

# Enhancing English speaking skills for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders by using drama activities in a lower secondary school

Bich Ngoc Ngo Thi \*, Hoai Linh Phung\*\*

\* Thai Nguyen University of Education

\*\* Chu Van An lower secondary school

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**Abstract-** This article explores the use of drama activities as a means to enhance the English speaking skills of 7th grade students in a lower secondary school. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including both action research and analysis. The results indicate that the use of drama activities significantly improved the students' confidence, fluency, and accuracy in speaking English. The students also showed a positive attitude towards using drama activities to learn English. The findings suggest that drama activities can be an effective and enjoyable method to improve English speaking skills for lower secondary school students. The study provides insights and practical implications for teachers and curriculum designers on how to incorporate drama activities into English language teaching.

**Index Terms-** English speaking skill, drama activities, lower secondary school, 7<sup>th</sup> graders

## I. INTRODUCTION

English has become a ubiquitous language, and its prevalence has made it an essential tool for global communication and academic purposes. In today's world, proficiency in English has become a vital objective for many students, particularly those in lower secondary schools. Among the various language skills, speaking is undoubtedly a crucial aspect of language proficiency and is often considered the most challenging for language learners.

The traditional approach to teaching speaking skills, which primarily emphasizes grammar and vocabulary, has proven to be insufficient in developing fluency and confidence needed for effective communication. In the past, language teachers focused mainly on grammar and vocabulary exercises, such as memorizing grammar rules, learning vocabulary lists, and drilling verb tenses. However, such activities did not provide learners with the opportunity to develop their speaking skills in a more interactive and engaging environment. Consequently, alternative teaching methods are required to supplement traditional language instruction and support the development of speaking skills.

Effective speaking skills are essential in both personal and professional settings, and they enable individuals to express themselves, communicate ideas, and build relationships. Speaking is perhaps the most natural and common form of human communication, and it represents the most enjoyable component of any language. Moreover, individuals communicate more often through speaking than writing, and thus, speaking is the primary goal of anyone learning a foreign language.

Despite its importance, learners may face several challenges when developing their speaking skills, such as shyness, lack of confidence, fear of judgment by others, laziness, and other factors. Overcoming such difficulties can be challenging, and learners may become disinterested in learning, leading to stress and boredom. Therefore, creating a supportive learning environment that encourages learners to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from their experiences is essential in developing learners' speaking skills.

Alternative teaching methods, such as role-plays, debates, discussions, and simulations, can help learners develop their speaking skills by providing them with opportunities to practice in a safe and supportive environment. Teachers should use such approaches to create an interactive and engaging learning environment that encourages learners to participate actively and feel comfortable practicing their speaking skills. By adopting such methods, learners can develop fluency and confidence in speaking English, which will enable them to communicate effectively and build stronger relationships both personally and professionally.

During observation with lower secondary school student Chu Van An, an obvious problem was discovered when dealing with speaking activities. Students seem to use their first language most of the time, with little or no effort in practicing speaking skills. In addition, they feel embarrassed and restrained when speaking in front of their partner, appearing annoyed, preoccupied, and uncooperative. Therefore, the first step in conducting this study is to discover why students are finding it difficult and then find some suggestions for solving the problem.

Although 7th graders learn a foreign language, especially in textbooks, lessons are focused on faithfully sticking to book structure and syllabus, and students can rarely cooperate. Alternatively, express their ideas. The teacher tried to involve them in the activities. Still,

getting their attention and getting them to speak English was challenging, especially if the exercises were done without context. Students may feel they are not the real protagonist of the class, so they act passively. They must move around the classroom, collaborate in peer and group activities, talk about exciting and relevant topics, and give their opinions. They must engage in more student-centered lessons. The main objectives of the study were to analyze the impact of drama activities on the development of students' speaking ability at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School, to determine the efficacy of drama in improving students' speaking ability, and to examine students' attitudes towards speaking ability through the drama technique.

Identify the constructs of a Journal – Essentially a journal consists of five major sections. The number of pages may vary depending upon the topic of research work but generally comprises up to 5 to 7 pages. These are:

- 1) Abstract
- 2) Introduction
- 3) Research Elaborations
- 4) Results or Finding
- 5) Conclusions

## II. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Research questions

The research questions for this study are:

Question 1. What are the students' attitudes toward the use drama-based lessons?

Question 2. To what extent are Drama activities effective in enhancing the seventh graders' speaking ability?

### 2.2. Context of the study

The study was conducted at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School in spring 2023 with the participation of 40 7 grade's students. Chu Van An Lower Secondary School is a public school located in a rural area in Vietnam. The school has around 700 students from grade 6 to grade 9, with a team of dedicated teachers who strive to provide quality education to their students. The school has been facing challenges in developing students' English speaking skills, which is a crucial aspect of language learning.

The main purpose of teaching English to 7th grade students at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School is to equip them with the necessary communication skills to interact with people from different cultures and backgrounds. The school aims to provide an English language program that promotes the development of all language skills, with a focus on enhancing students' speaking abilities.

The reference book chosen for this study is "Drama in Language Learning" by Maley and Duff. This book focuses on the use of drama activities as a means of promoting language learning, particularly in developing students' speaking skills. The book provides a detailed explanation of how drama activities can be integrated into language teaching, as well as practical examples of drama activities that can be used in the classroom. The book also emphasizes the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment for learners to take risks and experiment with language, as well as the role of teachers in facilitating the learning process.

### 2.3. Subjects of the study

Forty 7th grade students at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School were invited to participate in this study. The characteristics of the 40 7th grade students at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School participating in the study survey are as follows: The gender ratio of the 40 7th grade students at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School is almost equal, with 21 male students and 19 female students. The age of the 40 students is between 12 and 13 years old. There is a difference in English proficiency among the 40 students, with some students being more proficient in English than others. However, the use of drama activities can help improve the English speaking skills of the students and narrow this gap.

### 2.4. Method of the study

The study used action research method. Action research is a research method used by educators, teachers, and practitioners to improve their practice through systematic inquiry. It involves a cyclical process of problem-solving, data collection, analysis, and reflection, with the ultimate goal of improving the situation or problem being investigated. The action research process involves several steps. First, the researcher identifies a problem or area for improvement in their practice. Next, they develop a plan of action to address the problem, which typically involves implementing a change or intervention. The researcher then collects data to assess the impact of the intervention and analyzes the data to determine its effectiveness. Finally, the researcher reflects on the process and outcomes of the intervention and identifies areas for further improvement. One of the key features of action research is its emphasis on collaboration and participation. It involves working closely with stakeholders, such as students, colleagues, and community members, to develop a shared understanding of the problem and to identify

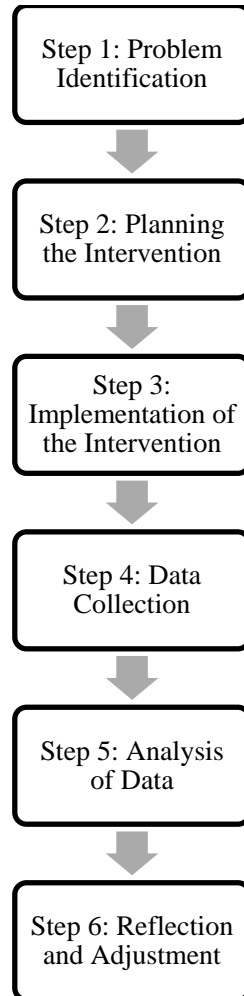
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potential solutions. Action research can be used in a variety of settings and contexts, including classrooms, schools, organizations, and communities. It is a flexible and adaptable method that allows practitioners to tailor their approach to their specific needs and circumstances. Overall, action research is a powerful tool for improving practice and addressing real-world problems in a systematic and effective manner.

Here is how the action research method can be used in the thesis:



**Diagram 3.1. Research design**

**Step 1: Problem Identification**

The first step in using action research was to identify a problem or area of improvement. In this case, the problem was the need to enhance the English speaking skills of 7th graders in a lower secondary school.

**Step 2: Planning the Intervention**

The next step was to plan the intervention. In this case, the intervention was the implementation of drama activities as part of the English language classes for 7th graders. The activities were designed to promote the development of speaking skills, such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and communication skills.

**Step 3: Implementation of the Intervention**

The third step is to implement the intervention. The drama activities were integrated into the English language classes and taught by the English teacher. The implementation of the intervention should be carefully monitored to ensure that the activities are being carried out as planned.

**Step 4: Data Collection**

The fourth step is to collect data on the impact of the intervention. This data could be collected through several methods, such as standardized tests, classroom observations, student self-assessments, and teacher evaluations. The data should be collected both before and after the intervention to allow for comparison.

**Step 5: Analysis of Data**

The fifth step is to analyze the data collected. The data should be analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns in the data. The results of the analysis should inform the interpretation of the effectiveness of the intervention in enhancing English speaking skills.

#### Step 6: Reflection and Adjustment

The final step is to reflect on the results of the action research and make adjustments as needed. If the results indicate that the intervention has had a positive impact on the students' speaking skills, the intervention should be continued. If the results indicate that the intervention has had limited or no impact, the intervention should be adjusted or modified to address the identified issues.

It is important to note that action research is an ongoing process and that each step should be repeated multiple times to ensure that the intervention is effective and that the research is comprehensive. Additionally, it is important to be transparent and ethical in the conduct of action research, ensuring that the rights and well-being of participants are protected at all times.

### 2.5. Models for using drama activities learning platforms in teaching English speaking

There are different models for using drama activities and learning platforms to enhance English speaking skills among students at the study.

**Role-playing model:** In this model, students were assigned different roles and asked to act out a scenario or a conversation. This model encouraged students to use language in context and promoted their fluency and accuracy in speaking English.

**Improvisation model:** In this model, students were given a topic or a theme and are asked to create a scene or a conversation on the spot. This model promoted creativity, spontaneity, and quick thinking among students.

**Reader's theatre model:** In this model, students read a script and acted out the scenes from the script. This model focused on pronunciation, intonation, and expression, and helped students improve their overall speaking skills.

**Digital storytelling model:** In this model, students used digital tools such as videos, animations, and slideshows to tell a story or present a topic. This model promoted the use of technology and multimedia in language learning and helped students develop their speaking skills in a fun and engaging way.

**Virtual reality model:** In this model, students used virtual reality technology to simulate real-life situations and practiced their speaking skills. This model provided a realistic and immersive learning experience for students and helped them overcome their fear of speaking English in public.

### 2.6. Data collection instruments

#### 2.6.1. Questionnaire

A good questionnaire may be an effective tool for guiding evaluation. Furthermore, questionnaire is not only helpful in collecting descriptive data, but they can also be quickly analyzed using a variety of available tools, saving both researchers and participants time, money, and effort. Questionnaire for students will be used as one of the significant data-collecting devices in this study. In this study, a questionnaire is designed for students before and after taking part in drama-based activities (see Appendix 1).

The questionnaire was created by taking into account the validity and reliability issues. In the questionnaire, each aspect had similar and adequate representation in questions. All of the items were written under the related factors and unrelated items were eliminated from the questionnaire in order to increase validity. The statements were made clear to understand and were put in a form that was testable.

In this study we assumed that all participants had responded to the questions in an honest and candid manner. Moreover, we assured that all participants had a sincere interest in participating in our research. Also, it was assumed that all participants were similarly experienced in English learning.

The questionnaire was administered to 40 randomly selected students. The participants of the questionnaire were composed of the 7th graders at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School. They were composed of 40 respondents, 18 of whom were male and 22 of whom were female. They were sophomores, so their ages were generally in the twelve.

The information about the students' expectations when taking drama-based activities was gathered through a questionnaire. The students would not be asked to give their real names so that they would feel comfortable to answer the questions frankly. Having collected the questionnaire from respondents, the researcher analyzed them and found the distribution of responses. In this study, questionnaires for 7th graders would be used to collect data to guarantee the accuracy of the data.

#### 2.6.2. Test

The test used in the thesis to answer the question of the effectiveness of drama activities in enhancing seventh graders' speaking ability includes eight progress tests administered weekly (see Appendix 5). The progress tests are designed to evaluate the students' English speaking skills in various scenarios, such as role-playing, improvisation, and dramatic monologues. The tests are conducted in various forms such as group presentations, individual presentations, and role-play activities. The questions asked in the progress tests are related to the topics covered in class, such as creating short scenes, reciting lines from a

play, improvisation, and more. Each progress test contains three questions or prompts, and the students are expected to respond orally in English.

The first three progress tests are designed to evaluate the students' skills in creating short scenes, improvisation, and role-playing. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth progress tests, the students are asked to demonstrate their English speaking skills in reciting lines, dramatic monologues, and group presentations. In the seventh progress test, the students perform a role-play activity based on a scenario provided by the teacher. Finally, in the eighth progress test, the students prepare an individual presentation on their favorite drama activity from the course.

The tests are designed to provide students with opportunities to practice their English speaking skills in various contexts related to drama activities, such as creating short scenes, improvisation, role-playing, dramatic monologues, and group presentations. By performing these tasks, the students can demonstrate their English speaking ability and show their progress in enhancing their speaking skills.

The thesis also used a variety of speaking tests (see Appendix 6) to assess the effectiveness of drama activities in enhancing the speaking ability of seventh-grade students.

For the midterm speaking test, there were three tasks. The first task was a role play where students had to act out a conversation based on a given scenario. The second task was a monologue where students had to prepare and present a 2-3 minute speech on a topic related to a recent drama activity. The third task was a dialogue where students had to engage in a conversation related to a recent drama activity.

For the final speaking test, there were also three tasks. The first task was a more complex role play where students had to act out a conversation using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The second task was a group discussion where students had to work together to discuss a topic related to a recent drama activity and come up with a group presentation. The final task was a presentation where students had to prepare a short presentation about their favorite drama activity and deliver it using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.

Overall, these speaking tests were designed to assess the students' ability to use English in real-life situations, sustain conversations, and communicate effectively. By using drama activities in the classroom, the research aimed to improve students' speaking ability and increase their confidence in using English.

### *2.7. The procedure of data collection*

The research was done by action research method.

Data analysis, along with data collection, creates a central part of any research process.

The process of data analysis has become easy to manage nowadays, due to the availability of more advanced computer software technologies. In this research, the author selected the Microsoft Excel software version 2013 for data analysis. Through using Microsoft Excel software, the data would be analyzed by calculating the correlation coefficient to identify the relations between each motivational factor and the overall satisfaction level.

This interpretation would make sense to the further recommendations in the last chapter. Besides, Microsoft Excel software version 2010 was also applied to organize the results obtained from the questionnaire and analysis. Because of the small size of the sample, the author counted manually, then categorized answers and finally employed the division function of Microsoft Excel to identify the percentage. With Microsoft Excel, the researcher can also draw some figures based on the results to better illustrate the results.

### *2.8. Data analysis*

Data collected from questionnaire was collected and summarized using Microsoft Excel and illustrated by a system of charts or tables.

Data collected from questionnaire was also summarized in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and visualized in the form of charts and tables for clearer presentation of statistics. Students' self-evaluation of the level interest in listening as well as their attention during speaking lessons before and after the intervention of drama activities were also compared to see whether drama-based lessons will change students' attitudes towards speaking.

Based on the findings from the questionnaire, the researcher made a comparison between the information I had with the findings of previous studies to look for any similarities and differences, then discussed the findings of the current studies and drew conclusion.

## **III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The research results and related discussions were presented, based on the findings obtained from the study. The initial segment demonstrated the data collected from the questionnaires administered to students, highlighting their attitudes towards speaking comprehension before and after the implementation of the drama activities approach. Then the chapter provided information about the questionnaires results obtained from the seventh graders at Chu Van An Lower Secondary School,



indicating the impact of drama activities on their speaking comprehension skills. Finally, the second part of the chapter gave the recommendations.

### 3.1. The questionnaire result

#### 3.1.1. Question 1: Have you ever participated in a drama activity in your English class before?

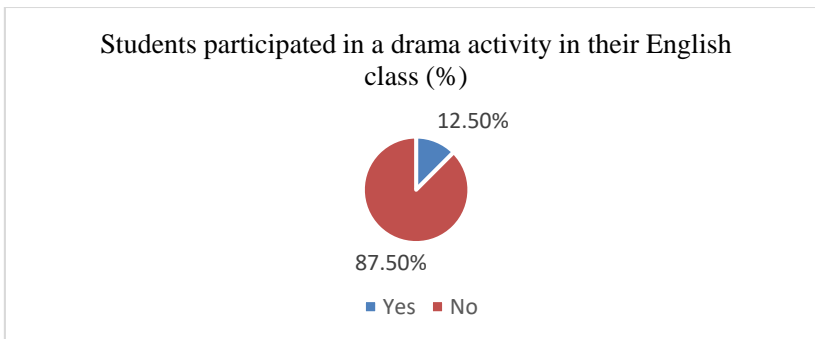


Figure 3.1. Students participated in a drama activity in their English class

In the given scenario, 5 students out of 40 answered "Yes" to the question "Have you ever participated in a drama activity in your English class before?" while 35 students answered "No". This suggests that the majority of the students (87.5%) have not participated in a drama activity in their English class, while a minority of students (12.5%) has.

This information can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of incorporating drama activities in the English curriculum. If the majority of students have not participated in drama activities, it may indicate that these activities are not being utilized to their full potential, or are not being implemented consistently in the classes. On the other hand, if the minority of students who have participated in drama activities have benefited from them and enjoyed them, it may indicate that incorporating these activities more frequently or in a different way could have a positive impact on student engagement and learning outcomes.

It's also important to note that the responses to this question are based on the personal experiences and perceptions of the students, and may not reflect the actual frequency of drama activities in the English classes. Further research and data collection, such as surveys or interviews with the students and teachers, could provide more insight into the use of drama activities in the English curriculum and its impact on student learning.

In conclusion, the responses to the question indicate that the majority of students have not participated in a drama activity in their English class, which could be an opportunity to further explore and improve the use of these activities in the curriculum.

#### 3.1.2. Question 2: How confident do you feel about speaking English in front of others?

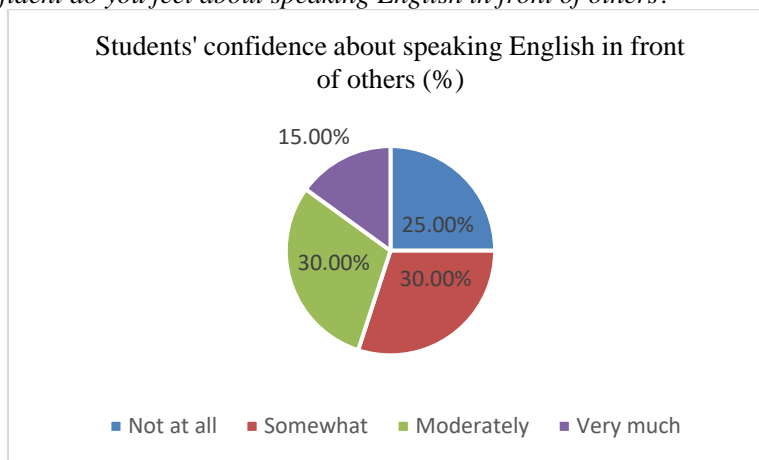


Figure 3.2. Students' confidence about speaking English in front of others

The survey results show that 10 out of 40 students answered "Not at all" confident about speaking English in front of others, while 12 answered "Somewhat" confident, 12 answered "Moderately" confident, and 6 answered "Very much" confident.

Overall, the results indicate that a majority of the students, 26 out of 40, feel either "Somewhat" or "Moderately" confident about speaking English in front of others, with a smaller proportion, 18 out of 40, feeling either "Not at all" or "Very much" confident.

It's important to note that these results are based on self-reported confidence levels and may not necessarily reflect the students' actual proficiency in speaking English. For example, a student may feel "Not at all" confident about speaking in front of others due to shyness or anxiety, even if they have a strong command of the language.

Additionally, the limited sample size of 40 students means that the results may not be representative of the entire student population and should be interpreted with caution. Further research with a larger sample size and demographic information would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the students' confidence levels in speaking English.

In conclusion, the results suggest that a majority of the 40 surveyed students feel confident about speaking English in front of others, but there is still a significant proportion that feels less confident. Further investigation is needed to fully understand the confidence levels and abilities of the students in speaking English.

### 3.1.3. Question 3: How often do you practice speaking English outside of class?

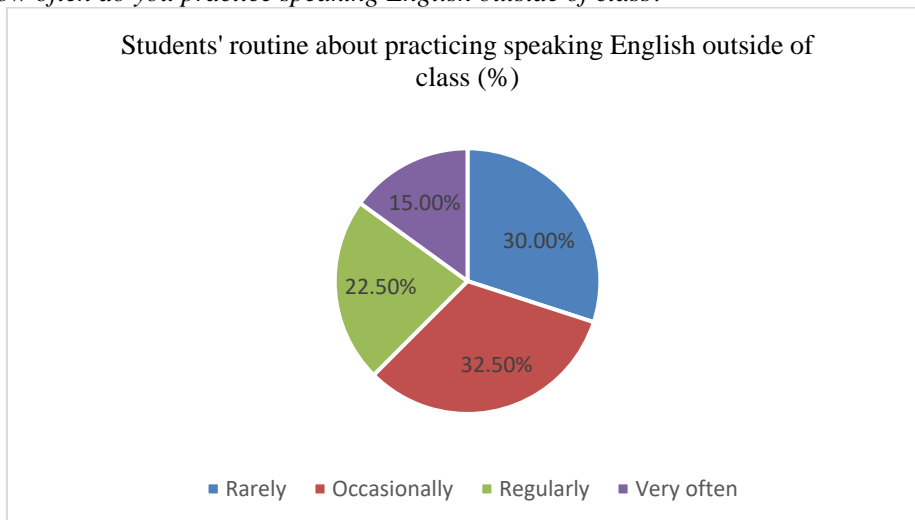


Figure 3.3. Students' routine about practicing speaking English outside of class

Based on the data provided, a total of 40 students answered question 3, with 12 students answering "Rarely," 13 students answering "Occasionally," 9 students answering "Regularly," and 6 students answering "Very often."

The most common answer among the students is "Occasionally" with 32.5% of the respondents selecting it. This suggests that a significant portion of the students engage in speaking English outside of class, but not necessarily on a regular basis. On the other hand, the least common answer is "Very often" with only 15% of the respondents selecting it, indicating that only a small number of students prioritize speaking English as a regular part of their routine.

In terms of overall practice frequency, 21 students out of 40 students answered either "Occasionally" or "Very often" which means that approximately 52.5% of the students engage in speaking English outside of class either occasionally or regularly. Meanwhile, 21 students out of 40 students answered either "Rarely" or "Regularly" which means that 52.5% of the students either rarely practice speaking English or practice it on a regular basis.

In conclusion, the data suggests that a significant portion of the students engage in speaking English outside of class, but not necessarily on a consistent basis. Additionally, there is a roughly equal distribution of students who either rarely or regularly practice speaking English, indicating that there is room for improvement in this area.

### 3.1.4. Question 4: How interested are you in participating in drama activities in your English class?

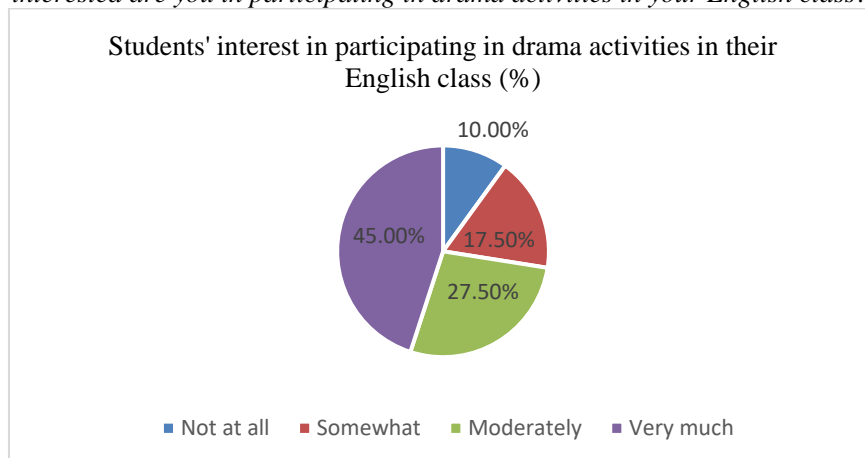


Figure 3.4. Students' interest in participating in drama activities in their English class

40 students are interested in participating in drama activities in their English class. Out of the 40 students, 18 answered "Very much," 11 answered "Moderately," 7 answered "Somewhat," and only 4 answered "Not at all."

This indicates that a significant portion of the students are eager to participate in drama activities in their English class, with a combined total of 29 students (18 + 11) answering either "Moderately" or "Very much." This suggests that the students value these activities and find them engaging.

On the other hand, only 11 students (7 + 4) answered either "Somewhat" or "Not at all," indicating that a smaller portion of the students are not as interested in these activities. This could potentially be due to a variety of reasons, such as shyness, lack of confidence, or simply not enjoying drama activities.

It's important to note that the results of this survey are just a snapshot of the students' attitudes towards drama activities in their English class, and may not accurately reflect their true feelings or experiences. Further data collection and analysis may be necessary to get a more complete picture.

Overall, the results suggest that the majority of the students are interested in participating in drama activities in their English class, and teachers and administrators may want to consider incorporating more of these activities into the curriculum to engage and motivate the students.

3.1.5. *Question 5: Have you noticed any improvement in your English speaking skills after participating in drama activities?*

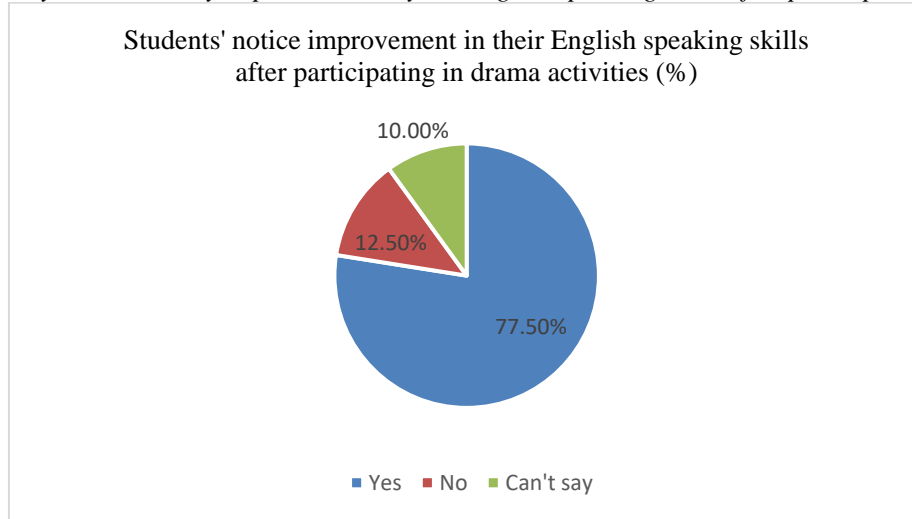


Figure 3.5. *Students' notice improvement in their English speaking skills after participating in drama activities*

Out of the 40 students surveyed, 31 answered "Yes," indicating that they have noticed an improvement in their English speaking skills after participating in drama activities. This represents a response rate of 77.5% in favor of the positive impact of drama activities on English speaking skills. 5 students, or 12.5% of those surveyed, answered "No," suggesting that they have not seen any improvement. The remaining 4 students, or 10% of the total, answered "Can't say," indicating that they are unsure or unable to determine if there has been an improvement in their English speaking skills.

In general, the results suggest that the majority of students surveyed believe that participating in drama activities has positively impacted their English speaking skills. However, it is important to consider the limitations of this survey, such as the small sample size of 40 students, the possibility of self-reported bias, and the lack of control for other factors that may have influenced the results. Further research with larger sample sizes and controlled experimental designs would be necessary to strengthen the conclusions that can be drawn from these results.

Additionally, it is important to note that while the results are positive, they may not necessarily apply to all students or all situations. Every student has unique learning needs and experiences, and the effectiveness of drama activities in improving English speaking skills may vary for different individuals.

3.1.6. *Question 6: In your opinion, how effective do you think drama activities are in enhancing English speaking skills?*



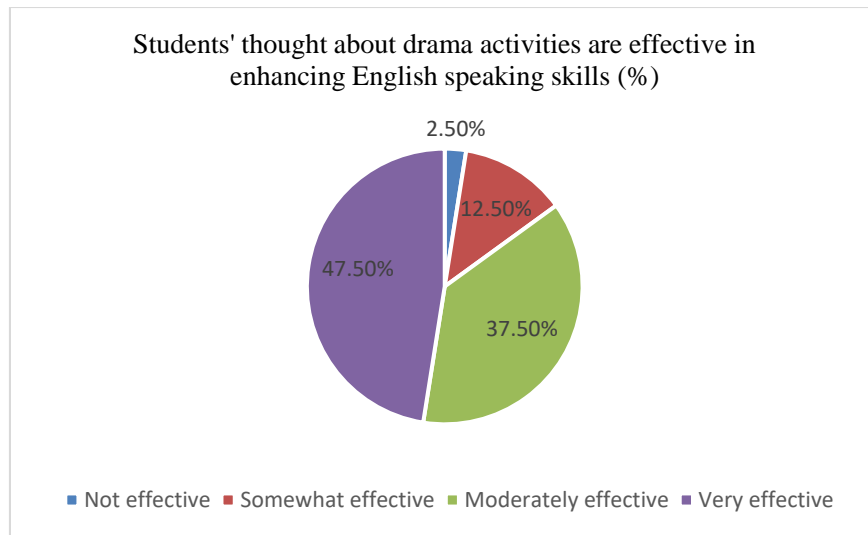


Figure 3.6. Students' thought about drama activities are effective in enhancing English speaking skills

According to the survey results, the majority of students (19 out of 40) believe that drama activities are "Very effective" in enhancing English speaking skills. 15 students out of 40 answered "Moderately effective," 5 students out of 40 answered "Somewhat effective," and only 1 student out of 40 answered "Not effective."

These results suggest that the majority of students believe that drama activities are effective in enhancing English speaking skills. This is likely due to the interactive and immersive nature of drama activities, which can help students practice and improve their speaking skills in a fun and engaging way. The results also indicate that there is a diverse range of opinions among the students, with some believing that drama activities are moderately effective while others believe they are very effective.

It is worth noting that the survey results are based on the opinions of the students and may not necessarily reflect the actual effectiveness of drama activities in enhancing English speaking skills. Further research and analysis are required to determine the true impact of drama activities on language learning.

In conclusion, the survey results suggest that the majority of students believe that drama activities are effective in enhancing English speaking skills. While these results are encouraging, further research and analysis are needed to determine the true impact of these activities on language learning.

### 3.1.7. Question 7: How comfortable are you with acting out different characters in a drama activity?

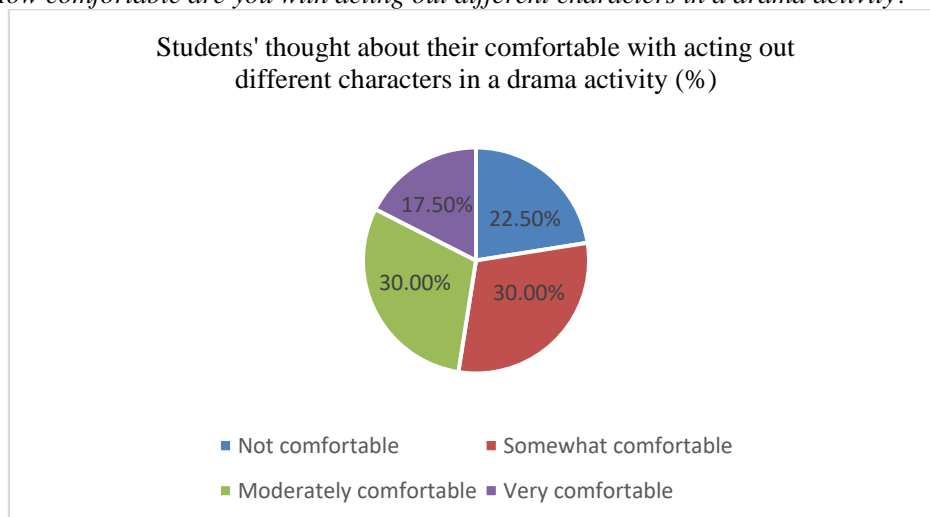


Figure 3.7. Students' thought about their comfortable with acting out different characters in a drama activity

According to the survey results, 9 out of 40 students answered "Not comfortable" when asked about their comfort level with acting out different characters in a drama activity. 12 students out of 40 answered "Somewhat comfortable," 12 students out of 40 answered "Moderately comfortable," and 7 students out of 40 answered "Very comfortable."

These results suggest that while a small number of students are very comfortable with acting out different characters, the majority of students have some level of discomfort with this type of activity. This could be due to a lack of experience or

confidence in performing, or simply because students find acting out different characters to be a challenging and intimidating task.

However, it is also important to note that the results are based on the students' own self-assessments, which may not accurately reflect their actual abilities or comfort levels. Furthermore, the results may not be representative of the entire student population, as the survey only collected data from 40 students.

In conclusion, the survey results indicate that a majority of students have some level of discomfort with acting out different characters in a drama activity. This highlights the need for educational institutions to provide more opportunities for students to gain experience and build confidence in this type of activity. This can help to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment where all students feel comfortable participating in drama activities and enhancing their language skills.

3.1.8. *Question 8: Do you think that drama activities help you remember English vocabulary and grammar better?*

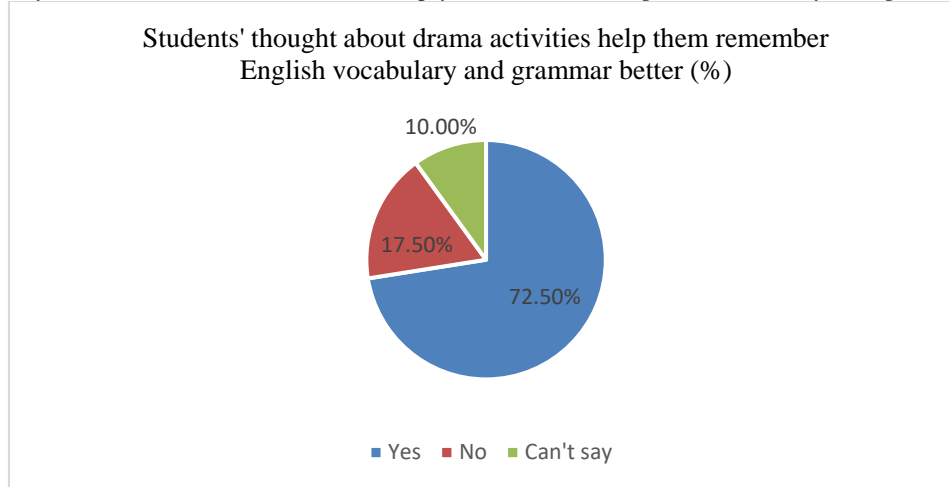


Figure 3.8. *Students' thought about drama activities help them remember English vocabulary and grammar better*

According to the survey results, 29 out of 40 students answered "Yes" when asked if they believe that drama activities help them remember English vocabulary and grammar better. 7 students out of 40 answered "No," and 4 students out of 40 answered "Can't say."

These results suggest that the majority of students believe that drama activities are helpful in remembering English vocabulary and grammar. This is likely due to the interactive and engaging nature of drama activities, which can provide students with an opportunity to actively practice and apply their language skills in a fun and memorable way. The results also indicate that there is a small group of students who do not believe that drama activities are helpful, and a small group of students who are unsure.

It is worth noting that the survey results are based on the opinions of the students and may not necessarily reflect the actual effectiveness of drama activities in enhancing language learning. Further research and analysis are required to determine the true impact of drama activities on language retention and recall.

In conclusion, the survey results suggest that the majority of students believe that drama activities are helpful in remembering English vocabulary and grammar. While these results are encouraging, further research and analysis are needed to determine the true impact of these activities on language learning. Nevertheless, the results highlight the importance of incorporating interactive and engaging activities, such as drama, into language learning programs to help students retain and recall their language skills.

3.1.9. *Question 9: Have you ever performed a drama activity in front of an audience before?*

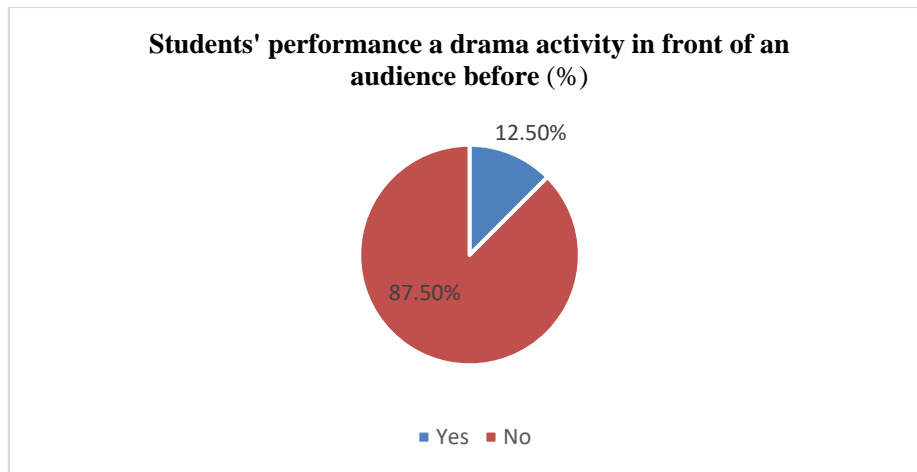


Figure 3.9. Students' performance a drama activity in front of an audience before

According to the survey results, 5 out of 40 students answered "Yes" and 35 students out of 40 answered "No" when asked if they have ever performed a drama activity in front of an audience before.

These results suggest that a small minority of students have had prior experience performing drama activities in front of an audience, while the majority of students have not. This highlights the importance of providing students with opportunities to gain experience and build confidence in performing drama activities.

It is also important to note that the results of the survey may not be representative of the entire student population, as it only collected data from 40 students. Furthermore, the results may be influenced by factors such as the availability of performing opportunities and the students' own interests and preferences.

In conclusion, the survey results indicate that a small minority of students have had prior experience performing drama activities in front of an audience. These results highlight the importance of providing students with opportunities to gain experience and build confidence in performing drama activities, as well as the need for further research to understand the reasons for the low number of students with performing experience.

3.1.10. Question 10: *Would you like to participate in more drama activities in your English class in the future?*

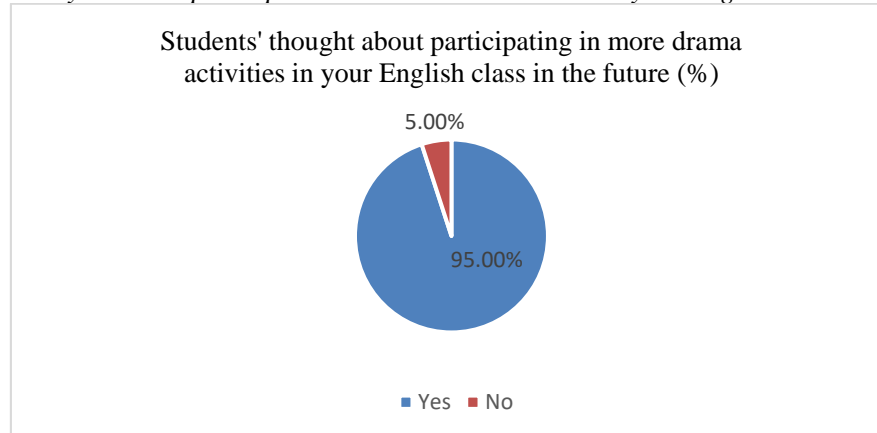


Figure 3.10. Students' thought about participating in more drama activities in your English class in the future

According to the survey results, 38 out of 40 students answered "Yes" and 2 students out of 40 answered "No" when asked if they would like to participate in more drama activities in their English class in the future.

These results suggest that a vast majority of students are interested in participating in more drama activities in their English class, which highlights the value and popularity of these types of activities as a means of enhancing language skills and learning. The use of drama activities can provide students with an engaging and interactive way to practice and apply their language skills, which can help to increase their motivation and involvement in the learning process.

It is also worth noting that the survey results are based on the opinions of the students and may not necessarily reflect the actual preferences of the entire student population. Further research and analysis are required to determine the true level of interest in drama activities among students.

In conclusion, the survey results indicate that a vast majority of students are interested in participating in more drama activities in their English class in the future. These results highlight the value and popularity of drama activities as a means of

enhancing language skills and learning and underscore the importance of incorporating interactive and engaging activities into language learning programs.

**2.2. The progress test's result**

*Table 3.1. The progress test's result in 8 weeks*

Grade	Week 1: Progress test 1	Week 2: Progress test 2	Week 3: Progress test 3	Week 4: Progress test 4	Week 5: Progress test 5	Week 6: Progress test 6	Week 7: Progress test 7	Week 8: Progress test 8
	Student	Student	Student	Student	Student	Student	Student	Student
Total	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
5	4	4	4	3	3	2	0	0
6	10	11	9	7	6	5	7	1
7	9	10	10	10	9	8	8	9
8	6	7	10	9	10	10	10	13
9	4	4	5	8	10	11	11	12
10	1	1	1	2	2	4	4	5
<b>Average Grade</b>	6.43	6.73	7.08	7.38	7.6	7.88	7.93	8.28

The table 3.1 above shows the results of 40 students for progress tests conducted over eight weeks. The first column lists the student numbers, while the subsequent columns represent the percentage of marks obtained by each student in the respective week's progress test.

Comparing the results of Week 1 and Week 2, there is an increase in the average grade from 6.43 to 6.73, indicating that the students have made progress.

Similarly, there is a steady increase in the average grade from Week 3 to Week 8, with the highest average grade recorded in Week 8 (8.28). This trend indicates that the students have been improving over time.

Comparing the results of Week 1 and Week 8, there is a significant improvement in the average grade from 6.43 to 8.28, indicating that the students have made substantial progress over the eight weeks.

In conclusion, the students have shown improvement in their grades over the eight weeks, although some students have been inconsistent in their performance. The significant improvement in the average grade from Week 1 to Week 8 is a positive sign, indicating that the students have made significant progress over the duration of the program.

**3.3. The Midterm Speaking Test and Final Speaking Test's result**

*Table 3.2. Midterm Speaking Test and Final Speaking Test's result*

Grade	Midterm Speaking Test		Final Speaking Test	
	Student	%	Student	%
Total	40	100%	40	100%
1	0	0%	0	0%
2	0	0%	0	0%
3	0	0%	0	0%
4	0	0%	0	0%
5	5	13%	1	3%
6	9	23%	9	23%
7	11	28%	8	20%
8	8	20%	10	25%

9	5	13%	7	18%
10	2	5%	5	13%
<b>Average Grade</b>	7.13		7.70	

The table shows the results of the midterm and final speaking tests for 40 students. The percentage of correct answers for each student is provided for both tests. Based on Table 4.2, it can be observed that learning English through drama activities has significant importance for 7th-grade students' speaking skills.

Overall, there is a slight improvement in the average grade from the midterm (7.13) to the final speaking test (7.70), indicating some progress in the students' speaking abilities.

Looking at individual grades, there were some students who did not score any points on either test (grades 1-4), indicating a need for further improvement. However, there were also students who showed significant improvement, such as those in grades 5 and 10 who increased their percentage of correct answers from the midterm to the final test.

In terms of class distribution, grade 6 and grade 7 had the highest percentage of correct answers on the midterm test, but grade 8 had the highest percentage on the final test. Grade 9 also showed improvement from the midterm to the final test.

Overall, while there is some progress shown in the results of the final speaking test, there is still room for improvement, especially for students in grades 1-4 who did not score any points on either test. The results suggest that drama activities can be an effective method for enhancing English speaking skills among middle school students.

### 3.4. Discussion

Based on the information provided in the given paragraphs, it can be concluded that drama-based lessons have a positive impact on students' attitudes towards English language learning, as well as their speaking abilities. The questionnaire results indicate that most students are interested in participating in drama activities in their English class and perceive them as effective in enhancing their speaking skills. Additionally, the progress test and speaking test results show an improvement in students' grades and speaking abilities over the eight weeks of the program.

Regarding the "Question 1. What are the students' attitudes toward the use drama-based lessons?", the questionnaire results suggest that the students have a positive attitude towards drama-based lessons. Specifically, most of them are interested in participating in such activities, are comfortable acting out different characters, and believe that drama activities can help them remember English vocabulary and grammar better. This indicates that the use of drama in language learning is perceived as engaging and motivating by the students, which can enhance their overall learning experience.

Regarding the "Question 2. To what extent are Drama activities effective in enhancing the seventh graders' speaking ability?", the results of the midterm and final speaking tests indicate that drama activities are effective in enhancing seventh graders' speaking abilities to some extent. While there is still room for improvement, the overall improvement in the average grade from the midterm to the final speaking test indicates progress. Moreover, the class distribution data suggests that students in all grades can benefit from drama-based activities, as different grades had the highest percentage of correct answers on different tests. This indicates that drama activities can be an effective method for enhancing English speaking skills among middle school students.

It is important to note that the progress tests do not specifically test the students' speaking ability, so it is not possible to make any conclusive statements about the effectiveness of drama activities in enhancing speaking skills. Nonetheless, the fact that there is a consistent improvement in grades over time suggests that the use of drama-based lessons may have had a positive impact on the students' English language learning experience.

To fully assess the effectiveness of drama activities in enhancing speaking ability, it may be necessary to conduct a specific speaking test before and after the implementation of drama-based lessons. This would provide more targeted and conclusive evidence about the impact of drama activities on the students' speaking skills.

Overall, the results suggest that drama-based lessons can be an effective method for enhancing English language learning among seventh graders, as they can positively impact students' attitudes towards learning and their speaking abilities. However, further research is needed to establish the effectiveness of drama-based activities in enhancing language learning in a more comprehensive manner.

Based on the results of the progress tests, it is difficult to determine the direct impact of drama-based lessons on the seventh graders' speaking ability. However, the results do suggest that there is an overall improvement in the students' grades over the eight weeks, indicating that they have been making progress in their English language skills.

## IV. CONCLUSION

### 4.1. Conclusion

The master thesis on enhancing English speaking skills for 7th graders by using drama activities in a lower secondary school aimed to investigate the effectiveness of drama activities in improving students' English speaking skills. The study was conducted on a group of 7th graders in a lower secondary school in Vietnam, using action methods.

The findings of the study suggest that drama activities can be an effective tool for enhancing students' English speaking skills. The results showed a significant improvement in students' speaking skills after participating in drama activities. The study also revealed that drama activities can boost students' confidence in using English and provide them with opportunities to be creative and participate actively in their learning process.

The study has important implications for language teaching and learning, highlighting the potential of drama activities to make language learning more engaging, interactive, and effective. The study also underscores the importance of promoting student participation in language learning and the need for teacher training to effectively incorporate drama activities in language teaching.

Despite some limitations in the study, such as the small sample size and limited duration, the findings provide a foundation for further research on the effectiveness of drama activities in language learning. Future studies can explore the impact of different types of drama activities and their effectiveness in different contexts.

In conclusion, the study on enhancing English speaking skills for 7th graders by using drama activities in a lower secondary school provides valuable insights into the potential benefits of drama activities for language learning. Teachers and language educators can use these findings to improve their teaching practices and enhance students' language learning outcomes.

### 4.2. Recommendations

The following recommendations are proposed for enhancing English speaking skills for 7th graders in lower secondary schools through the use of drama activities:

Firstly, Integrate drama activities into the English language curriculum: Drama activities should be incorporated into the English language curriculum as a regular part of the students' speaking practice routine.

Secondly, Encourage student participation and creativity: Teachers should encourage student participation and creativity in drama activities to enhance their confidence and fluency in speaking.

Thirdly, Foster a positive and supportive learning environment: Teachers should foster a positive and supportive learning environment that allows students to take risks and feel comfortable speaking in English.

Fourthly, Provide regular feedback and support: Teachers should provide regular feedback and support to help students improve their speaking skills over time.

Fifthly, Train teachers in drama-based language instruction: Teachers should receive training in how to effectively incorporate drama activities into their language instruction to ensure successful implementation.

Sixthly, Emphasize teamwork and collaboration: Drama activities should be designed to emphasize teamwork and collaboration among students to help build social skills and foster a sense of community.

Seventhly, Encourage the use of English outside of the classroom: Teachers should encourage students to use English in their daily lives outside of the classroom to further enhance their speaking skills.

In conclusion, incorporating drama activities into the English language curriculum has the potential to significantly enhance the speaking skills of 7th graders in lower secondary schools. By following these recommendations, schools can provide students with a fun and engaging way to practice speaking English and help them develop their language skills in a supportive and inclusive environment.

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#### AUTHORS

**First Author** – Bich Ngoc Ngo Thi (Ph.D.), Mentor and Supervisor, Thai Nguyen University of Education and [ngocntb@tinue.edu.vn](mailto:ngocntb@tinue.edu.vn)  
**Second Author** – Hoai Linh Phung, Master Candidate, qualifications, [phunghoailinh@gmail.com](mailto:phunghoailinh@gmail.com)