

University of Windsor

Scholarship at UWindor

UWill Discover Student Research Conference

UWill Discover 2017

Mar 31st, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

English as a Second Language: How can Drama Help?

Ashley Baez Abreu

University of Windsor, baezabr@uwindsor.ca

Arnay Avdic

University of Windsor, avdic@uwindsor.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/uwilldiscover>

Baez Abreu, Ashley and Avdic, Arnay, "English as a Second Language: How can Drama Help?" (2017).
UWill Discover Student Research Conference. 2.

<https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/uwilldiscover/2017/posters2017/2>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Conference Proceedings at Scholarship at UWindor. It has been accepted for inclusion in UWill Discover Student Research Conference by an authorized administrator of Scholarship at UWindor. For more information, please contact scholarship@uwindsor.ca.

Abstract

In Canada, there are higher high school dropout rates amongst ESL (English as a Second Language) students in smaller cities like Windsor. This has become especially prevalent in the last decade due to the increase of incoming immigrant and refugee populations (Abada, 2008). Therefore an increase in need to help student newcomers adapt, and adjust has emerged.

Throughout this study, the question that will be explored is: How can drama-based pedagogy influence both language acquisition, and social development in high school English language learners? This research study is presenting a new interpretation of known material relating drama education and language acquisition. For example, Sharon Wahl's accounts of her Drama and ESL class. She describes her observations, and the increase in comfort and fluency in the English language for her ESL students while they participated in Drama/Theatre games and exercises (Wahl, 2015). Some ways this study can help advance knowledge includes: contributing to the drama education field, contributing to and advancements in the ESL curriculum.

Throughout the study, qualitative research methods are being used to collect data. The study will begin by interviewing high school ESL students who arrived to Canada within the last ten years about their educational experiences. Based on prevalent themes of barriers, a unit of lesson plans will be created to meet the Ontario Secondary School Curriculum requirements for both Drama, and English as a Second Language. A questionnaire will be done before and after the unit is taught, where students' language skills, drama skills, and social skills will be assessed.

The research is currently in the process of getting permission to collect data in secondary schools. However, based on preliminary research, it can be hypothesized that one of the major

barriers throughout the educational experiences of high school ESL students includes language (i.e. lack of academic preparedness, isolation, etc.).

References

- Abada, T., Hou, F., & Ram, B. (n.d.). Group Differences in Educational Attainment among the Children of Immigrants. Retrieved September 30, 2016, from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2008308-eng.pdf>
- Wahl, S. (n.d.). Drama and Language. In *Drama, theatre, and performance education in Canada: Classroom and community contexts*. Retrieved September 30, 2016, from <http://yre.educ.ubc.ca/carter-prendergast-belliveau>