence the need for this study.

### **3.5 Research instruments**

The study employed 4 data collection instruments (questionnaires, focus group interviews, students' reflective notes from the students' portfolios and the researcher's reflection notes) to collect data. The tape recorder and the video camera were used as research tools to collect data during the focus group interviews for this study.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

Two of the objectives of this study were to explore to what extent drama activities affect students' motivation toward speaking English and to analyse students' views on using drama activities as a tool in building confidence in their communication skills. Data for these objectives was collected through two types of questionnaires. The entry questionnaire (Appendix 2) consisted of a demographic survey, an

investigation into students' communicative skills questions, attitude scale, and expectations of the integration of drama activities in the language lessons.

The exit questionnaire (Appendix 8) employed in phase four was an exit questionnaire which measured the students' progress and views on drama activities towards developing their English communicative skills and confidence after the enactment of drama activities. The researcher collected data by means of an entry and exit questionnaire survey, since this is an effective and relatively quick method of gathering a large quantity of general data and opinions from the sample. The results of a questionnaire may also provide baseline data on which to base questions to be asked in the focus group interviews (Creswell, 2003).

### **3.5.2 Administration of Questionnaire**

The entry questionnaire was handed to the participants the first day of class during normal lesson hours. The researcher explained the purpose of the entry questionnaire and respondents were accorded an opportunity to ask questions where need be. All the participants were asked to fill in the entry at the beginning English Drama Oriented Lessons (EDOL) of the research and exit questionnaire at the end of EDOL (Appendix 2 and 8). The questionnaires consisted of closed questions, where participants were instructed to tick off items that held their answer or opinion. Also the questionnaire had open-ended questions, where they were to specify or amplify

their answer/opinion and semi-closed questions which were the combination of both types. The questionnaires were anonymous.

To avoid the participants having preconceived ideas on how to respond to the exit questionnaire, the researcher did not inform the participants about the exit questionnaire when handing out the entry questionnaire. The researcher therefore only handed out the exit questionnaire the last day of the English Drama Oriented Lessons. In the same vein as entry questionnaires, the participants completed the exit questionnaires and handed them back to the researcher.

### **3.5.3 Pre and post focus group interview**

As mentioned earlier, this study randomly selected 10 participants for the focus group interviews. The focus group interview took place in the second day into the EDOL and last day of the English Drama Oriented Lessons. A focus group is a type of in -depth interview accomplished in a group, whose meetings present characteristics defined with respect to the proposal, size, composition, and interview procedures. The focus or object of analysis is the interaction inside the group. The participants influence each other through their answers to the ideas and contributions during the discussion. The moderator stimulates discussion with comments or subjects. The fundamental data produced by this technique are the transcripts of the group discussions and the moderator's reflections and annotations (Creswell, 2003).

The administration of the focus group interview allowed the researcher to collect an appropriate amount of data in a short period of time, although it cannot be argued with full conviction about the spontaneity of the contributions from the participants. Nevertheless, some of the information gathered during a focus group interview sessions is potentially of great worth, because it is collected with great difficulty through the simple observation of reality. The analysis of data collected through the focus group interview was systematic, verifiable, and focused on the topic of interest and with an appropriate degree of interpretation. In the analysis, the words and their meaning, the context in which the comments were made, the internal consistency, frequency, the extent of the comments, the specificity of the answers, and the importance of identifying the main ideas, all were considered as informed by (Creswell, 2008).

The purpose of the focus group discussions was to analyze the participants' perceptions and views on using drama activities as a tool in building confidence in their communication skills. The focus group interview session lasted for 45 minutes. Each participant was provided with a copy of the focus questions.

The interview questions were semi-structured in that the researcher followed a similar pattern for stimulating discussion to allow follow up questions if need be. All participants were allowed to freely participate in the discussion while cautioned not to go off topic. The focus group interview also provided an opportunity to gain in-depth information, where necessary, on issues addressed in the questionnaire. Those



participants who required clarification of items in the questionnaire were given an opportunity to ask questions.

The focus interviews were conducted in a separate classroom, which is not the participants' classroom. This was done with a purpose of having the participants at ease. The venue for a focus group is important and should, ideally, be accessible, comfortable, private, quiet and free from distractions (Creswell, 2008). However, while a central location, such as the participants' workplace or school, may encourage attendance, Creswell cautions that the venue may affect participants' behavior. For example, in a school setting, pupils may behave like pupils, and in clinical settings, participants may be affected by any anxieties that affect them when they attend in a patient role. The focus group interview therefore took place in a macro-teaching classroom (venue) at the Khomasdal Campus, University of Namibia.

At the beginning of the focus group interview, the researcher acknowledged the presence of the audio recording equipment and assured participants of confidentiality. The researcher further explained to the participants that they have the rights to withdraw if they are uncomfortable with being taped or being part a of the focus group interview.

### 3.5.4 Observation

Creswell (2006) states that for one to record behaviour as it is happening, one should employ observation as a data collecting tool. Creswell further argues that the observation method is the best way to answer research questions. To support the latter, Coskun (2010) posits that observation is the fundamental method for understanding a phenomenon in which naturalistic observation is the instrument for other researchers. Coskun also writes that the observation process allows researchers to obtain essential information for drawing inferences and making decisions.

Consequently, Creswell (2006) views observation as an appropriate method which increases an understanding of the complicated relationship between teaching and learning in the language learning classroom. Creswell also remarks that when the researcher is in the classroom as an observer, it opens up a range of experiences and processes which can become part of the raw material of a teacher's professional growth. The researcher had an observation checklist (Appendix 18) which guided her reflections of each lesson's progress.

Coskun (2010) asserts that observation is the best way to answer natural behaviour questions, "As it is the fundamental method of understanding a phenomenon in which naturalistic observation is the instrument for other researchers" (p. 320). Furthermore, Coskun states that observation accords the researchers the ability to obtain essential information for drawing inferences and making decisions.

Consequently, Coskun also views observation as an appropriate method for increasing understanding of the complicated relationship between teaching and learning in the language learning classroom. He remarks that “being in the classroom as an observer opens up a range of experiences and processes which can become part of the raw material of a teacher's professional growth” (p. 322). Creswell (2011) also agrees that observation is crucial in a language classroom as it is considered as a tool that provides teachers with perspectives to prepare, practice and develop professionally.

### **3.6 Data collection procedures**

The researcher obtained permission to carry out this research from the Post Graduate Research Committee at the University of Namibia after her research proposal was approved. The researcher then sought permission from the Director of the Language Centre at the University of Namibia main campus in Windhoek to use English Access Course (EAC) lessons to integrate drama in teaching the English Access Course for this study's objectives. The EAC is a year-long course which has two phases. It entails the Literature Phase and the Grammar Phase, each of which is taught two hours four times a week. Initially after permission to carry out research had been granted, the researcher obtained the participants' consent and procedures involved in the research were thoroughly explained to the participants.

The EAC aims at improving students' ability to communicate and improve their linguistic competence in English. A balance of receptive (reading, listening) and productive (speaking, writing) skills are developed through communicative classes

and self-study. It further develops awareness and use of the conventions of academic English for the students. More specifically, the course develops reading and writing abilities in a variety of academic registers as well as developing listening and speaking skills through lectures and presentations within a university context. The course therefore raises awareness of the conventions of academic literacy for the students to gain abilities to perform and cope in their degree programmes.

Data for this study was collected during normal teaching hours as the researcher is the lecturer for the English Access Course. The EAC lessons are eight hours per week whereby the students meet for four hours every Tuesday and Thursday. The researcher integrated drama techniques such as role play, simulations and improvisations for two hours every Tuesday in the EAC curriculum with the main of enhancing the students' communicative skills for the whole second semester in 2014. Both the researcher and the participants adapted various activities from the existing EAC curriculum (Literature and Grammar) for the English drama oriented lessons that are appropriate for the EAC students' needs and meet the current study's objectives.

During the first semester, participants were not exposed to the English Drama Oriented Lessons. The researcher aimed at evaluating the gap between their speaking skills before and after the English drama oriented lessons. Therefore, the researcher made use of the first semester to observe the participants' level of communicative skills during the normal lessons before implementing EDOL. For the purpose of these research objectives, the researcher observed and noted the students' behaviours

in the classroom observation checklist (Appendix 16) and compared the first semester's notes with the second semester's observational notes. To avoid collecting misleading and unnatural setting data the participants were not aware that they were being observed.

In line with the mixed method approach used in this study, data was collected in three sections categorized in themes; 1 entry questionnaires, pre-focus group interview, 2 participants' reflective notes and researcher's observational notes, and 3 exit questionnaires, post-focus group interviews.

### **3.6.1. Section 1**

Firstly, in the second semester during the first day of class, the researcher explained the class her research intentions. The researcher handed out the research consent forms (Appendix 1). When the participants finished with the consent forms, the researcher handed out the entry questionnaires (Appendix 2) to fill in and hand them back to the researcher the same day. The researcher handed out 45 pocket files as the students' portfolios. Participants were expected to write reflective notes on their expectations and experiences during the English drama oriented lessons. The reflection notes were guided by questions to elicit data concerning the participants' background information and their English language background, opinions and attitudes. The participants were expected to submit their portfolios every Thursday for the researcher to analyze code and record the data collected from the students' reflective notes.

In addition to the entry questionnaire, the researcher randomly selected 10 out of the 45 participants to be part of the pre-focus group interview. The pre-focus group interview were also administered the second day after the entry questionnaires before the English drama oriented lessons commenced. The focus group interviews were aimed at exploring participants' perceptions regarding their attitudes and perceptions on the role drama plays on their communicative skills. Furthermore as per the research norms, the researcher informed the participants that the interviews were not meant for assessments and the results are only for the purpose of this study and will be treated with high level of confidentiality.

### **3.6.2 Section 2**

Apart from the participants' reflection notes, the researcher also collected data by means of a classrooms observation checklist (Appendix 16). The researcher wrote reflective notes during lessons to reflect on the participants' behaviour and attitudes towards EDOL.

### **3.6.3 Section 3**

An exit questionnaire was to elicit the participants' views on the use of drama in teaching English to enhance their communicative skills was administered at the end of the English Drama Oriented Lessons. As in section 1, during this exit period from the EDOL, the researcher administered the post-focus interview. As per the research objectives, the post-focus interviews were to gauge and determine the extent the

English Drama Oriented Lessons helped in enhancing the participants' communicative skills.

### **3.7. English drama oriented procedures**

The first step taken by the researcher was to establish background knowledge concerning the drama activities which participants were required to engage in for this study. In order to make the interaction more meaningful to students and to facilitate their acquisition of a language, they needed to know who they were in that particular context, who they were interacting with, and why they were interacting with those people. Students' background knowledge of the drama was established by means of class discussion of their characters, their natures, their relationship with other characters, or their problems. First, the questioning techniques were employed to encourage students' participations and interaction. Examples of questions were as follows: "What kind of person is this character? How does s/he feel about the person s/he is talking to? What is the relationship between the character and the person s/he is talking to?"

Through the establishment of background knowledge about drama activities, students could be made aware of other crucial elements of communication in addition to linguistic forms. Also, students had opportunities to practice expressing their thoughts, opinions, and feelings.

### **3.7.1 Drama rehearsal**

Drama rehearsal was designed to elicit students' physical and emotional engagement. In this step, students were divided into groups or pairs, and they selected characters they wanted to be. The background knowledge established in the previous step enabled them to understand their roles and the context where the communication took place. Here, participants and the researcher chose drama activities as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The chosen drama activities provided students with language input, and the context of the drama activities served to facilitate their learning of how the forms were applied in that particular context. Close, yet non-intrusive monitoring and interruptions by the researcher were required in this step to correct students' when necessary. This was done with the purpose of enhancing the students' understanding of their role, and to ensure that they understood what they were engaged than merely rote learning as to what is witnessed in the traditional classrooms.

### **3.7.2 Drama production**

This step created opportunities for students to engage in a performance to experience life-like communication situations without any interruption from the teacher. Through a performance, in addition to delivering a dialogue, students could exploit facial expressions, intonations, and gestures to convey the intended meaning of each character. This helped them internalize both linguistic and non-linguistic components of speaking ability. To make sure that it was manageable within the class time, a



performance of an extracted scene was provided for students to practice their speaking ability. A full-scale stage performance of the whole play was kept for the final project or end of class activity. Students' performance was videotaped for subsequent evaluation.

### **3.7.3 Drama evaluation**

Drama evaluation involved the evaluation of the students' performance. The participants' reflective notes allowed participants to express their opinions towards their own performance and their peers' performances. Also a few of the drama activities were recorded and watched after the lessons. Students were able to observe themselves, which enabled them to improve their performance and learn from mistakes. The drama activities that participants were assigned to work on were selected by both the participants and the researcher according to scripts whose lengths were suitable for a class period, the vocabulary and syntax, for the participants' use was selected from the EAC study guide.

A description of the activities comprises the brief plan of activities for each day that are subsequently detailed in structured points. These points specify: Techniques – name of the drama technique that is to be explored and analysed after the activity.

- Objectives – describe what participants will achieve as a result of the activity, considering not only drama experience, but also other areas of learning.

- Focus - linguistic focus on a language item or skill which can be practised with the activity in question. Discussion about the language exploitation of the activity followed after each activity.
- Time – approximate time needed for activity management, realization and its evaluation.
- Materials – materials needed for the activity.
- Setting - specifies the starting position of the participants for the activity. This point suggests that if the activity is carried on in pairs, the teacher should divide the students into pairs before the beginning of the activity and explaining its preacher's comments underlining the connection between the activity and principles of drama. These comments also provide the connecting bridge between particular activities, ensuring the impression of flow and coherence of activities.
- Procedure – describes the management and stages of the activity.
- Variations – suggestions for possible exploitation of the activities.
- Notes – notes either on the realization of the activity or the solution to possible anticipated problems that can arise while implementing this activity.
- Acknowledgement – recognition of authors and lecturers whose activities were used for this study, either in the same exact form or adapted.

Not all these points of activity description are always present, only when the description requires it for better understanding of the context or completing the situations occurred.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

#### **3.8.1 Qualitative data analysis**

Qualitative data obtained from the researcher's observation notes, students' reflective notes in the participants' portfolios and the focus group interview were subjected to content analysis. This method involves comparing, contrasting and categorising data in order to draw meaning from it (Gall, 2007). The researcher grouped data according to emerging themes and looked for consistencies and differences to make comparisons and contrasts. This served to organise ideas emerging from the data, to make a well-informed assessment on the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills.

As introduced earlier in this chapter, the theory which underpinned the data analysis at this stage was the constructivist grounded theory. This theory was considered to be an important approach for theory generation, which is the focus of data analysis at this stage (Cohen et al. 2007). This theory was further chosen because it "consists of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 2).

Through the qualitative approach of collecting data at this stage, the understanding of an insider's view of the field was achieved through close association with both participants and activities within the natural setting (Burns, 2000). Referring to this stage, themes were found and categories were developed from the data in relation to the use of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills at the

university level of the Namibian context. In addition, the use of the constructivist grounded theory approach in analysing the qualitative data further allowed the interpretation and interrogation of the textual data to find the dominant discourses presented in the participants' experiences in English drama oriented lessons.

Three coding processes were conducted in analysing the qualitative data collected at this stage. Firstly, the open coding process which was the initial stage of the data analysis whereby first-order concepts and substantive code were identified and developed (Sarantakos, 2005). At this open coding process, exploration of any theoretical possibilities was left open in relation to the data (Charmaz, 2006). Additionally, the researcher remained close to the data, named each line or segment of the raw data especially during interviews, and moved quickly through it to construct meanings from the responses provided by the participants on their experience with the use drama in the English lessons (Charmaz, 2006).

### **3.8.2 Quantitative data analyses**

At the quantitative phase, entry and exit questionnaires were used to investigate participants' background information views, thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions and personalities towards the English learning and teaching. For the English language background, views and personal opinions, the Likert Scale was used with the primary concern of ensuring that all these items would be measuring the same thing (Creswell, 2008) in both entry and exit questionnaires. The system of

scoring employed was 1 to 5; the high scale 5 (Strongly Agree) for the favorable attitude and the low scale 1 (Strongly Disagree) for the unfavorable attitude. The purpose of the questionnaire was to interpret the students' perceptions on their personal language performance, self-confidence and team working styles. These aspects are important to be developed, for the students future use as they eventually register for their higher academic programme. Students ability to communicate confidently in English is vital at the university level as it enables them to be active and accomplished university students.

To analyse data collected from the entry and exit questionnaires, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used in the approach, organisation, and analysis of quantitative data in various formats. At this research stage, the SPSS software was adopted in the transcription, organisation and interpretation of the textual data and audio records of interviews. Descriptive statistics were chosen because the goal of analysing the data at this phase was to describe, summarize and interpret this particular set of data (Creswell, 2003). In addition, descriptive statistics allowed the researcher to summarize large quantity of data using measures that are easily understood (Burns, 2000). Statistical data collected at this phase resulted in numerical data in which it indicated the strength of the participants' responses to the questionnaire items of both sets.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Educational researchers should respect the right, privacy, dignity and sensitivity of their populations, and also the integrity of the institutions within which the research occur Gay (2009). Gay further points out that every researcher is required to obtain necessary permission from relevant authorities before a study begins. This study was guided by the American Psychological Association's (APA) ethical guidelines (2001). Participants were informed of the nature of the study to be conducted, and of what specific activities such participation would involve. They were also given the choice of participating or not participating, and were informed that should they agree to participate, they would have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were given a consent letter for their participations (Appendix 1).

Strict confidentiality was observed with regard to the nature and quality of participants' performance. To preserve this confidentiality, no question that required participants' identities was included in the entry or exit questionnaires, and completed questionnaires were identified by number only, as were reading comprehension answer sheets. With regard to the focus group interviews, anonymity was not always possible in as much as many participants were members of the focus group and were the researcher's students. However, no participant expressed objection regarding taking part in this study as they all took part from the beginning to the end.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter outlines the details of the research methods used in conducting this study. The chapter provides details of the research design, research instruments and research population. The chapter further provides the description of the type of sampling procedures used in this research, the place where the study was conducted. Furthermore, data collecting procedures and data analyses are provided and enlightened as to how the data was collected and analysed. Finally, the chapter outlines the ethical considerations for this study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA PRESENTATION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

As indicated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to explore the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills at the University of Namibia. The subjects of this study were the English Access Course students enrolled in English as a bridging course at the University of Namibia for a year. The AEC is a course designed for prospective students who could not attain a C or better symbol in Grade 12 as per the University of Namibia English language admission requirements.

Data for this study was collected during normal teaching hours as the researcher is the lecturer for the English Access Course. The researcher integrated drama activities using drama strategies and techniques such as role play, simulations and improvisations. The drama activities were adapted from the existing EAC curriculum by both the participants and the researcher. This was done with the purpose of enhancing the students' communicative skills for the whole second semester. As mentioned in Chapter 3, before the participants were exposed to the English drama oriented lessons in the second semester, the researcher observed and noted down the participants' English speaking skills during their normal lessons. This was aimed at understanding the gap between their speaking skills before and after the English drama oriented lessons.

In order to unpack knowledge and fill the research gaps in the field of English teaching and learning for these research objectives, this study examined the views,



perceptions and attitudes of students on the role of drama in the teaching and learning English to enhance their communicating skills. The main aims of this study were expressed as three research objectives which are outlined as the following:

1. To explore to what extent drama activities affect students' motivation toward speaking English?
2. To analyse students' views on using drama activities as a tool in building confidence in their communication skills;
3. To justify the incorporation of drama techniques in the teaching of the English.

The data collected is analysed by means of themes per section and put in categories. However, it is worth noting that since various facets of each phase of the study are interlinked with or dependent on elements of the other phases, it is not practicable to isolate results according to specific sections without referring to other sections.

#### **4.2. Entry Questionnaire**

The entry questionnaire was distributed the first day of the lesson in the second semester and the respondents filled it in before the English drama oriented lessons resumed. This comprised of different sections. The sections served to obtain the basic information about the participant's gender, age, home language, English language background information and English drama oriented lessons information. Data obtained by means of the questionnaires are quantitative questions which are interpreted and analysed by means of SPSS.

#### 4.2.1 Section 1: Biographical information of the respondents

**Table 1. Participants' gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	19	42.2	42.2	42.2
	Female	26	57.8	57.8	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 indicates that 57.8 % of the respondents are female and 42.2 % male. This is a general overview of a typical Namibian classroom as most classes are observed to have more female than male students or learners.

**Table 2. Participants' Age Group**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-20	33	73.3	73.3	73.3
	20-25	12	26.7	26.7	100.0
	Total	45	100.0	100.0	

The findings from table 2 indicated that 73.3 % of respondents in this study are between the ages of 17 to 20 years old with 26.7% being 20 to 25 years old. This could be concluded that most of the respondents who have registered for the English

Access Course just matriculated from grade 12. The average age of grade 12 matriculates in Namibia is 18 years old.

**Table 3. Home Language**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Oshiwambo	35	77.8	87.5	87.5
Otjiherero	2	4.4	5.0	92.5
Lozi	1	2.2	2.5	95.0
Rukwangari	2	4.4	5.0	100.0
Total	40	88.9	100.0	
Missing 0	5	11.1		
Total	45	100.0		

Research findings in this category indicate that 77.8% of the respondents are Oshiwambo speakers, 4.4% are Ruvakango and Otjiherero speakers and 2.2% are Lozi speakers. Namibia has always consisted of various ethnic groups with different languages. The largest group is Oshiwambo since a majority of the population are Ovawambo (the denomination of the ethnic group). The other indigenous language groups are Nama- Damara, Kavango, Caprivian, Herero and Khoisan and Coloureds (Britannica Online). Within those groups there are various dialects and variations (Wolfaardt 2005). It is therefore not surprising that this study presents results that Oshiwambo are the majority in this EAC class.

#### 4.2.2 Section 2: English language information of the respondents

This section presents information regarding the numbers of years respondents have been studying English. The results on the respondents' most liked English skills are also presented. Furthermore, the section presents the findings of how the teachers motivated respondents to speak English outside the classroom and how the respondents often speak English to others outside the classroom and finally the respondents' feelings and attitudes towards speaking English.

**Table 4. How long have you been learning English?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 10 Years	4	8.9	8.9	8.9
8-10	41	91.1	91.1	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

The question on how long students have been learning in English yield results that 91.1% of the respondents have been studying English for almost 8 to 10 years with 8.89 % indicating that they have only studied English for 8 years. This could be derived from the fact that English received not only an official status at Independence but it was recognised as a medium of instructions and most students who were born after Independence were taught in English. Even though the language policy dictates English to be used as a medium of instruction from grade 5-12 there are locations, and most specifically in remote areas where teachers use

mother tongue as medium of instruction through grade 12. This might be due to teachers' low level of English proficiency and lack of English teaching and learning materials. The researcher notes that the latter is not the focus of this study but derived conclusions from previous studies' results validating findings of the current study.

It is also worth noting that although 91.11% of the respondents indicated that they learned in English for almost 10 years which could be from early childhood; it is not possible to assess the standard of English to which they were exposed. It cannot be assumed that this experience would necessarily facilitate adequate English speaking skills. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 1, the Namibian language policy stipulates that Grade 4 is the transitional year when a change to English as a medium of instruction takes place. The policy further outlines that in Grade 5-7, English will be the medium of instruction. In the Upper Primary Phase the mother tongue may only be used in a supportive role and continues to be taught as a subject (Wolfaardt, 2004). This is not the focus of this study, but provides the researcher with information regarding English language disparities that might have played a role in the participants' low proficiency skills in English. Due to different interpretations of the Namibian language policy, many schools start teaching in English from the first grade while others start when learners are in grade 7 especially schools in the rural areas.

Another reason why this category is essential for this study is that it is ideal for children to start their early school years in their own language, particularly when the basic skills of reading, writing and concept formation are under development.

**Table 5. Participants' most liked English Skills**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Speaking	6	13.3	13.3	13.3
Writing	15	33.3	33.3	46.7
Reading	17	37.8	37.8	84.4
Listening	7	15.6	15.6	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 study findings reveal that 37.8% of the respondents like to read; followed by 33.3% liking writing, 15.5% liking listening and the least 13.3% of the respondents indicated that they like speaking. This study explores the role of drama in teaching English to enhance the students' communicative skills. The researcher was therefore interested in integrating drama activities in teaching the English Access course curriculum with the aim of enhancing the students speaking skills. Given the above findings on the speaking skills being the least liked skill by the respondents, it could be concluded that the respondents are less communicative as per their responses because they do not like speaking English.

#### 4.2.3 Respondents' motivation to speak English from the English teachers

**Table 6. How often did your English teachers motivate you to speak English in and out of classrooms?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Always	16	35.6	35.6	35.6
Sometimes	20	44.4	44.4	80.0
Never	9	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Regarding the question whether students were motivated by their teachers during formal lessons and outside of the classroom, the findings revealed that 44.4 % of the respondents were sometimes motivated to speak English with 35.5% of the respondents that are always motivated and 20% of the respondents indicating that they have never been motivated by their teachers to speak English outside the classroom.

The rationale for including the respondents' motivation to speak English from their previous English teachers in this study is based on English as a medium of instruction and the multilingual nature of the context in which Namibians acquire the English language speaking skills and motivational factors to learn to speak English. The literature on motivation to speak English for second language learners discusses a considerable array of factors hypothesised to underpin difficulties in L2 speaking comprehension. Many of these factors are related to facets of bilingualism or

multilingualism and the English language proficiency of both L2 teachers and learners (Otaala, 2006).

A lack of motivated Namibian teachers could be a result of them not being proficient in English as a language of instruction. This can therefore lead to not motivating their learners to speak English (Ulas, 2008). As per the research done, Namibia's commitment to English as the main language of education has been undermined by revelations that 98% of the Namibian teachers are not sufficiently proficient in the English language. Leaked results of government tests carried out in 2011 indicated that all but 2% of teachers need to undergo further training in Basic English training. One of the long serving and retired teacher and expert (Andrew Matjila) according to Kisting (2011) argues that the government has failed to provide adequate training to teaching staff for which English is a second or even third language. Kisting reports that Matjila said that the language policy, in place for over 24 years, failed to deliver widespread competence. Furthermore, Kisting refers to Matjila who postulates that public figures, such as politicians, also struggle with the language and that the limited language skills of teachers had "poisoned thousands of children" (p. 15). Matjila calls for "drastic" action to be taken as the situation continues to deteriorate.

Notably, the researcher was a high school teacher, and her first year of teaching experience taught her that teachers hardly use English as a medium of instruction in the school premises and more shockingly during lessons. The researcher taught at Uukule Secondary School in 2008-2009 where most teachers were Oshiwambo speakers and often when they were interacting with each other, they used their mother tongue. There were many instances when teachers used Oshiwambo among



themselves while talking about informal things and joking. It was also evident that teachers spoke in their native languages even when they were discussing school matters. For example, when exams were being marked or when they were teaching the content subjects, they spoke in their mother tongue. Lack of motivation from teachers is therefore a contributing factor to learners not being motivated to speak English.

#### 4.2.4 Respondents' English language usage to others outside the classroom.

**Table 7. How often do you speak English to others at school outside the classroom?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Always	13	28.9	28.9	28.9
Never	32	71.1	71.1	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

The findings on whether students use English language to talk to others outside the classroom in Table 7 indicate that 28.9% of respondents always spoke English to others outside the classroom with 71.1 % that never spoke English to others outside the classroom. The researcher's observation, ever since she was a teacher at Uukule Secondary School, the communication and interaction that took place among learners in school premises was in Oshiwambo. It is noted that learners of all ages naturally speak to each other in their mother tongue. The use of Oshiwambo predominated despite teachers being required to use English as a medium of instruction.

**Table 8. How often do you speak English with your relatives at home?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Sometimes	5	11.1	11.1	11.1
Seldom	6	13.3	13.3	24.4
Never	34	75.6	75.6	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

Table 8 indicates that 75.6 % of the respondents never spoke English with their relatives at home, with 11.1% speaking English sometimes and 13.3% who seldom speak English with their relatives. Research findings on English language speaking in Namibia suggest that most students come from homes where parents are not educated and cannot speak English Wolfaardt (2004). As indicated under the home language section, results indicate that a higher percentage of the AEC students speak Oshiwambo, which corresponds with the results of only students using English when talking to relatives. The findings that 75.6% of respondents never speak English to their relatives are a true reflection of the English status in Namibia as the medium of instruction.

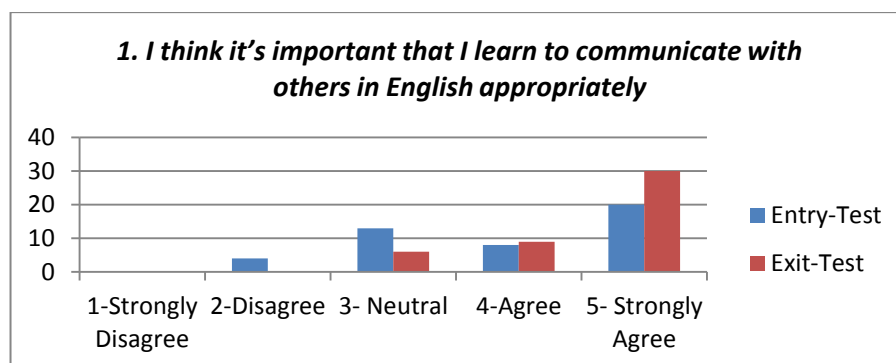
Most Namibian parents are not proficient in English and cannot converse in English because English was only recognised officially 25 years ago. Wolfaardt (2004) asserts that many Namibian parents went through a colonial education that used Afrikaans as the official language. When Namibia became independent in 1990,

English became the choice as the official language. English language did not only receive the status of the official language, but also became the medium of education throughout the country. The latter cannot be overemphasized, as it contributes to participants not being able to communicate to their relatives in English.

#### 4.2.5 Respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards speaking English

While the researcher recognises that there may be differences in the degree of likeness for English language usage depending on whether one is referring to grammar, vocabulary, motivation and confidence or fluency, such differentiation were considered in the scope of this study. Therefore, being comfortable in using the English language is taken as describing an individual's perception on how one uses English confidently and proficiently in most contexts. This section presents the merged students' perceptions and attitudes towards speaking English collected from the participants for both entry and exit questionnaires. Students were given a 1-5 Likert scale to indicate by circling the most correct response that best describes perceptions and attitudes towards the participant's best experiences using English.

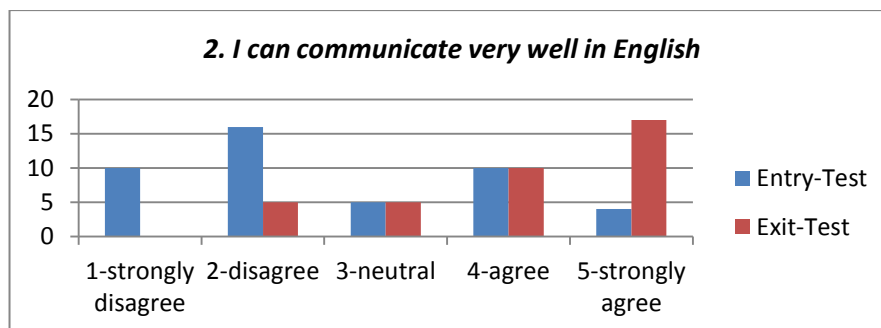
**Figure 1. It is important to communicate with others in English appropriately.**



5 = Strongly Agree (SA) 4 = Agree (A) 3 = Not sure (NS) 2 = Disagree (D) 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

Figure 1 presents participants' perceptions of their own usage of the English language with regard to speaking skills before and after English drama oriented lessons. Although the findings indicate that in the entry questionnaire only 20 students felt that it is important to learn how to communicate with others appropriately after the English drama oriented lesson, the participants perception increased with 10% with 30 participants indicating that it is important for them to learn to communicate with others appropriately in English in the exit questionnaires. It is noteworthy that in the pre questionnaire there were still 5 participants who strongly disagreed that it is not important to learn how to communicate in English appropriately. Also, before English drama oriented lesson, 12 participants were neutral but their perceptions changed after the English drama oriented lessons as only 5 were neutral in the exit questionnaire with no one disagreeing in the exit questionnaire.

**Figure 2. I can communicate very well in English.**

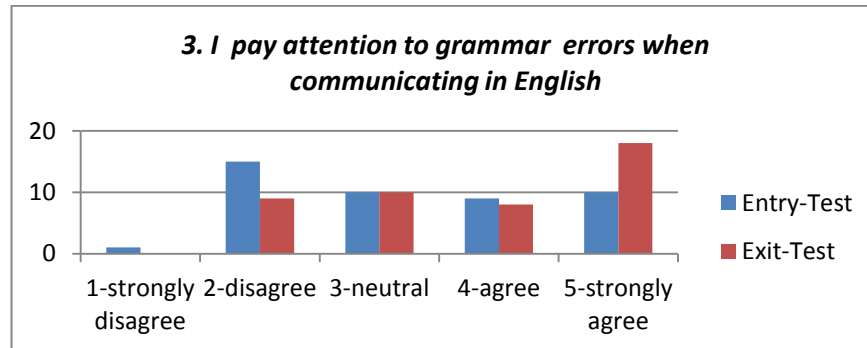


Findings on whether participants can communicate very well in English yields interesting results. Figure 2 shows that in the entry questionnaire only 4 students

strongly agreed that they could communicate very well English. Furthermore, 16 participants indicated that they could not communicate very well in English and 10 strongly disagreeing and 5 participants being neutral. It is noticeable that English drama oriented lessons had an impact on participants' change of behaviour as the number increased from 4 participants who agreed that they could communicate very well in English to 17 participants in the exit questionnaire. The significant increase is in the strongly agree column where in the exit questionnaire, none of the participants indicated that they disagreed as opposed to the entry questionnaire.

In his study, Jones (2008) found those students' attitudes towards English can change depending on the intervention or environment they are in. In this case, participants might have concluded in the entry questionnaire that they could not communicate well in English because they regard speaking English difficult as there is a lack of support to use English in the school, home environment and the community. Participants' views in this regard may be linked to insufficient exposure to the English language as there is limited opportunity to use English outside the classroom for the participant as per table 8 study findings.

**Figure 3. I pay attention to grammar errors when communicating in English.**



In the entry questionnaire 10 participants indicated that they paid attention to grammar errors with 15 participants indicating that they do not pay attention to these errors. After the English drama oriented lessons, a significant number increased from 10 to 18 participants strongly agreeing that they pay attention to their grammar errors when communicating in English. This could be a result of participants not being bothered, as indicated earlier that they are not motivated to speak English.

**Figure 4. I am shy to speak English.**

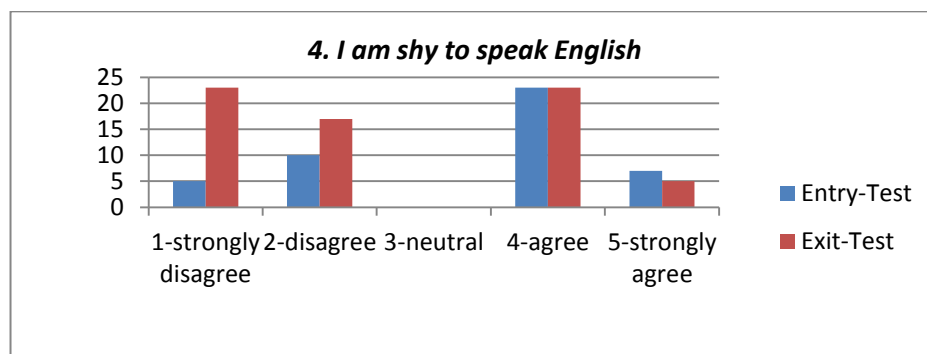
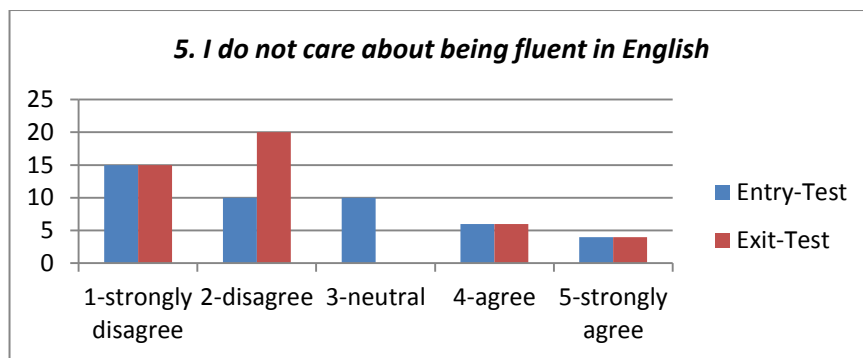


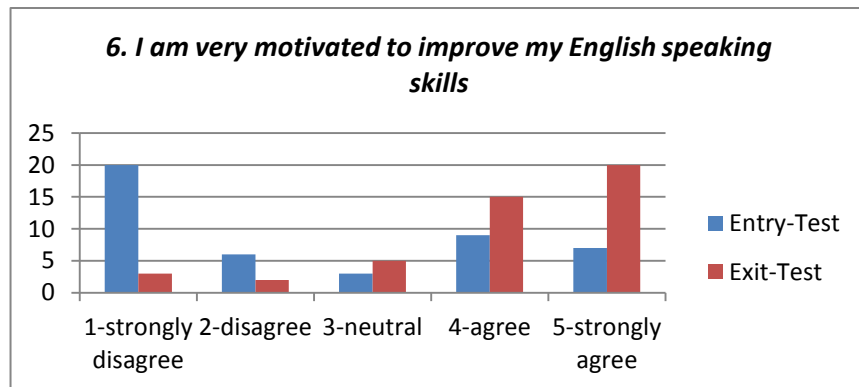
Figure 4 shows very interesting results. In the pre questionnaire, 7 participants strongly agreed that they are shy to speak English with a significant number of 23 agreeing, 10 disagreeing and 5 strongly disagreeing that they are not shy. Comparing the entry questionnaire to the exit questionnaire, only 5 out of the 7 participants who

strongly agreed that they were shy to speak, changed their views. This shows how much of a slight change in attitude occurred as the drama lessons only managed to improve 2 participants' attitudes towards speaking English in the strongly agree column. However, in the entry questionnaire only 5 participants strongly disagreed that they were shy to speak English however there was a significant increase in the number; as 23 participants indicated that they are not shy to speak English as endorsed in the entry questionnaire.

**Figure 5. I do not care about being fluent in English.**



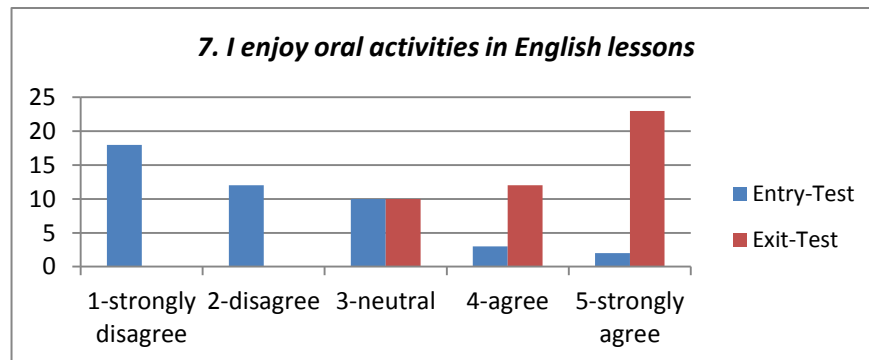
Responses to “I don’t care about being fluent in English ” yield results that both in the entry and exit questionnaire, only 4 participants endorsed that they don’t care if they are fluent in English. Also, in the entry questionnaire, 10 participants rejected the statement and the number significantly increased in the exit questionnaire that 20 participants disagreed with the statement .

**Figure 6. Motivation to improve English.**

Responses to whether students were motivated to improve their English skills show interesting results that correlate with the other reviewed studies on motivation. In the entry questionnaires participants rejected that they were motivated to improve their English speaking skills. 20 students strongly disagreed that they were motivated to improve their speaking skills before the intervention. However, as compared to the results in the entry questionnaires there was a significant change in the students' attitudes towards motivation to improve their speaking skills after the intervention as only 3 out of the 20 participants who earlier rejected the statement continued to do so. In the entry test only 7 were motivated to improve their speaking skills but the number increased to 20 participants being motivated to improve their English speaking skills in the exit questionnaire. It is either that drama activities had truly motivated them to improve their speaking skills, or their success with drama made them less afraid and defensive.



**Figure 7. I enjoy oral activities in English lessons.**



Responses to whether participants enjoyed the oral activities before the intervention yield information that would have a reader conclude that many students do not enjoy oral activities in English. A significant number of 18 participants strongly disagreed when asked if they enjoyed oral activities in English. Furthermore, 12 of participants rejected the statement. It is interesting to note that in the exit questionnaire almost 23 participants rejected what they endorsed earlier in the entry questionnaire. In the exit questionnaire, 23 participants strongly indicate that they enjoy oral activities in English after the English oriented lessons. This validates that drama activities does have an impact on the students' communicative skills.

#### **4.2.6 Section 3: English drama oriented lessons**

This section provides information on whether the respondents have taken part in drama oriented lessons previously. The section further provides information on the opinions on whether they think the drama oriented lessons helped them improve their speaking skills or not.

**Table 9. Have you ever taken part in English drama lessons before?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	2	4.4	4.4	4.4
No	43	95.6	95.6	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

The findings under this section reveal that 95.6% of the participants did not have any previous experience with drama with only 4.4 % having been involved in a drama oriented lesson before. Two respondents stated that they had participated in the dramatic plays during their high schools days but it was not necessarily an English drama oriented lesson.

#### 4.2.7. Respondents' attitudes towards drama oriented lessons

**Table 10. Do you think the drama oriented lessons will help you improve your English speaking skills?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	5	2.2	2.2	2.2
Not sure	44	97.8	97.8	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

The research findings displayed on Table 10 reflect that 97.8 % felt that they were not sure whether the drama oriented lessons will improve their speaking skills with a

mere 2.2% of the respondents indicating that the English drama oriented lessons would help them improve their speaking skills in the entry questionnaires. The findings are a true reflection of Table 9 whereby students were asked if they ever participated in a drama oriented lesson. Findings in Table 9 indicate that only 2 students had an experience in taking part in drama activities. This could be concluded that the two students' past good experiences in drama were beneficial and therefore think that it would be to their advantage to take part in the English drama oriented lessons.

#### 4.2.8 Responses regarding drama oriented lessons expectations

**Table 11. What do you expect from the English drama oriented lessons?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Improve speaking skills	18	40.0	40.0	40.0
Improve all the English skills	4	8.9	8.9	48.9
Improve grammar and vocabulary	9	20.0	20.0	68.9
Build confidence	14	31.1	31.1	100.0
Total	45	100.0	100.0	

In the table above, themes such as: improve speaking skills, improve vocabulary and build confidence emerged. The results showed that 40% of the respondents expect the English drama oriented lessons to help them improve their speaking skills. Furthermore a 31.1% expect the English drama oriented lessons to help them build

their confidence. 20% of the respondents expect to improve their grammar skills with a mere 8.9% expecting to improve all the four English language skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading).

### **4.3 Students reflective notes from their portfolios**

In order to understand the students' views and perceptions on the role of drama in teaching English to enhance their communicative skills, both the researcher and the participants selected drama activities focusing on the relevance and purpose for the students' academic career and personal gains as a framework from the existing EAC curriculum. Students were given portfolios where they were to write a short evaluation and reflection after each lesson of which Hatch (2009) refers to as "supplementary data source" (p.140). The reason for choosing the portfolios was to get the participants' immediate response to the drama activities after every second day of the English drama oriented lessons. Furthermore, this gives the participants ample time to think of the drama activities they are engaged in as a tool to enhance their communicative skills. This was also for the researcher to determine the participants' perceptions on the subject matter.

On the subject of participants writing reflections on the lessons, Hatch (2009) states that "the act of writing things down encourages individuals to process and reflect on experiences in different ways than thinking about them or discussing them with others" (p.142). Furthermore, Hatch states that "qualitative researchers are especially interested in how individuals understand the social circumstances in which

they operate, and asking them to make written reflections on their experiences can be a powerful way to get another take on participant perspectives” (p. 145).

Although writing reflections has its flaws, as participants often write reflections trying to impress the researcher, Hatch clearly states that the participants’ opinions matter: It does not matter whether the opinions are positive or negative, what matters is the degree of truthfulness portrayed in their reflections.

The reflections in the participants’ portfolios accorded the participants an opportunity to reflect on their feelings, attitudes and experiences of the drama activities. This was done for two ultimate goals: For the students to practice and improve their writing skills even if it is not the purpose of this study and at the same time collect data to fulfil the study objectives. The researcher designed the questions on which the students based their reflections as follows:

1. What did you learn about your confidence in speaking English after the drama lesson?
2. Were you motivated enough to be part of the EDOL?
3. Do you think you interact more with others during the English lessons without the drama activities included or during drama oriented lessons?
4. If this drama lessons were to be offered in your native language, would you feel more comfortable to talk than in an English class?
5. How easy /difficult was it for you to take part in an English drama oriented class?
6. Do you want the English drama oriented lessons to continue why?

During the analyses of the participants' reflections it was evidently sufficient for the researcher to divide the students' reactions into two groups: negative and positive typologies. The narrow nature of the questions allowed deeper analysis. The focus of the reflections was to get participants to write without having to think too much of what is required of them. The researcher's instructions to the students were clear and emphasised that the exercise was just reflections in which they should try to have their opinions heard rather than trying to perfect their English language.

The researcher's experience with former English Access students prior to this study is that, when students were given a written exercise in class, students tried too hard to have their English perfect which takes them time and they sometimes end up not having performed the writing task. Therefore, the researcher deemed it necessary to encourage students to write spontaneously as they answer questions to get their reactions on the drama activities recorded.

The results were divided into two main parts: negative and positive comments. The participants' reflections were not as comprehensive as the interviews but the findings helped fulfil the study objectives. Furthermore, the reflection portfolios helped complement the data collected during the interviews which speaks more volume to this study. The researcher collected the participants' portfolios at the end of each week in order to analyse weekly data from the portfolios during the weekend and give back the portfolios to the participants at the beginning of each week.

During the first two days into the English drama oriented lessons, one participant wrote:

*“I don’t like English, so I don’t like this drama either. I however think that the dialogue was fun because we got to know each other better and we could open up quicker. I easily get bored and this drama does not make me concentrate because the conversation was boring.”*

One positive remark from one participant was that:

*“Drama woke me up in class because I sleep when the teacher teaches throughout”. In my opinion a good self-confidence is required for taking part in drama, I can conclude that it was good to be part of the drama and it is fun to interact with fellow classmates.”*

Even though the participants expressed different negative opinions, they often found one or more positive highlights. For example, one wrote about how they thought it was difficult to speak in English all the time, and added that if somebody does not understand, they should have the right to have the instructions explained in Oshiwambo. This was a recurring theme in many of the participants’ reflections. In addition there were close to 5 reflections which rejected drama techniques as an alternative language teaching method compared to what they are used to in terms of traditional language teaching methods, where the teacher is viewed as the sole basket of knowledge.

One participant also thought it was boring because he had done things like this before and stated that:

*“I didn’t like it then, and I will not like taking part in drama activities ever.”*

Another negative aspect was stated by a participant who drew a parallel between drama and acting. According to him, drama is an independent subject in itself which should not be mixed with English language learning. However, he also mentioned that he considered the writing part fun and that creative writing should be given a larger space in English teaching. A variation of this opinion was voiced by another participant who claimed that he found it difficult to participate in plays. He expressed his dislike for plays and most of all that the drama activities are boring. Another participant in the same class explained why she thought it was boring and how she “hated” talking in front of people. She went on expressing that the tasks were simple and that it was the “speaking out loud” that was the hard part.

There were also several positive comments;

*“I enjoyed the activities because I could come up with imaginary stories and provide the others with a bit of fun”.*

Another participant wrote

*“I love drama activities because I am allowed to express my own feelings in connection to the exercises, the drama lessons make everybody see me and pay attention to me in class”.*

Another participant who did not indicate the gender wrote that:



*“I am more motivated to write good dialogues because they were to be read in front of everyone and I love attention. I like to get the opportunity to talk to the other classmates unlike when the lecturer is the only person to talk to us.”*

Regarding the question whether the drama activities should continue in the EAC lessons, only 4 participants disregarded drama activities to be part of the EAC throughout their reflections. Their reasoning is that they perceive drama activities as leisure activities and a waste of time as they will never be asked about drama activities in the examination. These views might have one think that the participants have been trained not to learn in different contexts which aimed at equipping them with knowledge but were rather taught to the tests and examination hence their worries that they might fail.

In addition to the participants who rejected drama, 6 were neutral as they were not sure if they wanted drama activities to be part of the EAC. A significant number of 28 students endorsed the statement that drama activities should be a sustained part of the EAC course. These findings correlate with the findings in the exit questionnaire in Figure 9, whereby 73.33% of the participants recommended the English drama oriented lessons to be part of the EAC curriculum. The participants motivated that drama activities helped them gain friends and interact with almost everyone in the classroom. Furthermore, participants indicated that they wanted more drama as part of other content subjects in the future.

The participants' reflections notes indicate that they viewed the EDOL as beneficial because such techniques created an enjoyable, relaxing, and friendly learning atmosphere. This also helped foster rapport between the participants and the researcher. According to Jones (2008), there is a positive association between this kind of relationship with students' level of engagement as well as their academic gain. This could be considered one factor affecting the participants' language learning improvement. As mentioned earlier, the researcher compiled the participants' views and categorised them as per the negative and positive views. There were several themes that emerged from each category as follows:

### **4.3.1 Overall descriptive themes of positive attitudes towards English drama lessons.**

#### **4.3.1.1 Cognitive benefits**

- Obtaining ideas, information and opinions from others
- Stimulating thinking to problem-solving
- Enhancing one's understanding of the target language through clarification
- Demonstrating and conforming one's linguistic knowledge through discussions
- Exchanging ideas, correcting errors

#### **4.3.1.2 Affective benefits**

- Building self-confidence
- Reducing anxiety
- Helping to be courageous in the group
- Encouraging a facilitative classroom atmosphere

- Encouragements from the lecturer and classmates

#### **4.3.1.3 Socio-cultural benefits**

- Exchanging and sharing ideas with others
- Building up a sense of belonging to the group
- Understanding the target language culture
- Getting to know other classmates personally

#### **4.3.1.4 Linguistic benefits**

- Improving English speaking skills and other skills
- Helping correct errors and mistakes
- Enriching vocabulary and expression

Based on the participants' responses to questions related to English drama oriented lessons, most participants gave highly positive comments on learning English through drama activities. Most positive responses emerged as the English drama oriented lessons progressed to the third week of intervention. The following are the participants' responses on EDOL as per the emerged themes.

#### **4.3.1.5 Interaction**

The participants' responses indicated that EDOL provided the participants' opportunities to actively participate in activities and freely interact with each other. Participants also indicated that through the groups' cooperation, they gained problem solving insights that concern the nature of the language they are learning.

Furthermore, participants indicated that they got to know each other better as they exchanged ideas and negotiated with each other during drama activities. The participants also indicated that, they are normally concerned about the lecturer's assessments of their classroom's participation but the English drama oriented lessons had them less concerned about being evaluated by the lecturer or being mocked by other classmates when they make language errors.

#### **4.3.1.6 Conducive learning environment**

This theme emerged as the participants indicated that they were initially afraid of standing in front of others to talk, especially the first two weeks into EDOL. The participants reported that, as the sessions progressed, they became more confident to freely participate in class with no fear. The participants also indicated that the classroom environment became more of a non-threatening and interactive setting which reduced their anxiety than it was before the English drama oriented lessons.

#### **4.3.1.6 Participants' speaking skills**

The participants' responses indicated that the English drama oriented lessons accorded them an opportunity to use the target language (English) for communication without fear. The participants reported that before the English drama oriented lessons, they had little opportunity to practice speaking English in their English lessons because they mostly listened to the teacher talk throughout the lessons and they only spoke up when asked questions. The participants also indicated that they greatly benefited from the English drama oriented lessons because they

could make use of vocabulary and sentence patterns they learned in the dramatic situations unlike in traditional teaching settings.

#### **4.3.1.7 The teacher's role**

This theme also emerged from the participants' responses. The researcher deemed it necessary to outline it as a theme as teachers have roles in classrooms as well. It is only important to make it as part of the participants' responses. The participants indicated that the lecturer did not act as the bank of knowledge as in many teacher-centred classrooms. The participant's assert that, the lecturer rather acted as their adviser as they were engaged in preparing their roles. The participants' therefore conclude that the lecturer's guidance and explanations had them meet their individual needs to effectively take part in the drama oriented lessons.

### **4.3.2 Descriptions of the participants' negative attitude towards the English drama oriented lessons.**

#### **4.3.2.1 Cognitive concerns**

- Not participating in class does not mean a lack of understanding or thinking

#### **4.3.2.2. Affective concerns**

- Lack of sense of belonging to class without participating
- Strong sense of competitiveness with other students in the group
- Shy in nature and passive in group

#### **4.3.2.3 Socio-cultural concerns**

- Lack of opportunities to participate by passive participants

- Time to prepare for the tasks
- Time wasting

#### **4.3.2.4 Linguistic concerns**

- Lack of opportunities to concentrate on language errors
- Lack of feedback for individual students

To summarise the participants' negative comments on the English drama oriented lessons, the participants indicate that there were times when they were discouraged by other participants' progress in the activities. They claim that some participants were too quiet and that could demoralize those that really wanted to learn through the drama activities. The participants indicated that those who have extremely low self-confidence appeared to be frustrated when those that were active were eager and ready to confidently take part in the drama activities. Some participants indicated that they were sceptical about learning through the English drama oriented lessons. These students were of the opinion that they were going to play too much and waste their learning time.

The participants further indicated that the English drama oriented lessons might not equip them with the knowledge they were supposed to get in a non-drama class. They argue that the English drama oriented lessons do not seem sufficient, due to limited class time. Some participants also expressed that not all of them could get the lecturer's feedback when needed it. This they argued prevented them from knowing

in what areas they need improvement. The participants recommend that English drama oriented lessons be complimented with constant monitoring and evaluation on the lecturer's part.

#### **4.4 Focus Group Interviews**

In addition to the participants' portfolios employed with the purpose of understanding the students' perceptions towards the use of drama activities in teaching English to enhance their communicative skills, the researcher randomly selected 10 participants to be interviewed in a pre and post focus group interviews. The pre and post focus group interviews lasted 45 minutes. The focus group interviews used the same questions as those in the students' reflections portfolios aimed at understanding different opinions crucial for this study and getting a deeper understanding of the students' perceptions to complement the feedback in the portfolios.

The participants' perceptions recorded in their portfolios were then compared with results of the pre-post focus group interviews to determine the extent to which the English drama oriented lessons helped in enhancing the students' communicative skills. Furthermore, focus group interviews allowed for the discussion of potential sources of difficulty in English speaking skills which might not have been revealed in the participants' reflective portfolios.

During the interviews, the interviewees were informed about the purpose of the interview and its voluntary nature, even though the focus group was randomly selected. The interviewees were also informed of their rights to be part of the focus group interviews or not. They were given consent letters with detailed information regarding the focus group interviews. All 10 selected participants were interviewed willingly. Even though the researcher had guiding questions for the interviews, the semi-structured questions were integrated into the interview, which allowed for an open discussion between the interviewer and the interviewees that is directed to the focus of this study.

#### **4.4.1 Pre and Post focus group interview results**

When a face-to-face interview was conducted, it is acknowledged that a number of factors such as social setting and personal characteristic (e.g. gender and personality) may affect the responses of the interviewees. Due to this fact, some measures were taken into account to avoid such factors negatively affecting the interview results. The researcher made sure there were no third persons in the interview room in order to provide a feeling of security and confidence to the interviewees (Creswell, 2003). The interviews were conducted the first day before the English drama oriented lesson resumed and the last day of the English drama oriented lessons. Among the types of questions designed for the interviews, were experience/behavior and opinion/value in relation to the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills:



1. What did you learn about your confidence in speaking English after the drama lesson?
2. Were you motivated enough to be part of the EDOL?
3. Do you think you interact more with others during the English lessons without the drama activities included?
4. If this drama lessons were to be offered in your native language, would you feel more comfortable to talk than in an English class?
5. How easy /difficult was it for you to take part in an English drama oriented class?
6. Do you want the English drama oriented lessons to continue why?

The researcher grouped the data collected through the focus interviews into themes to enable thorough analyses. The researcher did not have the mentioned themes in place before the interviews but rather extracted them from the participants' responses during the data analyses to determine common patterns from the data collected from the students' reflective notes. The following are the themes the researcher derived from the focus group interview feedback.

- Interaction /engagement
- Motivation
- Confidence
- Vocabulary

Based on the collected data, the majority of students agreed that drama performance helped them improve their spoken language and boost their confidence. The

participants felt that the English drama oriented lessons accorded them opportunities to interact with other classmates and get to know each other as a team. The participants also stated that drama activities equipped them with increased fluency in English language speaking as argued by Maley and Duff (2008) in the earlier reviewed literature that drama includes all kinds of talks and languages – to explain, complain, praise, disagree, request, etc. The results from the focus group interviews were also compared to findings from the portfolios to determine if what the participants indicated in their focus group interviews were reflected in their actual reflective .

It is worth noting that the participants were extremely quiet during the pre focus group interviews and it was difficult for the researcher to continue prompting them to speak up. Most of the questions met a yes or no response or some responses were extremely short. The researcher noted that there was one male participant who did not answer any question during the pre focus group interviews. Surprisingly, the same participant who was extremely shy and did not say anything during the pre-focus group interview was very vocal during the post-focus group interviews. Also, the researcher noted that the participants had longer and well constructed sentences in the post-focus group interviews unlike when they only had yes or no answers during the pre-focus group interview, although the questions did not require a yes or no answer.

To summarize the findings of the pre and post focus group interviews, the researcher analysed the data as per emerged themes from the focus group interview. The

researcher did not have these themes before the focus group interview but they emerged from the participants responses:

#### **4.4.1.1 Improved confidence**

In terms of the participants confidence', the participants in the pre-focus group interview had limited responses regarding their confidence level. There were only two female students who indicated that they are already confident in speaking English and drama would be a bonus to their confidence. The rest of the 8 participants indicated that they were shy and only hoping that drama activities would help them overcome their shyness.

During the post- focus group interview which was employed after the English drama oriented lessons, the participants indicated that drama helped boost and improve their self-confidence. The participants indicated that being involved in drama activities challenged their abilities to be confident in playing the roles assigned to them. The results further showed that even though they did not have prior acting experience, the drama oriented lessons helped them build their confidence as they could express themselves better without being shy, unlike before when they were shy to speak. This shyness was a fear that they will be laughed at when they make mistakes speaking English. This is in accordance with Zafeiriadou's (2009) theoretical perspective on drama, where the weight was more on the personal growth of students through creative self-expression and the search for personal meaning. Specifically, role play is one of an essential techniques of drama, whereby students are required to identify themselves with a role, being either a person or an object. Zafeiriadou stresses that

this approach helps students develop as a person as they are required to understand and empathize with the role that they are assigned with. Furthermore, through role plays, students' personality growth is also promoted as they have to come up with their own interpretation of the roles that are given to them (Zafeiriadou, 2009).

#### **4.4.1.2 Interacting**

Students' interaction with each other is one crucial discovery in this study, as it is an integral part of the objectives. To the question whether the participants interacted more with each other during the English drama oriented lessons than the lessons without drama, the participants in the pre-focus group interview indicated that they were not sure if they will interact with each other more during the drama oriented lessons since they have never taken part in the English drama oriented lessons. One participant had this to say:

*“Miss, I am sure we will talk to each other more during the drama lessons. I cant wait because I want to show my talent and get to know the quiet people in class”.*

Another participant also answered :

*“ You guys need to know that drama means taking part in role plays and acting right, I am sure we will interact with each other more.”*

After the English drama oriented lessons, almost all participants agreed that they interacted more with fellow students in the drama oriented lessons than the English lessons without drama activities. They indicated that drama activities strengthened their teamwork and friendship as they will have to work together and know each

other better. As per the findings, participants indicated that they felt at ease interacting with each other as time went on which has partially contributed to the development of their English language proficiency. The latter is expressed in Ward (1963) a pioneer in the drama in education movement, who suggested that drama helps develop emotional as well as intellectual skills which promotes the nurturing of the students' personalities.

Regarding this interaction theme, one participant expressed her dissatisfaction that:

*“I do not enjoy group work because some students are too lazy and don't do the work. I was so bored and did not like the noise some people made during the lesson”.*

Less common but still mentioned, was the idea that acting out dialogues and role playing enabled the participants to get to know themselves better and that it raises an awareness of others abilities to speak. One participant mentioned that it was a good way for her to know where she stands in her English communicative and presentation. This, she asserted could help her next year when she registers for her academic studies.

#### **4.4.1.3 Feelings**

The researchers' initial question on participants' feelings about the drama activities received positive answers both in the pre and post focus group interviews. When asking the participants to explain themselves, a female participant responded that it

was a fun way to practice being in front of other people. Another factor that was touched on by several participants was that they liked the way they were allowed to prepare for the task, as it influenced their feelings for it. This is explained by one participant:

*“I think I managed better when we were asked to write down what we were going to say in order to say things right, it is helpful to write down what you are going to say before you say it out loud”.*

The participant further stated that he is the type of a person that wants to plan what to say especially in a language that is not his native language:

*“I hate making errors, so, writing something first before I say it was more important for me”.*

Generally these points were made by the majority of the participants. It was also made clear that it was important from the participants’ perspective that if somebody did not feel confident enough to stand in front of the class they should not be forced to do so. Stressing on that one exclaimed:

*“Oh yaaa, it is good to mention that part”.* *“I felt like I was forced to be part of this but I later realized it was to my benefits.”*

A few students expressed that they thought it was tiresome and too much was expected of them especially during the role-plays but the activities turned out to be more fun than they thought.

#### 4.4.1.4 Increased fluency and speaking in front of others

Responses in the pre-focus group interview to the question, how the English drama oriented lessons could be beneficial to the participants' speaking skills met a nodding expressions from 7 out of 10 participants during the pre-focus group interview. It is worth noting that the question did not require a yes or no answer but the participants were shy to speak up during the pre-focus interview session. One of the vocal participants responded:

*"I think I will improve my English speaking skills more and speak fast than now. I cannot wait for us to start."*

Another one also had this to say:

*"Myself I am slow in English and I think I will speak fast when I take part in the drama activities."*

Another participant said:

*"Miss, I think I will be fluent in English after this drama lessons and show off to my friends"*

During the post focus group interviews the participants' responses had the researcher derive two distinctive themes: increasing language fluency and training students to speak in front of others. These concepts were summarized by two participants when commenting on the benefits of drama:

*"I am encouraged to stand in front of other and talk more especially if I am the lead speakers."*

Furthermore, another participant views were:

*“Using drama as a method helps me getting started; because I am very shy, uh ...I think I would prefer using my native language during drama lessons but it is bad that we have to use English to communicate.”*

Another participant also responded:

*“Aye, Miss, you want to say you did not notice that I speak like an American now? I am fast and I know more of my classmates now”*

In addition, another participant commented:

*“My friends are asking me why I use English every time now. I have also noticed that I am a little bit fast when speaking both Oshiwambo and English. I think the drama activities helped us improve our English speaking skills and also to talk to others in English more”.*

Participants further mentioned that even though they felt shy or hesitant to speak in English before the English drama oriented lessons, it is beneficial to them as they have to deal with their insecurities and build their English fluency to be successful in their every day's engagements.

An explicit concern of a few participants was uncertainty about the question regarding the extent to which more drama activities would affect their communicative skills and if they prefer having more English drama oriented lessons. One participant expressed that she would like to have drama activities in all classes for as long as learning grammar is a priority. The participants suggested that half of



the lessons should be dedicated to traditional grammar teaching and half taught with drama. The main concern seemed to be a general feeling that grammar is not in focus when performing drama activities. On the other hand, a few comments were also made about literature. The participants indicated that the literature books should be the only books to be used for drama activities as they are self-explanatory and suitable for drama. The participants generally felt that it is sometimes good when acting out the story lines that are already there.

One of the participants who love the Liwanika character from the *God of Women*, the literature book used for literature component had this say:

*“Like the way I acted as Liwanika, I had fun and I was always looking forward to the drama lessons to play Chief Liwanika.”*

Other participants nodded in agreement that *God of Women* was more fun and easy to work with.

#### **4.4.1.5 Attitudes/Beliefs**

In terms of participants' attitudes, beliefs and interests, there were some overlaps with other themes mentioned above. This could be because their attitudes are the underlying framework throughout where every other opinion is derived. For example, the discussion regarding drama and grammar sharing the time of English classes showed up again but with a slightly different variation. The general expressed attitudes towards English drama oriented lessons were that half of the lesson should

be devoted to drama and half to grammar alone without using drama techniques and strategies to teach grammar.

When the researcher further prompted the participants to clarify what they meant, they made it clear that they feel they will fail the grammar part as they are not getting sufficient explanations on language structures but instead are involved in drama activities. Furthermore, it could be concluded that the participants were thinking about their grammar tests and examination as one murmured that:

*“Will they ask us about drama in the exams or tests”?*

Consequently, there were no apparent negative attitudes towards the English drama oriented lessons apart from concerns regarding how drama and grammar should be taught in isolation. Furthermore, there were a few opinions that leaned towards the negative direction but they often concluded in a positive tone as one participant stated:

*“I found it a bit difficult to stand in front of everyone but it was a good way to practice speaking in front of a crowd, especially if I did not have to be myself but rather pretending to be somebody else.”*

One crucial point that emerged is that, the participants thought drama costumes would have been more appropriate during the lessons as they will be willing to participate when they had appropriate to wear for different activities. To this they all agreed that drama costumes would have excited them and made them more comfortable.

The general attitudes of the group on the key benefits of using drama in English teaching expressed by almost everyone in the group was the variations in the lessons. The need for variation was further expressed by the fact that a larger part of the group wanted drama activities as an alternative teaching method to traditional teaching, not replacing it. For example, on the question to what extent they would like to have drama activities as part of English lessons, almost everyone responded:

*“Every other week, because the English lessons without drama are boring especially if the teacher is not fun”.*

Another response worth mentioning is:

*“I love acting and learning English at the same time, Ahh, I do not mind doing it every day of my life.”*

A negative aspect of using drama activities was also expressed by one participant:

*“If we have it too often, too much of something can become boring. A whole hour lesson with these activities would be too much.”*

One female participant emphasized that if you use drama activities, it is necessary to explain that they are part of the basis for assessment because they want to do their best for marks but not only for fun. On the question of perceived positive effects of using drama activities the most common points were increased creativity and more fluent language.

#### **4.5 Researcher's Observation field notes**

First and foremost, it is crucial to restate that the researcher is the lecturer in this study. This simply means, the researcher was the lecturer and observer who was part of the participants when collecting data. As mentioned earlier in chapter 1 and 3, EAC is a year long course which is taught in two semesters. Before the researcher employed the drama techniques and strategies in the EAC lesson and collected the data, the researcher observed the participants' speaking skills during normal teaching hours in the first semester. This was done with the purpose of gauging the actual and authentic impacts on the participants' speaking skills before and after the English drama oriented lessons. The participants were not aware that they were being observed during the first and second semester as the English drama oriented lessons resumed.

Participant observation combines participation in the lives of people being studied with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data (Cresswell, 2003). Cresswell further states that participant observation is in some ways both the most natural and the most challenging of qualitative data collection methods. It connects the researcher to the most basic of human experiences, discovering through immersion and participation the hows and whys of human behaviour in a particular context.

According to Winston (2005), ethnographic research derives from social and cultural anthropology whereby a researcher is required to spend considerable time in the field, and study the phenomenon within its social and cultural context. Winston also

asserts that ethnographers try to immerse themselves in a setting and become part of the group being investigated, in order to understand the meanings that actors put upon events or situations. Furthermore, Winston notes that “data obtained through participant observation serve as a check against participants’ subjective reporting of what they believe and do” (p. 23). Creswell (2003) agrees with Winston that participant observation is also useful for gaining an understanding of the physical, social, cultural context in which study participants live; the relationships among and between people, contexts, ideas, norms, and events; and people’s behaviours and activities – what they do, how frequently, and with whom. Creswell also states that through participant observation, researchers can also uncover factors important for a thorough understanding of the research problems that were unknown when the study was designed.

The literature reviewed had the researcher understand that being an observer and a participant was of great advantage, thus, what the researcher learned from participant observation helped to understand data collected through other methods such as focus group interviews, entry and exit questionnaires and the participants reflections in their portfolios.

When the researcher first entered the class during the first semester, she noticed that the male students were all sitting at the back with the female students sitting in front of the class. This is a typical Namibian classroom setting where there is a natural separation between genders. Another natural separation the researcher noticed was

that, students were sitting according to their high school backgrounds and place of origin. For example, three girls from Ongha Secondary School were sharing two tables despite the fact there were more than enough tables in the classroom. When the researcher asked the participants a few questions, she realized that students grouped themselves as such in general as a class. Perhaps these are some of the classroom setting aspects that need to be researched. The researcher would say the classroom setting also helped her design drama activities that changed the dynamics of the classroom settings and have them interact with each other regardless of their gender or where they come from.

During the first semester, students were silent and only spoke when spoken to. The researcher observed that the students appeared to be angry and avoided eye contact with the researcher most of the times. Another aspect picked up from the participants' speaking skills is that most participants especially girls uttered incomprehensible sentences, so much that the researcher spent most of the class time prompting them to speak up and clearly. The researcher also realized that EAC students especially males were often absent from classes. When the researcher asked them why they are always absent during the lesson, one male participant responded:

*“Miss, English is not our motherland and we cannot speak English. I am ashamed for the girls to laugh me”.*

During the second semester, the researcher introduced the English drama oriented lessons to the EAC students who were the participants in this study. The first 5 days

of the English drama oriented lessons were very difficult as participants showed little or no interest in the activities. The researcher remembered the first day when one male participant loudly asked what they will benefit from the drama activities. When it was his turn, he could only stand and not say anything. Upon being prompted to talk he answered:

*“Miss, I am not a good actor and this drama things are for the girls not boys”. He further said that “I do not like drama because I am shy and I do not know how to speak English”.*

The general feeling the researcher got from this group is that they started off rather shy but warmed up to the activities as the English drama oriented lessons progressed. The researcher remembers the first drama activity conducted: *“Know your neighbour”* where students were to introduce themselves to the person sitting on their right and report back to the person sitting on their left. Most participants could only remember the names but they could not remember any other information about their neighbours. It was surprising to see how participants felt like strangers to one another in that class but they have been in the same class for a whole semester. Some participants were barely audible as others indicated when asked to mention each other’s names a frequent answer of *“I did not hear what he/ she said”* was apparent. The researcher is of the opinion that the entry questionnaire administered before the activities had the students restrained in their responses to the *“Know your neighbour”* activity as they later on became very noisy and visibly relaxed, though still appeared shy.

The vernacular Oshiwambo could be picked up when students became noisy. The researcher had to intervene often, reminding them that it was not Oshindonga or Oshikwanyama lesson. The researcher referred to the two dialects as they are the taught Oshiwambo dialects in Namibian schools and most of the students are Oshiwambo speakers as per the study findings on the biographical information of the respondents in Table 2 where the results show that 77% of the participants are Oshiwambo speakers.

The first two weeks of the English drama oriented lessons were challenging. The lessons were quieter with only a few students actively involved in the activities. The researcher noticed that out of 45 students, only 10-15 were active in the activities. As the English drama oriented activities progressed to the third week, the researcher was surprised to enter the classroom with cheerful participants all standing with greetings of, *“Hallo Miss English Drama!!!!* It was obvious that students were being assimilated and accustomed to the English drama oriented lessons.

That day, the researcher changed the initial teaching lesson plan. The researcher decided to have students talk about their weekend in groups and report back to the class as a whole. The researcher was amazed to see the shy male participant who threw tantrums the first day taking up the lead role of the reporter from his group. He was the first person to report back excitedly though some of his utterances were unintelligible.



As the English drama oriented lessons progressed, most students appeared to enjoy the lessons as compared to the first two weeks into the English drama oriented lessons. From this day on, things went very well with this group. They were always excited to see the researcher and some of them whenever meeting in the university corridors would use few of the drama activities' phrases as greetings.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, these participants' are a sample drawn from 210 registered students taught by other lecturers. The researcher is of the opinion that some of the participants informed students from other EAC classes about the drama oriented lessons. A few students from other groups joined the class as they wanted to enjoy the English classes apparently. The researcher inquired one of them why, and she answered *"Miss, I also want to speak English like you do"* When I prompted further, she responded.

*"In our class ne, we are like always quiet while the teacher is teaching and we hardly interact with each other like they are doing here". "I want to change to your class Miss please"*.

The researcher had to inform the students that the curriculum is the same; the difference is that English is taught through drama activities for the purpose of the research being carried out. The students understood but they kept coming to these lessons more often.

The researcher noted that almost every participant was enthusiastic and cooperative. Of course, some activities went off better than others, but none of the participants expressed any outright resistance or refusal to participate. All participants' appeared very motivated, and they grew less anxious and more confident as the sessions continued, with the most dramatic changes occurring in the shyest students.

#### 4.6 Exit questionnaire research findings

**Table 12. Which semester did you just complete?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid First	45	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 12 indicates that all the participants completed the second semester which runs from July to November. The EAC is a year course and it is divided into two semesters. None of the participants is repeating this course. They are all first year students.

**Figure 8. Did the drama oriented lessons fulfill your expectations?**

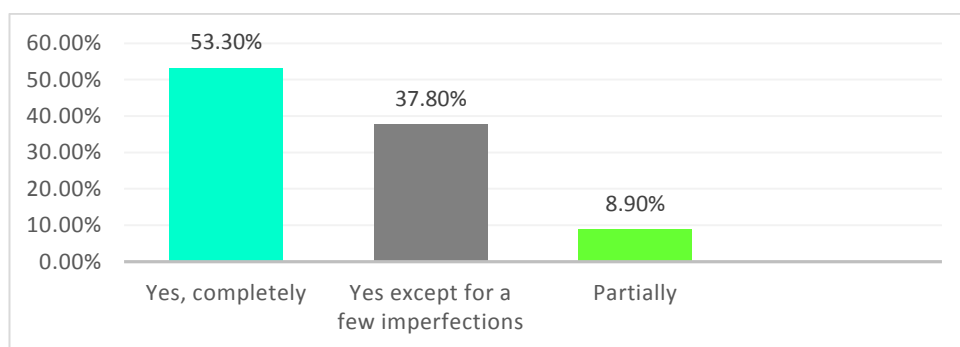


Fig 8 indicates that 53.30% of the participants' drama expectation were fulfilled. One has to go back to the entry questionnaire and compare this results. The entry questionnaire indicate that 40% expected drama to help improve their speaking skills. Furthermore 37.80% felt that drama fulfilled their expectations except for a

few participants not being actively involved and the drama dresses not appropriate for the settings. The results revealed that 8.90% of the participants expectations were partially fulfilled.

**Figure 9. Did the English drama oriented lessons help you improve your English skills?**

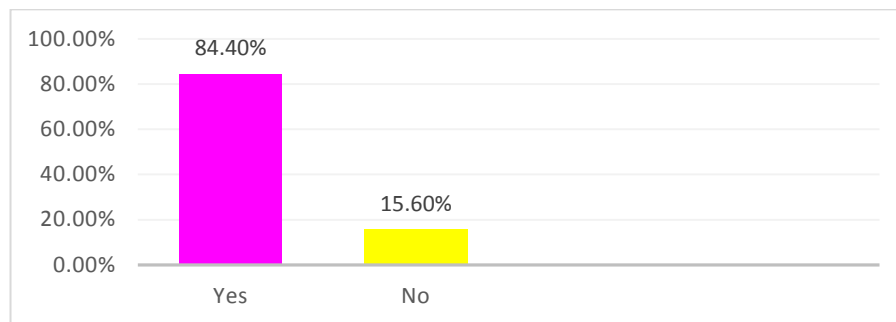
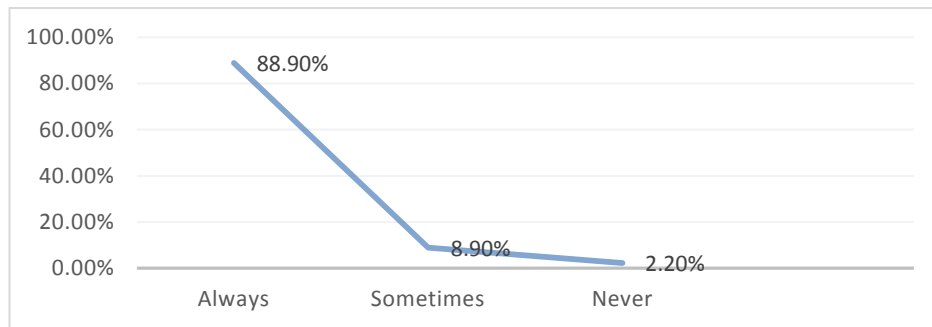


Fig 9 indicates that almost all participants responded that the drama oriented lessons helped them improve their English speaking skills. This is evident as 84.40% have responded that their English speaking skills improved through the English drama oriented lessons. Again, one has to refer back to the number of participants who expected drama to help them improve their speaking skills. In the entry questionnaire Table 10, only 2.2 % of the participants expected the drama oriented lessons to improve their speaking skills. Regarding this question 15.60% participants felt that English drama oriented lessons did not help them improve their English speaking skills.

**Figure 10. Motivation**

The findings from the question whether students were motivated to speak English indicate that 88.90% of the participants were motivated to speak English by their teacher. When reverting back to the entry question in Table 5, 20% of the participants indicated that they were never motivated to speak English. The results have changed after the English oriented drama lessons, as only 2.20% felt that they were never motivated to speak English. As per the reviewed studies, motivation depends on the activities students are exposed to (Jones, 2008). Jones also stressed the importance of learners' motivation to use the target language as it leads to improved confidence. It is therefore notable that 88.90% of the participants were motivated during the English oriented lessons.

The literature considers motivation in learning a second language (L2) as a very important aspect and educators should know how it affects students' achievement. There is evidence that students with favourable relations with the target language community as well as positive attitudes toward the learning situation are 'motivated' and they can develop interest in that language which can help them develop their speaking skills effectively (Gardner, 2007).

Findings from this study are consistent with those of Lin (2009) who suggests that motivation determines the level of active personal involvement in second language learning. Motivated students are deeply involved in their learning. In contrast, unmotivated students are insufficiently involved and therefore unable to develop their L2 skills. In this way, students' motivation determines how ready and willing they are to get more information and to increase their ability to speak the second language effectively (Jones, 2008).

**Figure 11. How often do you speak English to others at school?**

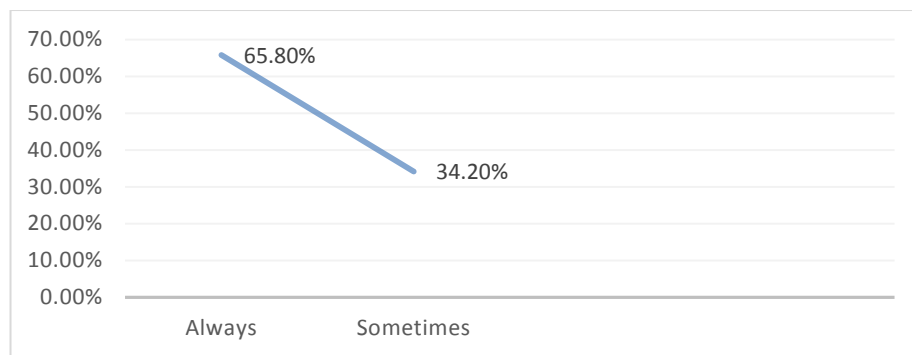
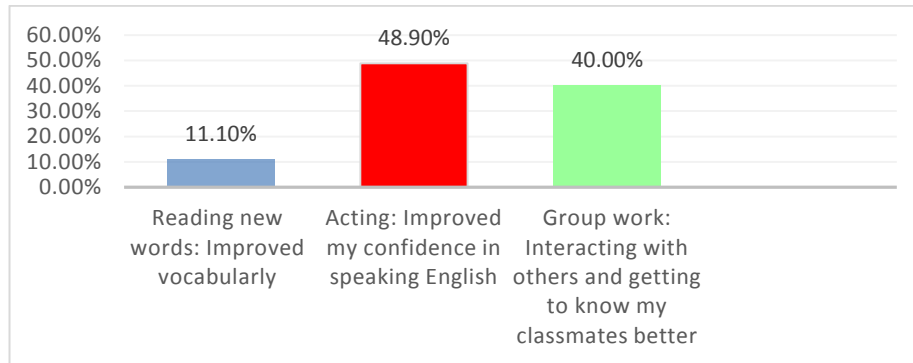


Fig. 11 indicates that a larger percentage of 65.80% use more English at school after the English drama oriented lessons. The figure shows that 34.20% do not use English at school even after the English drama oriented lessons. In the entry questionnaires 30 participants indicated that they communicate in their native languages to their friends outside the classroom. This could be one contributing factor to students not being fluent in English as they only use the target language (English) during the lessons and revert back to their native languages ones they are done with English lessons.

The Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985) is relevant in this regard, as he emphasized that language learners produce the least they receive. He concludes that language learners should be exposed to the target language as much as possible. "The input hypothesis contextualized L2 data is necessary for learning to take place" (Richards, 2008,p.126). The quotation above is introducing the idea of Krashen's input hypothesis of second language learning (Krashen, 1985).

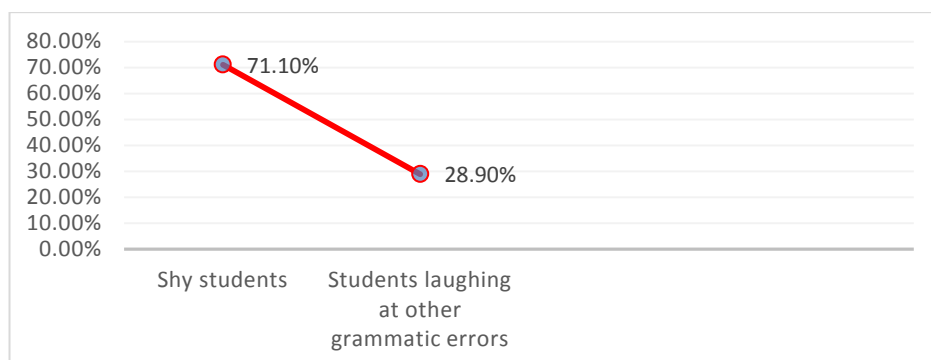
Richards asserts that if the learner is exposed to enough input and the input is understood, the necessary grammar is automatically provided. What is criticised in this theory is the claim that 'comprehensible input' is sufficient. However it is hard to argue against the fact that 'comprehensible input' is necessary, and according to the hypothesis the acquisition of a second language takes place when the input is one step above the learner's level but always linked to a meaning. The formula to an appropriate teaching and learning level would be input + 1 step above (i+1), meaning that the learner would be managing the language input but with a challenge to reach that next step (Richards, 2008). Nevertheless, there is a valid critique arguing that "it is the learners' effort of composing new utterances that makes them form and try out new portions of the second language and hence develop it further. Their mere struggle of understanding i + 1 would not be enough" (Richards, 2008, p. 127).

**Figure 12. What did you like most during the English drama oriented lessons and why?**



Research findings based on this question yield very interesting results especially in consideration of themes such as vocabulary enhancements, improved confidence and interaction. The results reveal that 48.90% indicated that they liked the fact that their confidence in speaking English improved while 40% indicated that English drama oriented lessons helped them interact more with others classmates and 11.10% indicating that they have learned new words which led to improved vocabulary.

**Figure 13. Is there anything you least liked during the English drama oriented lessons?**



Responding to this question, two themes emerged from the participants' responses. It is interesting to note that even though most of the participants in the entry questionnaire responded that they were shy, being shy is one of the themes that

emerged from their responses as the most hated theme. Findings indicate that 71.10% of the students did not like the fact that others were shy to participate during the lesson. Another theme that emerged was grammar errors being laughed at by other students when committed with 28.90% of the participants indicating that they did not like it when their fellow classmates laughed at them when they committed grammar errors.

**Figure 14. What did you find the most difficult and why?**

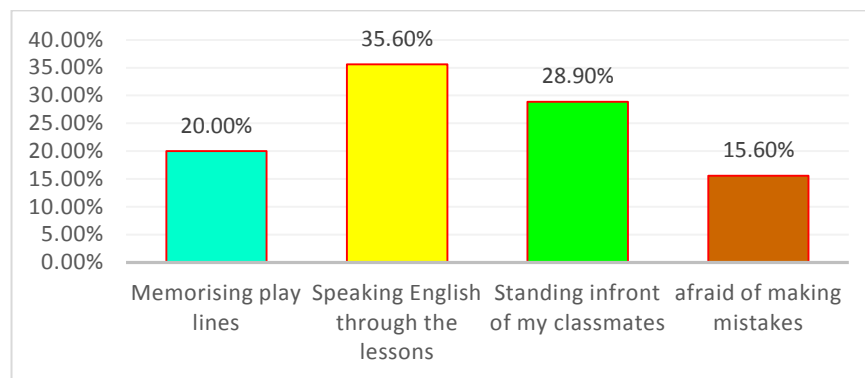


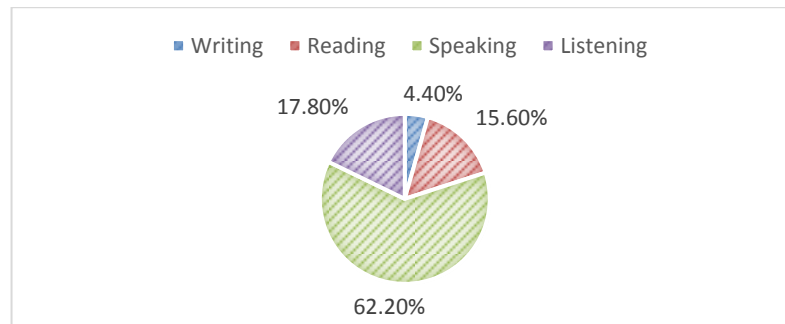
Fig 13 indicates that 20 % of the participants had problems memorizing the line for the role-plays. This could be true as the most of the role-plays they were involved in were adopted from the book '*God of Women*'. In order to perfect the plays, participants had to memorize their lines. The researcher observed that some participants could not even finish acting their roles due to the fact that they forgot their lines, especially the figurative speeches used and the songs which were mainly in Silozi.

Furthermore, results reveal that 35.60 % of the participants faced the challenge of speaking English throughout the lesson. The English drama oriented lessons were strictly in English. Most of the participants either kept quiet during English lessons



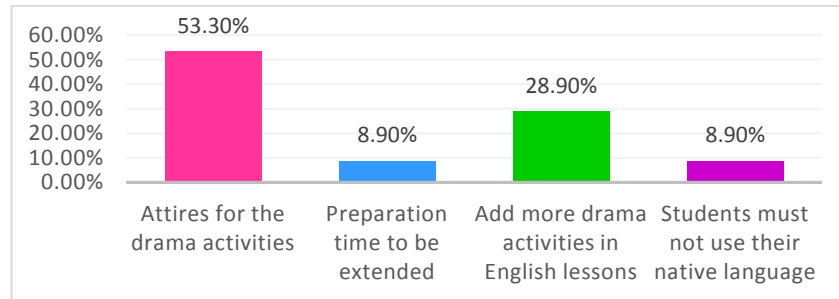
or they murmur in their native languages. There are times when the participants could prompt the lecturer to speak to them in their native languages. This is not surprising. In addition to speaking English and memorising play lines as challenging themes, 28.90 % participants indicated that they did not like standing in front of the class and 15.60% of the participants indicated that they were afraid of making mistakes.

**Figure 15. Which of the four English skills do you think has improved as a result of English Drama oriented lessons?**



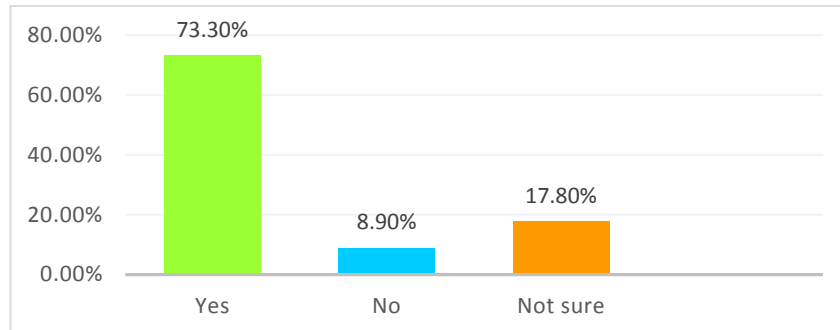
The above research findings are intriguing especially when assessing the writing skills that was supposed to inevitably improve as the participants were involved writing, as they reflected on their drama lessons' experiences. Results indicate that only 4.40% improved their writing skills with 62.20% stating that they improved their speaking skills. The conclusion that the researcher reached is that perhaps students concentrated too much on their speaking skills. Another interesting aspect is to note that listening skills improved to 17.80% with reading improved to 15.60%.

**Figure 16. Is there anything you would like to recommend for future English drama oriented lessons?**



Responding to this question, 53.30 % of the participants indicated that they wanted specific drama attire for different drama activities. The participants indicated that they would have enjoyed more of the plays if only they had relevant costume attire. Furthermore 28.90% of the participants advocated for more drama activities. The researcher can only conclude that, the participants enjoyed the drama oriented lessons to such an extent that they wanted more. Also in the researcher's reflective notes, it is noted that participants requested for more activities. In addition 8.90% of the participants recommended for strict English usage throughout the lesson. This implies that they might have noticed or heard others communicating in their native languages. Finally another 8.90% recommended for more preparation time for them to prepare for the activities.

**Figure 17. Do you recommend the English drama oriented lessons to be part of the EAC permanently?**



Responding to this questions, 73.30% of the participants strongly recommended drama activities to be permanelty part of the EAC curriculum with 17.80 % not sure of either to be included or not. Furthermore, 8.90% rejected the statements that the drama lessons should not be part of the EAC curricullum . The reason they provided is that the drama activities are a waste of time and they feel they might fail at the end of the year because they spent some of their lessons' hours participating in drama.

#### **4.7 Summary**

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study in accordance to the study objectives. Findings from the entry and exit questionnaires were statistically presented in tables, charts and graph while summarising the participants reflective notes, focus group interviews and the researchers observation notes were also presented through content analyses.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSIONS OF THE STUDY**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills at the University of Namibia. This chapter discusses the major findings of the study obtained through qualitative and quantitative methods by means of an entry and exit questionnaire, focus group interviews, participant's reflective notes from their portfolios and the researcher's observation field notes. The chapter further presents the pedagogical implications of the study. The following are objectives of the study:

1. To explore to what extent can drama activities affects students' motivation towards speaking English.
2. To analyse students' views on using drama techniques and strategies as tools in building confidence in their communicative skills.
3. To advocate for the incorporation of drama techniques in the teaching of English Access or any other English course at school or university level.

Before the findings of this study are discussed, it is imperative to highlight that the aim of integrating drama techniques in the EAC lessons was not to perfect the participants' vocabulary and grammar as this would take a significantly extended amount of time to achieve and notice explicit results. The purpose of this study was

to employ drama strategies and techniques in the EAC curriculum with an aim of enhancing the students' communicative skills which leads to motivation and confidence in speaking English.

## **5.2 Questionnaires**

Through the entry questionnaire, the researcher gathered data on the participants' biographical information, the language profiles on their speaking proficiency and drama experiences. Research findings from the entry questionnaire revealed that the study comprised of 19 males and 26 female participants whose ages range between 17-20 years old. Furthermore, findings from the entry questionnaire revealed that 35 participants were Oshiwambo, 1 Lozi, 2 Rukwangari and 2 Otjiherero first language speakers who have just completed their first semester of the two semesters for the EAC. The findings indicated that the participants have been studying through English medium of instruction for 8 to 10 years. The findings might lead to the conclusion that participants have been exposed to adequate English language instruction. However several factors such as teachers' English proficiency, family educational background and teaching and learning resources may contribute to students not being proficient in English.

According to the language policy (UNIN, 1990), English is the official language in Namibia and a medium of instruction. The language policy though implemented with several disparities allows English as a medium of instruction from grade 5-12 as a

medium of instruction which explains the reasons why some participants indicated that they have been learning through English as a medium of instruction for 8 to 10 years.

Another question in the entry questionnaire was to determine the participants' preferences when it comes to the English language four skills. Participants responded that 37.8% love reading followed by writing at 33.33%, 15.6% listening and lastly speaking at 13.3% in the entry questionnaire. The lowest percentages of speaking being rated the least liked English language skill in the entry questionnaire changed to 37.78 % in the exit questionnaire. This is an indication that English drama oriented lessons had an impact on the participants' preferences hence the change in behaviour. This is of interest to educators in Namibia, particularly those concerned about the general low level of speaking comprehension and proficiency amongst Namibian learners and students. It is crucial because it suggests that in dealing with sources of difficulty in English communicative skills, even in multilingual classrooms, teachers may focus on certain fundamental strategies and interventions, regardless of the learners' first language.

The study findings further indicate that two particular elements perceived by the majority of participants as sources of low level English proficiency are; shyness, lack of motivation from the teachers and confidence in speaking English. This implies that in teaching English speaking skills; the focus should be on strategies aimed at

motivating students, boosting their vocabulary and confidence which would effect a significant improvement in students' English communicative skills.

The study findings on whether participants were motivated to speak English by their teachers also revealed crucial research information. In the entry questionnaire, 44.4.1% indicated that the teachers motivate them to speak English sometimes, 35.6 % were always motivated with 20 % revealing that they have never been motivated to speak English by their teachers. It is interesting to note in the exit questionnaires after the English drama oriented lessons; there was a drastic change in results as the results revealed that 88% of the participants were always motivated to speak English. Only 2.2% reported that they were not motivated to speak English. The findings in this category are evident that teachers as driving forces in education should always motivate students to speak English whether inside or outside the classrooms.

Furthermore, the information from the participants on the use of the English language with their relatives at home also revealed interesting results. Research findings indicated that 75.6% never speak English with their relatives at home with 13.3% indicating that they seldom speak to their relatives and 11.1% revealing that they sometimes speak English to their relatives. This has an impact on the participants' communicative skills as they only use English at school and not exposed to it outside school. This is in accordance with Krashen's (1983) input hypothesis which claims that the more students are exposed to comprehensible input,

the more acquisition takes place. In this case, the participants are not exposed to English language speaking outside the university premises which might pose as a threat to their communicative skills.

Participants were also asked to express their views, perceptions and expectations on the impacts the English drama orientation would have on their communicative skills. In the entry questionnaire, 95.6 % indicated that they have never experienced learning English through drama with only 4.4 % having had experience taking part in drama. On their perceptions and expectations on whether they think English drama oriented lessons will help them improve their communicative skills, the findings from the entry questionnaire revealed that 97.8% were not sure whether English drama oriented lessons would help them improve their English speaking skills with only 2.2% revealing that they think they would benefit from the English drama oriented lessons. After the English Drama Oriented Lessons (EDOL), there was a significant change in expectations from 2.2 % to 54%. This change in perceptions and attitude might have come from the fact that the participants revealed that the English drama oriented lessons helped them boost and build their confidence.

### **5.3 Interviews**

To fulfil the study's objectives on determining the impact EDOL on the students' communicative skills, the researcher randomly selected 10 out of 45 participants for the focus group interview. The major advantage of interviews is flexibility (Creswell,



2008). Through interviews the researcher can explore issues further but may ask questions that lead to answering the research objectives. Semi structured questions were developed for the focus group interviews to shape responses and allow participants to explore the subject themselves. Creswell states that interviews are comparatively easy to organise, they provide a great deal of rich, interesting data and are generally enjoyable for both participants and the researcher. Interviews can be adapted to the needs of different locations and situations. While interviews can be very important, they have many disadvantages. One of these challenges that the researcher experienced, was that participants were not on time for their appointments. Another disadvantage included participants talking about issues not related to the topic under discussion.

In this case, the focus group interview lasted 45 minutes both in the pre and post focus group interviews. First, participants were asked general questions to have them feel relaxed. The focus group interviews primarily focused on the discussions of the English drama oriented lessons selected and the basis of discussion in the literature as having an influence on ESL students' communicative skills. However, in light of the wide variety of factors acknowledged by scholars as playing a role in the communication process, it was essential to explore the extent to which English drama oriented lessons affect students' motivation towards speaking English.

The purpose of the focus group interviews was thus not only to establish strong evidence or dispute the findings of the related reviewed studies but highlight any further conclusive findings on the role of drama in teaching English to enhance the students communicative skills. From the focus interview, themes such as interaction, confidence, motivation, usefulness, beliefs and improved vocabulary emerged.

### **5.3.1 Interaction**

Interaction is one notable theme that emerged from many responses from the pre and post focus group interview. The findings derived from the focus group interview, participants' reflective note and the exit questionnaire also revealed that EDOL (English Drama Oriented Lessons) promotes interaction among the students. In particular, participants indicated that they learn well when interacting with others during the EDOL. The research findings further revealed that the EDOL have accorded participants opportunities to interact and socialise effectively. Furthermore the results revealed that participants were more at ease when taking part in drama activities which resulted into cohesiveness of community building.

Consequently, the theoretical basis for this study is provided by 3 renowned researchers in cognitive (Krashen), educational psychology (Vygotsky) and second and foreign language acquisition (Bruner). Vygotsky as one of the tenets of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as cited in Malik (2008), the sociocultural theory maintains that learning occurs through interaction. Malik states that Vygotsky

introduced the concept of ZPD, which is the notional gap between a.) The learner's current developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving ability and b.) The learner's potential level of development is determined by the ability to solve problems under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

Malik further posits that acquisition of knowledge and skills occurs as individuals participate in society through interacting with, and receiving guidance from more capable persons. In relation to Vygotsky's theories of language acquisition is Krashen who devised a similar notion for language acquisition with his five hypotheses. Krashen (2004) asserts that "acquisition requires meaningful interactions in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding" (p.128). Krashen further asserts the kind of input that is one step beyond ESL/EFL student current stage and which a student needs in order to make progress in acquiring English. He calls this gap  $i+1$ , where (i) is the current level of proficiency. When a student is exposed to comprehensible input, acquisition takes place. Indeed, Krashen further states that comprehensible input is a sufficient condition for language acquisition and he suggests that natural communicative input is key to designing a syllabus, ensuring that each learner will receive some 'i + 1' input that is appropriate for their current stage of linguistic competence.

However, Krashen (2008) denounces that language will not be acquired in the presence of the affective filter. This simply means that a student who is nervous or bored in class will learn neither subject content nor new language, even if the input is comprehensible. Furthermore, it is in this aspect where drama techniques become relevant especially in acquiring the language. In relation to this study, it was evident from the beginning; especially the first two weeks of the drama oriented lessons that participants were extremely quiet and shy to talk.

The participants in this study became more articulate and free to engage in activities as the EDOL progressed. The EDOL helped participants overcome their fears in speaking English and they were the catalyst to their change in behaviour towards speaking English. To this, Bruner (1978) coins the term scaffolding as a description for the kind of assistance given by the teacher or more knowledgeable peer in providing comprehensible input and moving the learner into the Zone of Proximal Development. Scaffolding is the term given to the provision of appropriate assistance to students in order to achieve what would have been too difficult for an individual student (Bruner, 1978). Bruner clarifies that scaffolding includes all activities that teachers engage in when they predict varied difficulties that the class or individual students will have with a given task.

During the English drama oriented lessons, the researcher who was the lecturer in this study, designed cooperative learning activities aimed at promoting interaction

among the participants. As mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4, most participants grouped themselves per gender and language group at the beginning of the first semester. The researcher then realized that for a cohesive classroom community to be created, cooperative learning activities were imperative. In relation to the reviewed literature teachers and lecturers in ESL environments should emphasize group dynamics as students work together in small groups to achieve their goals.

A cooperative learning environment is structured so that students' success is interdependent on each other (Olsen & Kagan, 1992). In addition, Pica (2007) asserts that "participation in verbal interaction offers language learners the opportunity to follow up on new words and structures to which they have been exposed during language lessons and to practice them in context" (p. 59-60). Teaching which takes place in the classroom is described by O'Gara (2008) as "an interactive process, primarily involving classroom talk, which takes place between teacher and pupils and occurs during certain definable activities" (p. 20).

The research findings in this study are thus backed up by scholars as per the participants' responses during the focus interview and in their reflective notes. This could be concluded that English drama oriented lessons increased variety of second language practice through different types of interaction. The interaction is such as possibility for development or use of the second language in ways that support cognitive development and increased second language skills; opportunities to

integrate language with content instruction; inclusion of a greater variety of curricular materials to stimulate language use, as well as concept learning and the freedom to master new professional speaking skills, particularly those emphasizing communication.

### **5.3.2. Motivation**

Motivation is an internal state that initiates and maintains goal-directed behaviour. It is an inducement to action (Murray, 2010). Murray states “when students are motivated to learn, they try harder to understand the material and thereby learn more deeply, resulting in better ability to transfer what they have learned to new situations” (p. 459). If students can use the language themselves, then they become aware that they have learnt something useful and are encouraged to go on learning: perhaps the most important factor is to maintain motivation in the learning process itself (Hedge, 2011). Many researches (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Hayes, 2010) in the motivation field proved that there is an inseparable relationship between motivational strength and oral English proficiency. So using any kind of good methods in the oral English class is very important to students speaking skills.

Results from this study prove that EDOL had an impact on participants’ motivation towards speaking English. Most participants in their entry questionnaires indicated that they find it crucial to learn to communicate appropriately in English; even though in the same entry questionnaire 20% indicated that they were never motivated

to speak English by their teachers. The latter was then rejected in the exit questionnaire after the participants took part in the English drama oriented lessons.

The participants claims are therefore proven in Wagner (2009) , “drama is powerful because of its unique balance of thought and feeling makes learning exciting, challenging, relevant to real life concerns, and enjoyable” (p. 9). Wagner further states drama has the potential to provide students an opportunity to practice their English speaking skills in a setting where they feel safe. Research suggests that drama holds the potential to lower anxiety and increase motivation for English Language Learners (ELL) (Stern, 2008). Stern’s (2008) study showed that drama helped ESL students gain self-confidence, and they felt less nervous speaking English in front of the group as they were motivated to speak English through drama activities.

According to Emel et al. (2010), “it is easy to see why motivation is of great importance in SLA. It provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force needed to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved with Second Language Acquisition (SLA) presuppose motivation to some extent” (p. 65). English language learners have varying degrees of motivation based on their beliefs, such as their belief in the importance of learning English and their beliefs in their abilities which is not far from the participants’ assentation’s and behavioural change after attending the

English grammar lessons. It is therefore important for language teachers to know that certain teaching methods and tasks can have a positive or negative affect on student motivation. Even though 88.90% of the participants indicated that they were motivated to speak English through the English drama lessons in the exit questionnaires, one cannot rule out the fact 8% of the participants viewed it differently.

The participants who indicated that they were not motivated expressed their views about boring activities. Some participants during the focus interview also mentioned that they were bored with the speaking activities. Another aspect that was mentioned was that students were shy and it was difficult for them to face other classmates and freely communicate in English. To this, Emel et al. (2010) suggests that group dynamics may also have a profound effect on the motivation of L2 students and it is crucial for language teachers to be aware of the dynamics in their classes.

### **5.3.3 Confidence**

Regarding the participants' confidence as per their pre-focus interview responses, participants endorsed that they were shy to speak English and most importantly felt more comfortable speaking their native languages. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, some students were extremely quiet during the first days in English drama oriented lessons. It is important to note that there was significant change in the participants' behaviour and perceptions after two weeks into the English oriented drama lessons.



Participants significantly gained confidence and expressed themselves freely during the drama exercises. Regarding confidence, Cohen (2012), points out that self-image is an important factor to be considered in the learning and teaching arena. Self-image refers to a person's beliefs about themselves. A person with a positive self-image will usually be more self-confident than a person with a low self-image. In the pre-focus group interview, entry questionnaire and a few of the students' reflective notes in the early days of the English lessons, one could conclude from the participants' responses that they had low self-image and did not believe in their capabilities of speaking English in front of others. This might be caused by students coming from English classrooms where teachers do not motivate them to speak English. According to Cohen (2012), confident language learners with a positive self-image actually seek out meaningful input, and are better able to acquire a second language.

#### **5.4 Reflective notes**

Findings from participants' portfolios demonstrated similar results as that of the focus group interviews responses. Most participants thought that the activities in the English drama oriented lessons helped enhance their understanding of the lessons, their language, and their thinking skills. One reoccurring statement from the participants was:

*"I can practice many skills, such as speaking, answering questions in English, and thinking analytically."*

Also, participants revealed that they liked the learning atmosphere, which they thought was “relaxing and enjoyable.” Similarly, participants added that the English drama oriented lessons helped to confidently express themselves without fear of making grammar errors and being laughed at by others.

The significance of English drama oriented lessons is attributed to the fact that it allows for creation of contexts for different language uses, thus fostering students’ language awareness. Hence (Zafeiriadou (2009), stresses that drama has a unique value as a pedagogical technique as it helps students develop their creative thoughts and emphasises language education as a creative process. However, Zafeiriadou (2009) cautions that drama activities should not be mistaken as performing plays but it should instead be considered as a teaching tool used to strengthen language learning (Miccoli, 2003). It is further noted that students with the right to express their own feelings, view and explain themselves is the notion of “ educating adolescents in a way that could help cultivate creative development” (Zafeiriadou, 2009. p.25).

Incorporating drama techniques and strategies in EAC lessons encouraged students to speak even with limited English language skills, by using non-verbal communication such as body movement and facial expressions. The English drama oriented lessons provided students an experience of using the language for genuine

communication and real life purposes by generating the need to speak (Zafeiriadou, 2009).

This is in line with Bas (2008) that using drama techniques and strategies could help learners use language for genuine communication and real life purposes which generates the need to speak. Bas further asserts that drama techniques and strategies in language classrooms result in real communication which involves generating ideas, emotion and feeling which could stimulate learners' intellect and imagination. However, Bas acknowledges that many teachers are still anxious to use drama activities in English classes due to fear and lack of training in using drama techniques as teaching methods.

### **5.5 Drama techniques as effective teaching methods in English lessons**

Using drama as a part of teaching English seems to be non-existent in Namibia. The participants were asked if they had drama experience in their previous English classes. Out of the 45 participants, only two participants indicated that they had taken part in drama lessons previously. Although these participants indicated that, they further explained that the drama they took part in was a form of art performed during their leisure time. Research proves that L2 teachers hardly use drama in their language lessons as they perceive drama as a waste of time (Maley and Duff, 2008). Furthermore, this might be the result of a lack of drama resources and training in integrating drama in English lessons. In Namibia, no substantial research has been conducted in the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students

communicative skills at the all levels, be it lower primary, upper primary, secondary or tertiary level. Drama techniques and strategies as teaching methods are neglected.

It is crucial to note that the sample of this study is relatively small in relation to the country's population. It is therefore not practical to make conclusions that drama is not used at all by the majority of teachers in the education sector, as the scope and definition of drama may differ depending on who you talk to. Also, the 45 participants' responses in this study cannot be generalized to the country's population.

The reviewed literature indicated that some teachers indeed use drama techniques but call it by different names such as "communicative exercises", "games" or "creative learning" in which music, evaluation exercises and poetry is included (Bolton, 2006). The researcher has chosen to use a wide definition of drama and later narrowed it to drama in education and further to drama in teaching English as a second language. It is therefore important to mention that using drama activities in the way used in this dissertation, to teach English, requires adequate teacher training in order to effectively integrate drama activities in English lessons. What has been analysed in this study is therefore the use of drama activities in language learning and teaching to enhance students' communicative skills.

As evident from the collected data, participants made several remarks that can be used to support having drama activities incorporated in EAC lessons. An affirmative view seemed widely spread among the participants when asked if they think drama techniques can be integrated in future EAC lessons. The participants endorsed the statement that confirms that they would like to have drama activities integrated in the EAC curriculum. These findings confirm that English drama oriented lessons were useful to the participants, hence this proposition. Furthermore, the participants indicated the importance of having drama as part of EAC lessons though with few consideration such as providing the drama attire to students and maximizing the preparation time for the activities.

Most participants thought that learning through the integration of drama techniques made the lessons more interesting and enjoyable, as one of the participants stated:

*“These lessons are different from other English lessons”. They are more interesting”* and another added, *“It seems everyone enjoys learning, and that makes me enjoy it, too.”*

In addition, a number of participants commented that they felt the English drama oriented lessons helped improve not only their language but also their thinking skills, for example:

*“After taking part in the English drama oriented lessons, I think I have gained more thinking skills as I can now think in English not like in the past where I first had to think in my mother tongue and translate to English”.*

### **5.6 To what extent did the drama oriented lessons enhance the students' communicative skills?**

A framework for the discussion related to the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills is provided by revisiting theories regarding language acquisition specifically on the basis of drama in teaching English or drama in education and the findings from this study. By revisiting these theories, it is important to keep in mind that, as mentioned above, most researchers focused on L2 speakers and writers. It is therefore crucial to discuss the extent to which English drama oriented lessons would enhance the participants' communicative skills in accordance with L2 speakers in the context of a multilingual country such as Namibia.

Based on support in the literature reviewed, Krashen and Terrell (1983), state that "the most important goal of the early stages of the natural approach is to lower the affective filter" (p. 91). The findings of this research suggest how drama can be effective in increasing motivation and confidence and reducing anxiety for the English language students who participated. At the same time, these findings also revealed that drama may be more beneficial for some English language learners than others, and that different drama activities are more appropriate for different English language learners. The results arrived at in this study were not very surprising since overall, significant change in the group's motivation, anxiety, and confidence were observed during the lessons and as indicated in the students reflective notes and focus group interviews.

The study findings have brought to light that some participants who did not like drama oriented lessons were observed to have changed as the drama oriented lessons progressed. There were some impressive changes observed in individual participants for instance; the male participant who threw tantrums the first day of English drama oriented lessons, arguing that he doesn't like drama activities, later enthusiastically exclaimed that English drama oriented lesson helped him become confident in speaking English.

Drama in English language classrooms is ultimately indispensable because it gives students the chance to use their own personalities and draw upon their natural abilities to communicate effectively in a given situation as per the study findings. Furthermore, the study indicates that English drama oriented lessons put language into context by providing students the experience of success in real-life situations and arming them with confidence to communicate effectively outside the classroom.

Reverting back to the participants' behaviour during lessons before the English drama oriented lessons, most participants were extremely quiet and only spoke when spoken to or answered in yes or no to questions posed to them. This is one of the factors behind the research motive to integrate drama techniques in teaching English with the aim of enhancing students' communicative skills. The researcher's experience from teaching the 2013 EAC students was that the students were too quiet

in class and participation was limited. The EAC students' muteness is not the only driving force behind the decision to integrate drama techniques and strategies in the English lessons. The researcher's past experience of students' silence in language lessons draws back ever since the researcher was a secondary school teacher in 2008-2009 and during her practicum when she was an MA-TESOL graduate student in 2013 at Eastern Michigan University. The researcher taught ESL students from different backgrounds that were more silent during the lessons unless spoken to. It was then, during that experience that the researcher decided to embark on a journey of finding out the role of drama in teaching English to enhance the students' communicative skills.

Reverting to the literature reviewed, Tan (2007) postulates that the students' silence in class does not mean that they do not like the lesson, it is evident in the study findings as the participants revealed in their entry questionnaire that they are always afraid that others would laugh at them when they make grammar errors when speaking. Participants also noted that time allocated to prepare or do activities might be a contributing factor to their muteness as they need more time to structure their thoughts and respond to what is required of them.

The participants also reported in the focus group interviews that drama activities motivated and helped them learn about themselves and their English speaking skills. Most participants affirmed that the English drama oriented lessons helped them



improve their speaking skills. Considering that in the entry questionnaire, only 13.6% liked speaking skills, the participants behaviour towards speaking English changed to 65% of participants liking English speaking skills compared to other English skills. In addition when asked if they think the drama oriented lessons helped them improve their English speaking skills, participants had this to say during the post focus group interview:

*“Drama lessons are fun when you are enjoying the lessons you tend to learn more”.*  
*“Yaaaa, drama lessons have really helped us improve our speaking skills because we are now used to speaking English more with each other than before.”*

This concept of drama activities encouraging students to speak up or listen attentively was repeated throughout the interview, with the participants indicating that they spoke more during drama than they would have otherwise in lessons without drama activities. The benefit of being able to have fun doing drama often outweighed any perceived risks of speaking.

The study findings show positive effects of drama on students’ self-confidence and motivation towards speaking English. In accordance with Stern (2008) findings, findings of which in this study indicate that the English drama oriented lessons helped students gain self-confidence as they felt less nervous and more confident when speaking English, unlike before the intervention program. Most of participants indicated that they enjoyed the drama activities and were motivated to participate more actively as the lessons progressed. Stern (2008) in his study reported that most

of the students perceived the drama activities as helpful in making them less nervous, and motivating them. Students in a Korean EFL study by Coleman (2010) also reported that they felt more relaxed and confident speaking English as a result of drama-based English.

### **5.7 Observation**

Findings from the observation tool used by the researcher on classroom participation and interaction revealed that, the majority of participants had limited proficiency in the language of learning. This situation consequently prohibited them from; expressing their communicative needs well, engaging in interactive and meaningful discussions and accessing the curriculum.

On the contrary, a few participants displayed language proficiency, were more confident, assertive and could actively participate in classroom/group discussions. Generally, the participants' interactions were poor and passive since they were unable to make meaningful presentations. Ayer and Peter (2009) argue that most of the ESL students' inability to be expressive has a negative impact on their learning. They further maintain that grave silence during class and group discussion is evident in classrooms because students are put in an academic environment which demands them to use the language that is not their mother tongue.

All-wright (2005) argues that the use of a non-native language as instructional communication deprives students of their usual communication methods and the

opportunity to be confident and motivated to participate and interact with each other during English lessons. Regarding the EAC students' English proficiency, the researcher observed that the latter is true; participants appeared to be uncritical of material they had been taught and lacked knowledge of the genres of academic speaking. Participants engagement in group discussions were challenging to them for several reasons: an inability to formulate a timely response, inability to formulate a linguistically correct response, inability to engage in back and forth dialogue with the lecturer or classmates and a feeling that their contribution is not important. During the first few days of the English drama oriented lessons, some participants appeared to have been experiencing stress, as was evident through angry outbursts when they could not express themselves freely in English.

As per the researcher's observation, some participants had a tendency of pretending to be busy writing something while one could clearly see that they were trying to avoid being called out to either answer questions which requires them to speak up. Such behaviour could only be associated with the fact that participants knew that they were not fluent enough to express themselves clearly and comprehensibly. The researcher also noted that, participants often times murmured in their native languages during the lessons. During group discussions and formal presentations, students seemed to have developed a self-perception of inadequacy and incompetence as evidenced from some of their statements in their vernaculars (Oshiwambo) such as "*Oh, shee noho katushi kutya natu ninge shike*", (we do not know what we are supposed to do). Another famous statement participants would

murmur during the English drama oriented lessons especially during the first few days of the English drama oriented lessons was “*Nda hala obreak yeya shili, hano efimbo inali pwako?*” (I so much can’t wait for break time”. “Isn’t it time yet?” Cummins (2011) states that classroom participation and academic oral presentations require students to acquire the rules for organizing and delivering good presentations while mastering the appropriate language to achieve this goal. He further argues that students’ abilities to present ideas orally are crucial to university students’ educational lifelong and career success. He asserts that when students can discuss what they read, think critically and defend their positions, teachers and lectures get a clear picture of how well students understand and apply the knowledge.

Maley and Duff (2008) support Cummins’ theory, that students reinforce their learning by articulating it and having a dialogue with their lecturers and peers. However, for students to do well in spoken discourse, Cummins identifies the elements: cognitive knowledge of second language, knowledge of how to overcome difficulties, knowledge of how to plan a task, topical knowledge and learners’ affective reactions. It is therefore clear that the ability to use language to communicate effectively requires both knowledge and competence and the capacity to use that knowledge in appropriate situations.

When responding to the question whether participants wanted to improve something about the English drama oriented lessons, they suggested that they needed more time

to prepare for their activities. They felt like they were not given enough time to prepare themselves. The researcher concurs with the participants that they needed more time to prepare especially for their presentations and role-plays.

Cummins (2011) argues that oral activities including group presentations were supposed to have been prepared prior to the day of presentation to allow the presenters time to organize themselves, improve on the spot and be flexible in responding to questions from fellow students either at the end of the speech or during the activity. This was a difficult undertaking for students as (Ryan, 2004) puts it “student cannot cope with the cognitive and linguistic demands made on them by the social and academic environment in which they were obliged to function, for example, where they had to listen at the same time write what they comprehend. “The amount of information they have to process in order to carry out the task is just too much for their absorption” (Ryan, 2004, p. 230). In the same vein, Eccles (2012) points out that the development of good oral skills is necessary to participate in debates, discussions or to engage in problem solving and creative thinking. Eccles further states that limited time puts students at fringes of learning, which makes them less able to see meanings in texts, when compared with first language counterparts who have been exposed to inherent and informal methods of learning their language at an early stage.

Findings on whether participants spoke English to their peers or relatives at home revealed that 75.6% of the respondents use their native languages. Cummins (2011) views this as negatively impacting the students speaking skills because they are not exposed to the language throughout the day, which prevents them from practicing speaking English outside the classroom.

Though the majority of the participants were not fluent in English, there were a few who had a good command of English and were always eager to participate during lessons. These participants were different from the rest, as the researcher could evidently observe that they had intensive exposure to English language hence their articulate command of English. These participants were also confident from day one hence; sometimes they would dominate discussions during lessons.

The researcher is of the opinion that these were the participants who responded that they were motivated by their teachers to speak English, or they took part in drama lessons in high school, resulting in their confidence to communicate in English. For the low proficiency English language learners, it can be concluded, that emerging from the study findings that revealed, almost 86% of the respondents' quality education was compromised from the early stages of their schooling (primary and secondary level). As reported in Harlech-Jones (1998), most teachers in rural schools are under qualified or poorly trained hence they should not be expected to

teach using English effectively as they are already struggling to speak English fluently.

Though 89% of the respondents indicated that they went to school in the rural areas during the oral test, the researcher could observe that the participants' English proficiency differed greatly. There were 7 participants who were observed to be slightly better than those who could not express themselves in English freely and effectively. These participants were eager to learn from others. Often times when they had group work to do, the researcher could observe that they always advocated to be grouped with those that had a good command of English.

As days progressed in the English drama oriented lessons, participants who thought their English was bad and were terribly shy to participate in the speaking activities changed their perceptions as they were observed freely mingling with each other. In their final reflective notes, especially those from the last days of the English drama oriented lessons, most participants reflected that, the drama activities helped them believe in themselves and improve their English level. Participants noted that they never thought they would stand in front of the class and speak English throughout without having anyone laughing at them.

Some participants in their reflective notes revealed that their teachers did not care whether they spoke their native languages during English lessons or not. Participants

attributed their low proficiency levels in English to their poor educational background. In his study, Dougill (2009) revealed similar findings that students who were shy and afraid of being laughed at or of being criticized by others due to inaccurate pronunciation changed their perceptions and attitudes towards English as they became more involved and interacted with other in English without fear. Also Cummins (2011) asserts that students need teachers' assistance through scaffolding activities which have them speak English frequently in order to improve their levels of proficiency.

Brock-Utne (2002) in his study also reports that ESL international students were seriously handicapped when it came to using English as a language of instruction. Only a few students were involved in active participation and discussion while the majority sat and maintained silence, or alternatively copied work put on the board. He further states that, students were so shy that they could not ask the lecturer what was written on the chalkboard, since they did not know how to ask due to limited English proficiency.

Hall (2002) argues that teachers have the power to either motivate or demotivate their learners towards learning English. He further argues that students view teachers as their source of knowledge and if teachers do not use English during or outside the lessons, learners will as well fall in the trap of not speaking English just like their educators. Hall also asserts that teachers should keep in mind that they are the hope



of the students and vehicles of change towards speaking English among ESL learners.

Hall (2002) suggests that teachers should acquaint themselves with communicative language teaching methods or strategies such as role-plays and discussions through pair or group work to encourage students to participate in classroom activities, if students are to achieve the desired speaking skills. Stern (2008) in his study concludes that, “teaching strategies should be adjusted to real life situations into the class, where students are provided with rich opportunities to express their ideas and exchange their opinions” (p. 72).

As per the suggestions from the reviewed literature (Cheng, 2010; Cummins, 2011; Hall, 2001; Stern, 2008), the researcher with the help of the participants selected interactive drama activities with the aim of enhancing the participants’ communicative skills. In the participants’ post focus group interview, they responded that drama activities increased their classroom participation without any fear. Furthermore, results revealed that accuracy and fluency skills were developed, very limited code switching was observed, self and peer correction helped in accuracy and fluency, imitation and questioning skills enabled students at sustaining oral skills. These thematic findings clearly indicate that English drama oriented lessons definitely had a positive impact on the students’ communicative skills.

The researcher recalls that before the EDOL, students were mute when the researcher reminded them to only speak English during classroom discussions. A few times when the lecturer/researcher asked the participants to volunteer for classroom activities, the researcher met silence and reluctance from the students. After the English drama oriented lessons were introduced, the researcher observed that participants were quick to respond to activities which required them to volunteer and interacted with each other freely without any fear of being mocked by others.

One sentimental example of the impacts drama has on students' communicative skills was when participants were asked to pair up and talk about their weekend. It was amazing how they quickly moved from one corner to the next, turning towards each other to carry out their given tasks. Thereafter, participants were also given an opportunity for describing their weekend moods using either body language or facial expressions.

During the English drama oriented lessons especially the last month (November 2014) of the lessons, participants kept speaking English and continued having fun and mostly imitated each other in a constructive manner. The class was kept as social as possible, because the researcher understands that language learning occurs in a social setting.

Wessels' (2012) study of EFL students in Singapore also showed significant pre-test, post-test gains in English speaking skills, while control groups showed no significant change. It is crucial to note that during the focus group interviews, the reflective notes and post questionnaire, participants affirmed that the English drama oriented lessons helped them speak freely without any fear. Participants indicated that they enjoyed the exercises where they could speak openly and not care about what others think about them.

Participants, especially in their reflective notes, revealed that the English drama oriented lessons exposed them to constant usage of English which eventually improved their communicative skills. Research also suggests that to increase students speaking skills, they should be encouraged to participate in listening activities. Such activities can include, one student listening to his partner so that listening, is practiced to encourage comprehension.

In his study, Nunan (2005) reports that exposure to English language frequently paves ways for effective communicative skills. In this regard, it was evident that the EAC students got accustomed to speaking English and did not mind what the next person thinks about their English speaking skills. The results in the entry and exit questionnaires, students' reflective notes and the researcher's observation notes on the participants speaking skills revealed that there is clear difference in their confidence, attitudes and motivation towards speaking. The objectives of the study

were achieved as revealed by the study findings that English drama oriented lessons integrated in the EAC curriculum as teaching methods of using drama techniques such as roleplays, simulations and improvisation enhanced the students' communicative skills.

### **5.8 Conclusion**

The study findings, derived realization of the English drama oriented lessons which fulfilled the research objectives. The objectives of this study were accomplished in the sense that participants were introduced to the concept of English drama oriented lessons and they successfully completed the semester with improved communicative skills. With regard to the role of language background and language repertoire in L2 communicative skills, the literature explored in this study strongly supported the notion that language input, scaffolding, cooperative learning, students' motivation and students experience are significant elements in teaching English to enhance the students' communicative skills.

Overall student motivation is significant, as it involves stimulating feelings that students associate with learning (Maley & Duff, 2005). They argue that students should engage in "goal-directed behaviour" to initiate and sustain the learning process (p. 234). Whenever students have a goal, there is something to achieve (Hall, 2002). It is clear that the drama techniques can affect one's learning efficiency.

Using these kinds of methodology in English teaching can arouse students' speaking skills as proven in this study.

From the findings of this study, it is discovered that students and learners at any stage of their education, and teachers and lecturers can use communicative classroom activities such as role-play to arouse students' motivation of English speaking. Therefore, students can be supported to learn to speak English effectively in any given situation. Finally, this chapter discussed the study findings in comparison to other studies conducted in the same discipline, while analysing a wide range of available literature.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Summary

This study focused on assessing the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills with the purpose of integrating drama techniques in teaching EAC and further design the EAC curriculum with drama techniques and strategies in teaching literature and grammar as the EAC components. The implementation of the drama techniques and strategies were aimed at facilitating students' speaking skills. Donato (2012) asserts that if teachers set out to have speaking lessons through drama techniques (role plays, simulations and hot seating) without specific parameters or indicators in mind, it is unlikely that students will have substantial opportunities to talk. Therefore, the indicators of the speaking skills through a drama techniques framework helped the participants grasp what makes them competent speakers.

It is noteworthy to mention that this study builds on many other studies in the second language acquisition teaching field and methods. One of the crucial studies that provided guidelines for the current study is Krashen's (1985) hypotheses which are widely accepted in the field of second language acquisition. Krashen and Terrell's (1983) natural approach to second language acquisition emphasizes practicing communication skills, receiving meaningful input and lowering the affective filter to better acquire a second language. They state that for one to teach a second language they should consider having cooperative learning activities because they are a

successful method of learning and teaching that utilize components of the natural approach and has been shown effective in second language acquisition.

The definition and advantages of communicative language teaching involves the premise that language does not occur in isolation; it occurs in a situational and social context and is used to express social and functional meanings. The speaker of the language uses his linguistic competence and communicative competence for successful communication (Ellis, 2009). Linguistic activities and communicative activities are both important parts of our EAC curriculum design. The communicative language teaching is a teaching methodology, which requires students to practice in real situations. The communicative activities are based on the Western humanistic philosophy (Burgess, 2007). One typical classroom activity is role-play. An English teacher whose name is Shi Zheng did extensive researches about communicative language teaching. In a published article he stated: The communicative approach is an effective teaching method, which helps students to develop the ability to use a new language practically. The students and teachers should put themselves into the “real” scene. Gradually, they accumulate the perceptual knowledge of English and then develop the sensibility of this language, thus, to achieve the purpose of grasping a language (Shi Zheng, 2006). This study narrows the gap in knowledge as per Littlewood (2011) assertions that English Drama Oriented Lessons are beneficial to students as;

- They improve motivation,
- They provide “whole-task practice”,

- They allow natural learning,
- They can create a context which supports learning.

The English drama activities designed for the EAC lessons were dynamically designed along the lines that made cooperative learning successful. The activities also emphasized the communication skills and meaningful input required by the natural approach. Also, this study attests to cooperative learning activities being a successful method of ESL/EFL instruction.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, most related studies in line with this study carried out experimental studies comprising of pre and post-test language tests. The study ran language tests to determine the significant difference in the students' communicative skills before and after the drama intervention. For this study, the researcher was interested in finding out the role of drama in teaching English to enhance the students' communicative skills. The researcher did not put in consideration linguistics aspects of the English language, to test the participants' linguistic competence.

The researcher aimed at finding out the role of drama in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills. Furthermore, the researcher also intended to explore the extent to which drama techniques can impact English speaking motivation amongst student motivation and finally to gauge the possibilities of integrating drama



techniques in the EAC lessons. The drama's techniques used in this study such as role-play, simulation and guided improvisation were the communicative drama techniques deemed fit to enhance students' communicative skills. These techniques build the capacity of students to imagine they are someone else and play that part (Shi Zheng, 2006). Engaging in role-play activities is a way to practice, or rehearse, situations that may happen in real life. The purpose of this is to prepare students for the real-life language use (Maley & Duff, 2005). Also, role-plays are the most commonly used method to ensure that students can use effectively what they have learned in real communication.

According to Richards (2008) collaborative communication activities such as role plays have the following characteristics:

- They provide opportunities to practice strategies for opening, developing, and terminating conversational encounters.
- They require learners to develop meanings collaboratively.
- They necessitate the use of turn-taking rules. Findings from this study have answered the objectives of this study.

This was proven by the participants' responses that drama oriented lessons helped them to relax and become less anxious in social settings. This resulted in them now more than ever motivated to speak English in any given situation.

The English drama oriented lessons are also reported to have motivated the participants and increased their confidence in speaking English. Although, the English drama oriented lessons lasted over one semester, the students' responses in their reflective notes, focus group interviews, the researcher's reflective notes, and entry and exit questionnaire produced enough evidence that drama techniques are beneficial to students' communicative skills.

During the drama activities, students had numerous opportunities to practice speech in the target language meaningfully which significantly helped the group become cohesive. Observations showed that the participants' motivation and confidence towards speaking English increased and their anxiety decreased. Furthermore, the researcher observed that the participants appeared to be more at ease speaking English and spoke much more after the drama oriented lessons than they did before. In their reflective notes, the participants confirmed the researcher's observation that their confidence in using the English language and their motivation to engage in more English speaking activities increased.

The researcher concluded that, English drama oriented lessons provided participants an opportunity to use the target language (English). The participants needed not to feel uncomfortable as some would in the case of ordinary classes. Some students are shy and are not able to perform well, whereas English oriented drama lessons would have them to work within their teams and allow everyone to participate even when

mistakes were made. Moreover, the drama activities took place in a stress-free situation. The participants became more comfortable in speaking English regardless of the grammar mistakes committed. The more they participated in the drama activities the more motivated they became. This was a result of English drama oriented lessons providing participants multiple opportunities to control their English speaking growth.

The English drama oriented program approach a successful natural classroom experience. Drama activities clearly fit Krashen and Terrell's (1983) definition of acquisition activities providing meaningful input. Although the results from this study cannot be generalized to other populations, these results could likely be replicated with similar populations whose English comprehension is already quite advanced.

Consequently, the researcher's classroom observations revealed that the interaction between teachers and students typically takes the form of a one-to-one exchange between the teacher and students in a whole class setting, instead of other possible patterns of interaction, which do not develop from exchanging ideas, feelings and thoughts.

Based on this research finding, the students' perceptions and attitudes including their responses during the focus group interviews show positive effects of drama on students' interaction, involvement, anxiety, self-confidence and motivation towards

learning English. Ayers (2007) accentuates that the traditional teaching methodology does not promote optimal learning.

With reference to the students' role, Ayers (2007) emphasizes that recognizing students as sources of knowledge is a crucial component for creating a classroom environment in which language learners are empowered and given significant opportunities for language practice. The latter is evident in the current study findings that students indicated in the exit questionnaires and the focus group interviews that they learned from one another. Participants also revealed that the interaction with their peers accorded them an opportunity to learn cooperatively. To support these findings, Maley and Duff (2005) assert that when students work together, they share knowledge. Willis recommends that it is the teacher's role to moderate, direct discussion, probe, foresee, and analyze the implications of student interactions during language classrooms.

The results of this study revealed that; most of the students' low English proficiency resulted from aspects such as, learners' educational background, teachers' English proficiency, students' attitudes and motivation and their home language usage. The study also highlighted that errors and weaknesses in students' English speaking skills impacted negatively on their academic performance in general. Their inability to communicate effectively and actively participate during lectures is influenced by a range of social, and pedagogic factors entrenched within the broader social context in and outside the learning situations. Most of these problems emanate from; limited proficiency in the language of learning, lack of practice in academic discussions and

from being in educational environments that have teachers with different English language backgrounds.

The findings in this study demonstrate that drama techniques and strategies can be successfully implemented in ESL EFL and ELL classrooms and coordinated to reinforce the regular curriculum. The findings support results from other studies showing drama in education having positive effects on English language learners' anxiety, confidence and motivation towards speaking English (Coleman, 2010; Stern, 2008; Stinson, 2006). While the sample of the participants is limited and the time frame constrained to draw any generalizable conclusions, the findings indicate that drama significantly built the participants' confidence and motivated them to use the target language more.

Most students were motivated by drama activities and they developed a community that fostered group cohesiveness that had them talk more freely in front of others. In addition to these positive effects on the affective filter, drama activities exemplify the other components of the natural approach. Drama provides opportunities to practice communication skills, and it provides meaningful and comprehensible input necessary for English language learners to successfully acquire English.

## **6. 2 Recommendations**

It is important to approach speaking skills at any level of the students' speaking skills, with a specific plan and framework in mind. It is well known that choosing the proper strategy and method is not a priority for many teachers because of time

constrains and lack of required effort to select proper techniques. The drama techniques used and suggested in this study can help greatly in changing the classroom dynamics and offer a roadmap for acquiring speaking skills in a pleasant atmosphere. Furthermore, both EFL and ESL teachers need to become more familiar with language learning processes and incorporate strategies that support language learners' development in speaking. Teachers should be understanding and patient with students in their classes. They should be error tolerant instead of emphasizing errors as mentioned previously.

Another important ingredient for lecturers and teachers who would like to implement drama oriented lessons is an awareness of interpersonal dynamics amongst students. Even though the study was cognitive and socially in nature, it implicitly affected both the affective and psychomotor aspects of the students. The researcher's observational reflective notes throughout the study revealed that the participants were comfortable and motivated when grouped together in cooperative activities. In these settings there was more cooperation and positive interaction.

Findings from this study necessitate the possibilities for further research with regard to further explore the role drama plays in teaching English to enhance students' communicative skills at a larger scale and at all educational level: Since one of the limitations of this study consisted of a smaller population comprised of students from four Namibian ethnic groups and mostly from one language group (Oshiwambo), a large-scale, follow-up study designed to replicate these analyses and allow external and internal validity to investigate the subject matter is a necessity.

This study recommends for further research extending to the impacts of drama on the other language skills such as listening, reading and writing. There is clearly a need for teacher education programs to include drama as a teaching method tool for the pre-service teachers. Professional development workshops focused on integrating drama in teaching English as a second language in Namibia is also needed. Furthermore, enlisting the aid of the drama specialists in the school, when available, or involving English language learners in drama oriented lessons from a younger age.

Furthermore, more intensive studies should be carried out to investigate in more depth the efficacy of speaking skills, with a view to developing assessment measures which are not subject to the constraints identified in this study and which would thus allow for more realistic evaluation of actual comprehension during authentic speaking tasks.

Finally, long term studies tracking the use of drama techniques in ESL classrooms are needed especially in Africa and to be specifically in Namibia with both learners and teachers involved. Long term studies on larger populations of students will strengthen the case for the inclusion of drama techniques in any English lesson and to add to the growing body of research on drama as an important and effective strategy for English language learning.

In view of these findings, this study recommends that:

- Academic speaking skills should be taught explicitly and consistently across different curriculum areas to give students adequate practice in the speaking process.
- Various teaching methods need further exploration with an expert in the drama field given an opportunity to teach EAC students.
- Professional development training should be put in place for in-service lecturers and teachers if they are to be equipped with necessary skills and techniques to teach English and other content subjects across the curriculum.
- EAC lecturers and other lecturers at the University of Namibia should conceptualize and adopt pedagogies that support students' motivation towards speaking English in acquiring the necessary English language skills for effective learning.
- Students should be encouraged to make efforts to listen to/and/or read academic discourse and texts, and practice speaking English wherever they are.
- EAC curriculum designers and developers should design definite speaking activities that empower students to improve their English speaking skills across their academic and professional careers.
- The restructuring of the EAC to integrate drama techniques and strategies is justified in this study and it is an urgent need.



### **6.3. Conclusion**

This chapter summarized the presentation of the data collected in Chapter 4 and consequently the research finding discussions in Chapter 5. The chapter further provided recommendations of the study such as professional development training for teachers and lecturers, change in the EAC curriculum and recommendations for further studies.

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**APPENDICES****APPENDIX 1****Consent Letter**

Dear Participant

My name is Elizabeth Namundyebo, a PhD (Philosophy) candidate at the University Of Namibia Faculty Of Humanity in the Department of Literature and Languages under the supervision of Professor Jairos Kangira (HOD, Language and Literature Department, UNAM) and Dr Elizabeth Morgan (Eastern Michigan University). My research topic is, The role of Drama in Teaching English: Towards the Enhancement of Students Communicative Skills at the University of Namibia. I would like to request you to fill in this Entry questionnaire which serves to detect the information concerning the above mentioned research topic.

The questionnaire consists of close and open-ended questions, where you are supposed to tick/ underline/circle the items that hold your answer or opinion, and open questions, where you are supposed to specify or amplify your answer/opinion. This questionnaire is anonymous and it will serve only to the purposes of my PhD dissertation.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Yours faithfully Elizabeth Namundyebo (PhD candidate, University of Namibia)



## APPENDIX 2

### Entry Questionnaire

#### Section 1: Background information of the participants

##### 1. SEX

Gender	NO
MALE	
FEMALE	

##### 2. AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	NO
1. 10-15	
2. 15-20	
3. 20-25	
4. 25-30	

##### 3. HOME LANGUAGE

HOME LANGUAGE	
English	
Oshiwambo	
Otjiherero	
Damara-Nama	
Lozi	
Rukwangari	
Afrikaans	
Khoekhoegowab	
Other	



**4. How many years have you been studying English?**

Number of years	Answer
05-10	
10-12	
12-15	
Others	

**5. Which of the following English skills do you like most?**

Skills	Answer
Speaking	
Writing	
Reading	
Listening	

**6. Did your English teachers motivate you to speak English in and out of classroom? Tick the answer that applies to you?**

Categories	
Always	
Sometimes	
Never	

**7. Apart from English lessons, how often do you speak English with others per week? Tick the answer that applies to you.**

Categories	Always	Sometimes	Never
A) At School			
B) With friends (outside school)			
C) At home			
D) With relatives			

**8. Have you ever taken part in English drama lessons?**

Category	No
Yes	
No	

**9. Do you think the drama oriented lessons will help you improve your English speaking skills?**

Categories	
Yes	
Maybe	
Not sure	
No	

**10. Using the below 1-5 scale, please indicate by circling the most correct response that best describes your English experience best**

5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

4 = Agree (A)

3 = Not sure (NS)

2 = Disagree (D)

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

	Always	Sometimes	seldom	Never
Categories				
A)At school				
B) With friends (outside school)				
C)At home				
D) With relatives				

NO	STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
1	I think it's important that I learn to communicate with others in English appropriately					
2	I can communicate very well in English					
3	I pay attention to grammar errors when communicating in English					
4	I am shy to speak English					
5	I do not care about being fluent in English					
6	I am very motivated to improve my English speaking skills					
7	I enjoy oral activities in English lessons					
8	I prefer speaking my native language to English to others at school					

### 11. What do you expect from the English drama oriented lessons?

Themes	Answer
Improve speaking skills	
Improve all the 4 English skills	
Improve grammar and vocabulary	
Build confidence	

**APPENDIX 3****Reflective notes (Students' Portfolios)**

Read the following questions and answer them as per your preferences, attitudes, perception and experience during the English drama oriented lessons. Write as much as possible in the spaces provided.

1. What did you learn about your confidence in speaking English after the drama lesson?

---

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---

2. Were you motivated enough to be part of the drama activities today?

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---

3. Do you think you interact with others more in the English drama oriented lessons or in English lessons with no drama activities?

---

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---

---

4. If this drama lessons were to be offered in your native language, would you feel more comfortable to talk than in an English class?

---

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---

---

5. How easy /difficult was it for you to take part in an English drama oriented class?

---

---

---

---

6. Do you want the English drama oriented lessons to continue?

---

---

---

---

## APPENDIX 4

### Focus Group Interview

For the study to yield more accurate description of the participants' attitudes, motivation and views on the role of drama on their English speaking communicative skills, the researcher selected focus groups for the interview. The focus group consisted of 10 participants who were randomly selected. The focus interview questions are the same as the questions for the students' reflective notes in their portfolios.

1. What did you learn about your confidence in speaking English after the drama lesson?


2. Were you motivated enough to be part of the play?


3. Do you think you interact more with others during the English lessons without the drama activities included?


4. If drama lessons were to be offered in your native language, would you feel more comfortable to talk than in an English class?


5. How easy /difficult was for you to take part in an English drama oriented class?


6. Do you want the English drama oriented lessons to continue why?


**APPENDIX 5****CONSENT LETTER**

Dear Participant

My name is Elizabeth Namundyebo, a PhD (Philosophy) candidate at the University Of Namibia Faculty Of Humanity in the Department of Literature and Languages under the supervision of Professor Jairos Kangira (HOD, Language and Literature Department, UNAM) and Dr Elizabeth Morgan (Eastern Michigan University). My research topic is, The role of Drama in Teaching English: Towards the Enhancement of Students Communicative Skills at the University of Namibia. I would like to request you to fill in this Entry questionnaire which serves to detect the information concerning the above mentioned research topic.

The questionnaire consists of close and open-ended questions, where you are supposed to tick/ underline/circle the items that hold your answer or opinion, and open questions, where you are supposed to specify or amplify your answer/opinion. This questionnaire is anonymous and it will serve only to the purposes of my PhD dissertation.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Yours faithfully Elizabeth Namundyebo (PhD candidate, University of Namibia)

**APPENDIX 6****Exit Questionnaire**

Biographical Information

**1. Sex:**

Gender	
Male	
Female	

**2. Which semester have you just completed?**

Semester	
First	
Second	

**3. Did the drama oriented lessons fulfil your expectations?**

Categories	
Yes, completely	
Yes except for a few imperfections	
Partially	
Not at all	



**4. Do you think the drama oriented lessons helped you improve your English speaking skills?**

Category	
Yes	
No	

**5. During the English drama oriented lessons, how often did your lecturer motivate you to speak English?**

Categories	
Always	
Sometimes	
Never	

**6. Did your English teachers motivate you to speak English in and out of classroom?**

Categories	
Always	
Sometimes	
Never	

**7. After attending the English drama oriented lessons, which English skills do you like most?**

Skills	
Speaking	
Writing	
Reading	
Listening	
Both	

8. Using the following 1-5 scale, please indicate by circling the most correct response that best describes your behavior when speaking English after attending the drama oriented lessons, the degree to which you agree with the following statements.

1-strongly disagree    2-disagree    3-neutral    4-agree    5-strongly agree

NO	STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5
1	I think it's important that I learn to communicate with others in English appropriately	0	0	6	9	30
2	I can communicate very well in English	-	5	5	10	17
3	I pay attention to grammar errors when communicating in English	-	9	10	8	18
4	I am shy to speak English	23	17	-	23	5
5	I do not care about being fluent in English	15	20	-	6	4
6	I am very motivated to improve my English speaking skills	3	2	5	15	20
7	I enjoy oral activities in English lessons	-	-	15	12	18
8	I prefer speaking my native language to English to others at school	22	5	-	10	8

**9. What did you like most during the English drama oriented lessons and why?**

-----  
 -----  
 -----  
 -----

**10. Is there something you did not like in the English drama oriented lessons?**

-----  
 -----

-----  
 -----  
**11. What did you find most difficult or challenging and why?**

-----  
 -----  
 -----  
 -----

**12. Which of your 4 English skills do you think has improved during the English drama oriented lessons?**

Writing	
Reading	
Speaking	
Listening	

**13. Is there anything you would like to recommend for future English drama oriented lessons?**

-----  
 -----  
 -----  
 -----

**14. Do you recommend drama to be part of the English Access Course permanently?**

Categories	
Yes	
No	
Not sure	

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **Ethics for the Respondents**

#### **CONSENT LETTER TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

This is to state that I agree to participate in a program of research being conducted by Elizabeth Namundybo, a PhD candidate at the University of Namibia, Faculty of Humanity in the Department of Language and Literature.

#### **A) PURPOSE**

I have been informed that the purpose of this research is to explore students' responses to the role drama has in teaching English to enhance students' English communicative skills.

#### **B) PROCEDURES**

The research study will take place at University of Namibia, Khomasdal Campus. It will take place in one two-hour session of the grammar lessons. The participants will be required to work in groups as per class activities. The participants will be given time to practice English expressions and vocabulary in their teams to prepare for their roles. C.) CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

- I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without negative consequences.
- I understand that my participation in this study is confidential.
- I understand that the data from this study may be published.

I ..... HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED  
THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT  
AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

Signature:

Date

**APPENDIX 8****RESEARCH PROJECT SCHEDULE**

WEEK	DATE	DATA COLLECTED
Week 1	14/July /2014	Administered the consent form, entry questionnaire Pre-focus interview
Week 2	21/July/ 2014 23/July/2014	Drama day 1- Group formation Drama day 2- Know your celebrities
Week 3	28/July/2014 30/July/2015	Drama day 3-Tenses, describing sequence of actions Drama day 4-Tenses, describe ongoing actions
Week 4	4/August/ 2014 6/August/2014	Drama day 5- My world-Vocabulary building Drama day 6-Childhood memories- Building memories
Week 5	11/August/ 2014 13/August/2014	Drama day 7. Group story, narration Drama day 8 Proverbs in action
Week 6	18/August/2014 20/August/2014	Drama day 9 Character building-Plays Drama day 10-Character building -plays
Week 7	1/September 2014 3/September/2014	Drama day 11 Odd news-fragments Drama day 12 Who is speaking
Week 8	8/September /2014 10/September 2014	Drama day 13 Something in common, superstition Drama day 14 Waking dream, free association
Week 9	15/September/ 2014 17/September/2014	Drama day 15 My culture my pride Day 16 My culture my pride

WEEK	DATE	DATA COLLECTED
Week 10	22/September/ 2014 24/September/2014	Drama day 17 Self-portrait- personal features Drama day 18 Identity, Famous people,
Week 11	29/September/2014 1/October/2014	Drama day 20 From my album, WH questions Drama day 21- High points, Visual inputs
Week 12	6/October 2014 8/October/2014	Drama day 22- character description, Drama day 23-Characters from Fiction
Week 13	13/October/ 2014 15/October/2014	Drama day 24 invented language Drama day 25 Imaginations
Week 14	20/October /2014 22/October/2014	Drama day 26 Visiting A Dr, social communication Drama day 27 Mask- Ice
Week 15	27/October/ 2014 29/October/2014	Drama day 28 In a restaurant Drama day 29 Being a teacher for a day
Week 16	3/November /2014 5/November/2014	Day 30 Post focus interview Day 31 Administered the exit questionnaire

## APPENDIX 9

## SAMPLE LESSON PLAN 1

Semester: 2      Date: 16/July /2014      Lecturer: E. Namundyebo

Slot: A 5      Topic: Know your neighbor      focus: Group formation

**Lesson Objective(s): Students will be able to tell and recite each other's' names**

**Lesson Activities:**

Teacher Activities	Student Activities	Time
<p>Preparations (anticipatory set):</p> <p>Tt instructs students to greet each other by means of a high 5.</p> <p>Procedure:</p> <p>Tt instructs students to stand in a cycle.</p> <p>Tt holds the middle of strings of ropes.</p> <p>Tt instructs each student to hold a string.</p> <p>Tt lets go off the string.</p> <p>Tt Instructs students to find the partner holding the other end of the string.</p> <p>Tt gives Ss the know my neighbor instructions.</p> <p>Closure:</p> <p>Tt collects the strings and instructs students to bring pictures of the local and international celebrities they know.</p>	<p>Ss. Stand and greet each other with a high 5.</p> <p>Ss make a cycle as instructed.</p> <p>Ss each hold a string of rope.</p> <p>Ss hold on tight and find a partner holding the other end of the string.</p> <p>Ss whisper to each other their names and where they come from.</p> <p>Ss find another partner by means of strings again.</p> <p>Ss whisper to their second partner the names of the first partner and where that partner comes from.</p> <p>Ss take their sits and stand one by one to tell their first partners names to the whole class.</p> <p>Partners confirm if the information given is right.</p>	1hour

**Note:**Ss= students    Tt=teacher

**Lesson Reflections/ lesson notes**

This is an effective group pairing strategy. It is sometimes desirable to group students randomly as they tend to work with those that they like or know. You can get a better mixture by randomizing the group formation process. This activity promotes classroom cohesiveness but teachers should be aware of classroom management issues. Students were reluctant to participate and shy to talk. Some expressed how they do not like drama activities.





## APPENDIX 10

### SAMPLE LESSON PLAN 2

Semester: 2                      Date: 21/July /2014                      Lecturer: E. Namundybo

Slot: A 5 Topic: Know your celebrities: Range of question types

**Lesson Objective(s): Students will be able to identify the celebrity personalities  
Students will be able to mingle and interact in genuine interactions.**

**Materials and Resources: Celebrity pictures, cards**

**Lesson Activities:**

Teacher Activities	Student Activities	Time
<p>Warm up</p> <p>Tt randomly asks 6 students to stand.</p> <p>Tt asks the previous day's first partners to stand too</p> <p>Tt asks students to retell the names of their partners.</p> <p>Procedure:</p> <p>Tt collects the pictures from the students.</p> <p>Tt have students sit in a group of 5.</p> <p>Tt Hands out the pictures and numbered cards randomly to the groups.</p> <p>Tt give lesson instructions</p> <p>Tt writes the following questions on the board.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who are you?</li> <li>2. Are you Namibian?</li> <li>3. Are you alive or dead?</li> <li>4. What do you do?</li> </ol> <p>Closure:</p> <p>Tt collects the pictures and tell students to bring their childhood pictures to class.</p>	<p>Ss. 6 students stand and try to remember their yesterday's partner's names and where they come from.</p> <p>Ss Hands the pictures to the lecturer.</p> <p>Ss sit in groups of 5.</p> <p>Ss reveal their cards and find the group that has the same card as theirs.</p> <p>The group that takes the same card as the other one will face each other during the questions.</p> <p>Ss introduce their celebrities without mentioning names but their characters.</p> <p>Ss ask their opposite group the questions as written on the board.</p> <p>Ss reveal their celebrities and the groups that guessed right gets a certificate to be hanged in class.</p>	<p>1hour</p>

**Note: Ss=students Tt=teacher**

**Lesson Reflections/ lesson notes**

**You may want to demonstrate with one student how to introduce a celebrity and ask different questions. This activity was fun though students were still hesitant to talk.**



## APPENDIX 11

## SAMPLE LESSON PLAN 3

Semester: 2      Date: 28/July /2014      Lecturer: E. Namundybo

Slot: A 5      Topic: Childhood memories      Focus: Past tense recounts

**Lesson Objective(s): To bond with each other by sharing memories.**

**Materials and Resources: Childhood pictures, sticking notes**

**Lesson Activities:**

Teacher Activities	Student Activities	Time
<p>Preparations (anticipatory set):</p> <p>Tt introduces a celebrity she likes and asks students to guess who is she is talking about.</p> <p>Procedure:</p> <p>Tt asks students to write down on a slip of paper a word that evokes their childhood memories.</p> <p>Tt collects the papers and distributes them randomly to the class with the pictures.</p> <p>Tt gives the lesson's instructions</p> <p>Closure:</p> <p>Tt instructs students to take back their pictures and a write their childhood memory short essay to be handed in the next day</p>	<p>Ss guess the celebrity names and other characters like they did the previous day.</p> <p>Ss write words that evoke their childhood memories at the back of their pictures.</p> <p>Ss place the pictures in a big box placed in the middle of the class</p> <p>Ss go back and pick the pictures randomly.</p> <p>Those who picked their own pictures are out of the game.</p> <p>Ss that did not pick their pictures go around finding the people whose pictures they picked.</p> <p>Ss use the word at the back of the picture to guess the childhood memories of the person in the picture.</p> <p>Ss should make sure that they use past tense when describing their classmates' childhood memories.</p> <p>Ss take back their pictures and take note of the homework.</p>	1hour

**Note:**Ss=Students Tt=Teacher

**Lesson Reflections/ lesson notes: Memory lessons are powerful way of binding a group together as the students become part of the group story.**

**Teachers/lectures should however be careful to urge students not to share painful memories.**

## APPENDIX 12

## SAMPLE LESSON PLAN 4

Semester: 2      Date: 13/July /2014    Lecturer: E. Namundybo

Slot: A 5    Topic: Proverbs in action    Focus: English proverbs

**Lesson Objective(s): Ss will be able to speculate, clarify, and question specific proverbs .**

**Materials and Resources: Laptop, OHP, CD, slip papers**

**Lesson Activities:**

Teacher Activities	Student Activities	Time
<p>Preparations (anticipatory set):</p> <p>Tt introduces the lesson by asking Ss what they know about proverbs and mention few in their native languages and translate them in English.</p> <p>Procedure: Tt explains to the students what proverbs are and lists few examples. Since proverbs are sometimes condensed, the meaning may not be that clear to the students.</p> <p>Tt has girls students stand and take turns to throw the ball to the boys.</p> <p>Whoever picks the ball is paired with the girl that threw the ball.</p> <p>Tt plays the short clip of proverb role play as an example.</p>	<p>Ss volunteer to talk about the proverbs in their native languages and translate them in English.</p> <p>Girls stand in front and take turns to throw the ball to the boys in order to get their partners.</p> <p>Each student in a pair pick a slip of the paper from the board.</p> <p>Ss prepare for 15 minutes on the proverbs they chose and prepare a role play of their choice out of the proverb they have chosen.</p> <p>Ss role play the Each play is 5 minutes per pair.</p>	<p>1hour</p>

**Note: Ss = Students Tt = Teacher**

**Lesson Reflections/ lesson notes**

**This activity offers a stimulating starting point both for drama work and for cross-cultural comparison and discussions. Students were eager to act but their native languages were more apparent during the discussions.**

## APPENDIX 13



### ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

**Ethical Clearance Reference Number: SEC/FHSS/26/2014**

**Date: 1 June, 2014**

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

**Title of Project:** An Exploration Of The Role Drama Plays In Teaching English To Enhance Students' English Communication Skills at the University of Namibia

**Nature/Level of Project:** Doctorate

**Principal Researcher:** Elizabeth .M. Namundybo (Student Nr: 200317016)

**Host Department & Faculty:** English Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences

**Supervisor (s):** J. Kangira (Main) E. Morgan (Co)

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
  - (i). withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
  - (ii). request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. I. Mapaure  
UNAM Research Coordinator  
ON BEHALF OF UREC

## APPENDIX 14

## Research Permission letter

(+264 61) 206 3111  
Website: www.unam.na



340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue  
Private bag 13301  
Windhoek  
NAMIBIA

Inspiring minds & shaping the future

Date: 10 JUNE 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER**

1. This letter serves to inform that student: E. M. NAMUNDYEBO  
(Student number: 2000317016) is a registered student in the  
Department of LANGUAGE & LITERATURE STUDIES  
at the University of Namibia. His/her research proposal was reviewed and  
successfully met the University of Namibia requirements.
2. The purpose of this letter is to kindly notify you that the student has been granted  
permission to carry out postgraduate studies research. The School of Post-  
graduate Studies has approved the research to be carried out by the student for  
purposes of fulfilling the requirements of the degree being pursued.
3. The proposal adheres to ethical principles.

Thank you so much in advance and many regards.

Yours truly,

Name of Main Supervisor: PROF J. KANGIRA

Signed: [Signature]

Dr. C. N.S. Shaimemanya

Signed: [Signature]

Director: School of Postgraduate Studies

Tel: 2063523

E-mail: [cshaimemanya@unam.na](mailto:cshaimemanya@unam.na)

**APPENDIX 15**

Submission letter to carry out research at the Language Centre, the University of Namibia: Khomasdal Campus

To: Dr Liswani Simasiku

Cc: Mr Joseph Mukorori

From: Elizabeth Namundyebo

Date: 02 June 2014

Subject: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dear Dr Simasiku

My name is Elizabeth M Namundyebo, a Lecturer at the University of Namibia (Language Centre) and a PhD (Philosophy) candidate at the University of Namibia, Faculty of Humanity in the Department of Language and Literature Studies. The research I wish to conduct for the Doctoral dissertation is titled “The role of Drama in Teaching English: Towards the Enhancement of Students Communicative Skills at the University of Namibia.” This research will be conducted under the supervision of Professor Kangira HOD (University of Namibia) and Dr Elizabeth Morgan (Eastern Michigan University).

I am hereby seeking your consent to integrate drama in teaching 65 English Access students at Khomasdal Campus in Windhoek starting from February 2014 to November 2014. The English Access classes are made up of Grammar and literature components. Students have 4 hours per day (2 days in a week) of which 2 hours are for Grammar and 2 hours for Literature. The researcher will use one hour twice a week to integrate drama activities for the purpose of this research.



I have provided you with a copy of my research proposal which includes copies of the consent forms to be used in the research process, as well as a copy of the research permission and the Ethical Clearance Certificate letter which I received from the University of Namibia Postgraduate Studies.

Upon completion of the study, I undertake to provide the Language Centre with a bound copy of the full research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0812099183, [enamundyebo@unam.na/chaquee@gmail.com](mailto:enamundyebo@unam.na/chaquee@gmail.com). I hope that the results of my study will be of benefit to the stakeholders directly involved in the study as well as to the broader research community.

Your consideration of this letter will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Namundyebo (PhD candidate)

The University of Namibia

Prof Jairos Kangira (Supervisor)

HOD: Faculty of Humanity, Department of Language and Literature Studies

Cell: 0813096571

Email: [jkangira@unam.na](mailto:jkangira@unam.na)

## Appendix 16

### Observation Checklist

Accuracy	Notes	Fluency	Notes
Little or no language production		Little or no communication	
Poor vocabulary, mistakes in basic grammar,		Very hesitant and brief utterances, sometimes difficult to understand	
Adequate but limited vocabulary, makes obvious grammatical mistakes,		Conveys ideas, but hesitantly and Briefly	
Good range of vocabulary, occasional grammar slips,		Effective communication in short Turns	
Extensive vocabulary used appropriately, virtually no grammatical mistakes,		Easy and effective communication, uses long turns	