THE EFFECTS OF CREATIVE DRAMA ACTIVITIES ON SOCIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION OF CHILDREN AGED SIX

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate whether drama activities which are integrated into the curriculum as a part of the daily plan make a meaningful difference on the acquisition of social skills of children aged six during the preschool education or not. The experiment group consists of 19 children who attend the kindergarten class of an elementary school in Buca, İzmir during the 2008-2009 Spring semester. 10 of them were placed in the experiment group and the other 9 were in the control group. The research applied the experiment and control group design. The repetetive measurements were conducted twice, before and after the research in order to measure students' social skills. The research employed Social Skills Evaluation Scale (SSES) in order to measure students' social skills both in the research group which creative drama activities were employed and the control group which traditional method was employed. The findings revealed that there is a statistically meaningful difference between the results of the students' those who were in the experiment group and those in the control group in terms of both the scale and its subscales. The difference was found in favor of the experiment group.

Keywords: Creative drama, Social skills, Kindergarten students

INTRODUCTION

Social skills can be taught and they include both observable and non observable cognitive and affective elements which are target oriented and which change depending on the social context. In addition, social skills entail deciphering-understanding social information that take place among people as well as giving appropriate responses to the information received (Yüksel, 1999). Hersen and Eisler (1976) defines social skills as individuals' ability to conduct successful interactions in their natural environment, at school, at home and at work (cited in Bacanlı, 1999). Cartledge and Milburn (1983) state in most of the definitions of social skills they are defined as skills

a) that will provide others to give positive reactions and prevent negative reactions, will create interaction with others and they are socially approved learned behaviors

b) which will cause others' giving positive responses and enable them avoid negative responses

c) will create an impact on the others and they will be target oriented

d) they will be appropriate to the situation and will chance depending on the social context

e) they can be both observable and unobservable cognitive and affective behaviors.

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A socially skilled individual can act appropriately in his social environment in which they live, can conduct interpersonal relations and can fulfill their social requirements (Avcıoğlu, 2001). As a part of behavioral conducts, social skills enable individuals initiate and maintain positive interactions with others (Westwood, 1993; cited in Avcıoğlu, 2001). Research emphasizes the importance of children' gaining social behaviors on their school adaptation and success (Ladd and Price, 1987, cited in McClelland, Morrison, 2002; Porath, 2003). Students with low social abilities may frequently have behavioral and academic success problems and they can be refused by their peers (Cooper ve Farran, 1988; Alexander, Entwisle and Dauber, 1993; McClelland, Morrison and Holmes, 2000, cited in McClelland, Morrison, 2002) . Nevertheless, students' developing acceptable social skills enables them to avoid going through negative social encounters with adults and their friends. In addition, this enables them assume appropriate social roles and improves their relations with the same age group (Gresham and Elliott, 1990).

In line with these results, it is seen that children's acquiring social skills at an early age is important. Pre school education is the most appropriate time for children's social skills acqusition process because it cultivates and encourages the development of children's social skills since it is the earliest stage of education and it is also critical for teaching social skills to this age group (Ekinci Vural, 2006).

From the point view of teaching-learning process, social skills have many positive outcomes on students. If students can apply communication, self control, adaptation and coping skills etc. effectively during their school lives, this creates positive outcomes on their school adaptation and academic success. Our educational system targets social and personal development, and yet most of the objectives focus on academic success at schools. It is imperative that individuals should develop their social skills in order to cope with problems such as violence, alienation, inefficiency in their peer relations, communicational difficulties and social isolation efficiently (Oral, 2002). Today, when teaching and learning experiences are considered the affective domain is placed less importance and that negatively affects the students' social skills development. However, it is evident that when active learning principles were fully put into practice these problems will also be solved.

The frequent problems regarding the inefficient peer relations and social skills acquisition accelerate the curriculum planing attempts which teach social skills (Çetin, Bilbay, Kaymak, 2002). It is important to employ a suitable and effective method to teach social skills. Therefore, children need activities which take place in an educational environment and which will be game-like activities that take place in close- to-natural environment (Avcıoğlu, 2005). Researchers state that one of the methods that can be employed in teaching social skills is drama (Jendyk, 1981; Landy, 1982; Courtney, 1995; Avcıoğlu 2005; Gülay and Akman, 2009).

Creative drama is defined as the creation of dramatic moments in the game processes and life situations during in-group interaction processes under the leadership of an expert by using the improvisation and role playing techniques etc (San, 2002). Drama is very important for the teaching-learning process and it provides students' development in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains and yet it is viewed as a game. Drama is an effective method to teach skills like literary development, self efficacy, understanding one's self, developing symphaty, social awareness, creativity, critical thinking, self realization, problem solving, and producing solutions to problems (Genç, 2003).

Creative drama activities can be said to have important contributions to children's socialisation and becoming a member of the society because creative drama activities take place in groups

(Heathcote and Wagner, 1990; cited in Kara and Çam, 2007). Social skills are very important for children's becoming a member of the society. During the creative drama activities children can assume different roles and experiences and go through several social roles and social problems. Especially through conflict resolution included in the drama activities social skills are developed (Sternberg, 1998). In addition, children can understand the society and the interaction patterns that take place in the society better and they can investigate the solutions to the problems that take place in these interaction patterns (Önder, 2007). They can find solutions to these problems in a safe manner and experiment in-group interaction processes with their friends who have similar problems. In addition, since creative drama provides in-group interaction it improves interaction among the group members, enables people assume different roles and express themselves and it is an effective method to teach social skills (Çoban Çalışkan, 2007).

Landy (1982) states drama activities take place among the methods that improve social skills. During the drama activities students role play, analyse roles and work cooperatively in creative situations that require emotional control (Freeman, 2000). Creative drama environment in which such activities take place provides an atmosphere in which students will feel comfortable and not be critisized and this atmosphere fosters the development of the individuals' social skills. In creative drama self acceptance grows into accepting others during the cooperative activities and that improves social skills. Individuals with developed social skills and social acceptance are more motivated and show more socialised behaviors (Siks, 1983). In addition, creative drama includes response giving, practice to give responces, shaping responses and includes elements of cognitive restructuring and this fosters drama's ability to improve social skills (Freeman, 2000).

In the literature, several studies were done to determine drama's effects on social-emotional development of 5 and 6 year old children (Metin, 1999), individual's social development (Uysal, 1996) and on individual's level of socialization (Akın, 1993). Kara and Çam (2007), in their development and learning course, researched whether there is a meaningful difference between the creative drama and the traditional method in teaching prospective teachers to have skills to initiate and continue doing group work, skills to start a relationship and maintain it, and skills to control themselves.
This study investigates whether drama activities which are integrated into the curriculum as a part of the daily plan make a meaningful difference on the development of social skills of children aged six during the preschool education or not.

METHOD

Research Design

This study investigates the effects of using creative drama on kindergarten students' acquisition of social skills. In other words, the question whether creative drama activities, the independent variable, effect the acquisition of social skills which is the dependent variable was investigated. This is an experimental study and employs an experiment and control group design.

This design has only one factor (the independent variable) whose effects were investigated on the dependent variables. Repetetive measurements of the dependent variables were conducted. The repetetive measurements measured the students' social skills twice, once before and once after the experimental process.

Participants

The group consisted of 19 children (9 girls, 10 boys) who attended the kindergarten class of an elementary school in Buca, İzmir during the 2008-2009 Spring semester. 10 of them were placed in the research group and the other 9 were put in the control group. Kindergarten teachers voluntered to answer Social Skills Evaluation Scale (SSES) for all 19 students, both in the experiment group and in the control group.

Instrument

The research employed Social Skills Evaluation Scale (SSES) in order to measure students' social skills both in the research group which creative drama activities were employed and the control group which traditional method was employed. This scale was developed by Avcıoğlu (2003) for 4-6 age group in order to measure important skills that improve social interaction. It is a five-point Likert type scale. SSES includes social skills that 4-6 year old children should have. The skills were placed under 9 categories in the scale. These are interpersonal skills (IS), skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA), skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP), skills to control himself (SCH), verbal explanation skills (VES), skills to accept results (SAR), listening skills (LS), goal setting skills (GSS) and skills to complete tasks (SCT). SSES has 62 items and 9 subscales. All items were organized in a positive manner. The scale includes answers such as "always does", "very frequently does', "usually does", "rarely does" and "never does". The answer "always does" gets 5 points and the answer "never does" gets 1 point. Low score indicates that the student does not have enough social skills and high score indicates that the student does have social skills. The lowest possible score is 62 and the highest possible score is 310. The subscales interpersonal skills (IS) can be the lowest 13, the highest 65; skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA) can be the lowest 8, the highest 40; skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP) can be the lowest 9, the highest 45; skills to control himself (SCH) can be the lowest 10, the highest 50; verbal explanation skills (VES) can be the lowest 7, the highest 35; skills to accept results (SAR) can be the lowest 4, the highest 20; listening skills (LS) can be the lowest 5, the highest 25; goal setting skills (GSS) can be the lowest 3, the highest 15;) and skills to complete tasks (SCT) can be the lowest 3, the highest 15 (Avcıoğlu, 2003). The respondents read the statement in the scale first and then register the most appropriate item for the child they are evaluating. If they are asked a question regarding a skill that they have no chance of observing they do not answer that item.

A factor analysis was conducted in regard to the content and the general qualities of the scale to find out how many factors there are in the test. As a result of the analysis, factor loading value was found between .44 - .77 for the subscale interpersonal skills (IS), between .58 - .82 for the subscale "skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)", between .52 -.87 for the subscale "skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)", between .45 -.66 for the subscale "skills to control himself (SCH)", between .47 -.84 for the subscale "skills to accept results (SAR)", between .41 - .67 for the subscale listening skills (LS); between .54 -.63 for the subscale "goal setting skills (GSS)", between .56 -.79 for the subscale "skills to complete tasks (SCT)"; between .45 -.65 for the subscale "verbal explanation skills (VES)". factor loading value was found between .41- .87 for the whole scale (Avcıoğlu, 2003). The reliability of the scale was tested through Cronbach Alfa coefficient (Avcıoğlu, 2003). Cronbach Alfa coefficient for the whole Social Skills Evaluation Scale (SSES) and the subscales are .94 for interpersonal skills (IS), .93 for "skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)", .93 for "skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)", .92 for "skills to control himself (SCH)", .93 for "verbal explanation skills (VES)", .84 for "skills to accept results (SAR)", .86 for "listening skills (LS)"; .79 for "goal setting skills (GSS)", .69 for "skills to complete tasks (SCT)"; and .97 in total.

Creative Drama Program and Its Implication

Pre-implication Process

The researchers discussed what points to pay attention to when designing a drama plan and how to use the method effectively with the Preschool Education students before the experiment during 2008-2009 Spring semester at Dokuz Eylul University, Buca Faculty of Education in the 'Teaching Applications' classes. After that, each prospective teacher was asked to prepare four drama plans for the subjects of their choice and their plans were discussed with them. Before the implication, their plans were investigated by two drama specialists and one pre school education specialist. Before the implication, prospective teachers and the specialists came together for two hours a week for two weeks. The parts that need to be improved in the plans such as the missing statements of the objectives or the wording problems with the statements of objectives, the adjustment of the difficulty level of them for the preschool students, ensuring the variety of the questions for the evaluation part etc. were determined with the prospective teachers. In addition, different drama plans developed by others were studied.

After the drama plans were finalised by the prospective teachers they became ready for the implication of their plans. The Social Skills Evaluation Scale (SSES) for young learners was employed for both the experiment and control group students as a pre test before the 6 week instructional period starts.

Implication Process

The drama plans were put into practice by the 6 prospective teachers in the kindergarten class (the experiment group) of an elementary school in Buca, İzmir. The program was followed by each prospective teacher for 4 days a week for 6 weeks. In the literature it is stated that children were able to learn how to use social skills during a 3-5 times a week social skills instruction (Akkök, 1996). The experiment group received 6 week instruction and one prospective teacher each week followed his drama program and as a result a total of 24 drama activities took place. The implications of the plans developed by each prospective teacher were observed and meetings were held with each prospective teacher for one hour a week for 15 minutes after each activity. During these meetings problems regarding absence of clear directions, motivating children to drama activities, following the steps in the plan etc. were discussed and some suggestions were made to ensure their developments.

Every activity which took place in both the experiment and the control groups was observed by one of the researchers and was made sure that the process is maintained properly. It was expected that the creative drama activities in the program would positively affect the social skills development of children aged 6. Children in the control group were given activities that were stated in the daily plans for the same length of time. The drama activities did not go over 30 minutes including the evaluation part conducted at the end of the activity. During the process, first the drama activity took place and then questions regarding definitional, affective and cognitive/experience level were asked (Önder, 2007). "Social Skills Evaluation Scale" for young children was applied to kindergarden students in the experiment and control groups by their teachers at the end of the 6 week training period and the post test results were gathered.

RESULTS

The findings are revealed in this part. Data was analysed through the Shapiro-Wilk test which compares the measures against the normal distribution and t- test was conducted.

Table 1. The pretest results of the experiment and control groups according to Shapiro-Wilk for normal distribution

The scale and subscales	Groups	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Shapiro-Wilk	p
Interpersonal skills (IS)	Experiment	10	37,7	6,63	0,96	0,80
	Control	9	35,7	4,06	0,93	0,47
Skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)	Experiment	10	23,6	2,63	0,96	0,78
	Control	9	22,3	3,32	0,91	0,31
Skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)	Experiment	10	26,0	3,94	0,95	0,68
	Control	9	22,0	3,74	0,93	0,51
Skills to control himself (SCH)	Experiment	10	33,2	4,51	0,94	0,57
	Control	9	30,4	3,57	0,98	0,95
Verbal explanation skills (VES)	Experiment	10	19,7	3,95	0,86	0,06
	Control	9	17,1	2,93	0,90	0,24
Skills to accept results (SAR)	Experiment	10	13,0	2,00	0,85	0,06
	Control	9	11,4	2,19	0,90	0,23
Listening skills (LS)	Experiment	10	17,0	2,54	0,87	0,09
	Control	9	13,2	2,11	0,92	0,39
Goal setting skills (GSS)	Experiment	10	9,30	1,25	0, 90	0,08
	Control	9	7,7	1,12	0,78	0,06
Skills to complete tasks (SCT)	Experiment	10	10,5	1,18	0,86	0,07
	Control	9	7,7	1,12	0,90	0,26
Whole scale	Experiment	10	190,0	21,75	0,93	0,45
	Control	9	170,7	18,79	0,93	0,45

p>0,05

Table 1 shows that the value of p for the experiment and control groups that was found after the Shapiro-Wilk test is greater than 0.05. This result shows that the data gathered from the pre test results of the experiment and control groups shows a normal distribution. Therefore a t-test was conducted to determine the difference between the means of the experiment and control groups. The results are displayed in Table 2.

As Table 2 reveals, there is a difference between the pre test results of the experiment and control groups for the "Skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP), Listening skills (LS) ve Goal setting skills (GSS) " in favor of the research group. There is not any statistically meaningful difference for the rest of the subscales. In general there is not any meaningful difference between the experiment and the control groups in the scale, and yet the difference is close to the meaningful difference. Therefore when students' final social skills scores were evaluated their preliminary social skills scores were calculated as the control variable and one factor covariance analysis was conducted. But initially, the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to check whether the posttest results of the experiment and control groups show a normal distribution or not. The results are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the value of p for the experiment and control groups that was found after the Shapiro-Wilk test is greater than 0.05. This result shows that data has a normal distribution according to the post test results of the experiment and control groups. The groups' arithmetic mean and the standard deviation scores and corrected post test mean scores basing on the pre test score means and standart error scores are displayed in Table 4.

Table 2. The t test results for the comparison of pretest results of the experiment and control groups

The scale and subscales	Groups	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p
Interpersonal skills (IS)	Experiment	10	37,7	6,63	0,80	0,44
	Control	9	35,7	4,06		
Skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)	Experiment	10	23,6	2,63	0,93	0,37
	Control	9	22,3	3,32		
Skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)	Experiment	10	26,0	3,94	2,26	0,04*
	Control	9	22,0	3,74		
Skills to control himself (SCH)	Experiment	10	33,2	4,51	1,46	0,16
	Control	9	30,4	3,57		
Verbal explanation skills (VES)	Experiment	10	19,7	3,95	1,61	0,13
	Control	9	17,1	2,93		
Skills to accept results (SAR)	Experiment	10	13,0	2,00	1,62	0,12
	Control	9	11,4	2,19		
Listening skills (LS)	Experiment	10	17,0	2,54	3,51	0,00*
	Control	9	13,2	2,11		
Goal setting skills (GSS)	Experiment	10	9,30	1,25	2,99	0,01*
	Control	9	7,7	1,12		
Skills to complete tasks (SCT)	Experiment	10	10,5	1,18	0,49	0,63
	Control	9	7,7	1,12		
Whole scale	Experiment	10	190,0	21,75	2,06	0,06
	Control	9	170,7	18,79		

*p<0,05

Table 3. The posttest results of the experiment and control groups according to Shapiro-Wilk for normal distribution

The scale and subscales	Groups	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Shapiro-Wilk	p
Interpersonal skills (IS)	Experiment	10	54,8	7,15	0,93	0,39
	Control	9	40,3	4,36	0,91	0,31
Skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)	Experiment	10	33,9	2,42	0,93	0,44
	Control	9	24,2	3,35	0,96	0,78
Skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)	Experiment	10	37,7	3,06	0,89	0,18
	Control	9	26,1	1,27	0,87	0,12
Skills to control himself (SCH)	Experiment	10	42,8	4,71	0,92	0,31
	Control	9	33,7	5,50	0,89	0,15
Verbal explanation skills (VES)	Experiment	10	28,9	2,18	0,91	0,28
	Control	9	19,1	2,26	0,85	0,08
Skills to accept results (SAR)	Experiment	10	19,5	1,27	0,88	0,15
	Control	9	13,7	2,35	0,87	0,07
Listening skills (LS)	Experiment	10	22,5	2,22	0,89	0,15
	Control	9	15,8	3,15	0,84	0,06
Goal setting skills (GSS)	Experiment	10	13,2	1,14	0,85	0,07
	Control	9	9,33	1,00	0,92	0,36
Skills to complete tasks (SCT)	Experiment	10	14,9	0,32	0,87	0,13
	Control	9	11,6	2,40	0,87	0,12
Whole scale	Experiment	10	268,2	18,76	0,92	0,40
	Control	9	193,8	17,45	0,94	0,62

p>0,05

Table 4. The Groups' Arithmetic Mean And The Standard Deviation Scores And Corrected Post Test Mean Scores Basing On The Pre Test Score Means And Standart Error Scores

The scale and subscales	Groups	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Corrected Mean	Standart Error
Interpersonal skills (IS)	Experiment	10	54,8	7,15	54,11	1,47
	Control	9	40,3	4,36	41,10	1,55
Skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)	Experiment	10	33,9	2,42	33,73	0,91
	Control	9	24,2	3,35	24,42	0,96
Skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)	Experiment	10	37,7	3,06	37,12	0,72
	Control	9	26,1	1,27	26,75	0,77
Skills to control himself (SCH)	Experiment	10	42,8	4,71	41,55	1,08
	Control	9	33,7	5,50	35,06	1,15
Verbal explanation skills (VES)	Experiment	10	28,9	2,18	28,34	0,52
	Control	9	19,1	2,26	19,74	0,55
Skills to accept results (SAR)	Experiment	10	19,5	1,27	19,23	0,57
	Control	9	13,7	2,35	13,97	0,60
Listening skills (LS)	Experiment	10	22,5	2,22	21,11	0,76
	Control	9	15,8	3,15	17,32	0,81
Goal setting skills (GSS)	Experiment	10	13,2	1,14	12,68	0,26
	Control	9	9,33	1,00	9,92	0,27
Skills to complete tasks (SCT)	Experiment	10	14,9	0,32	14,99	0,45
	Control	9	11,6	2,40	11,45	0,48
Whole scale	Experiment	10	268,2	18,76	262,22	4,25
	Control	9	193,8	17,45	200,42	4,51

As seen on Table 4, the mean scores of the post test results of the experiment groups are higher than the mean scores of the post test results of the control groups. In order to determine whether this difference is meaningful covarience analysis was conducted. The ANCOVA results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5 shows that covarience analysis results reveal that when the pre test results are under control, the grouping major effect is meaningful in terms of the post test results of the groups. There is a statistically meaningful difference between the post test scores of the experiment and control groups for both the whole scale and the subscales. The difference is in favor of the experiment group.

Table 5. ANCOVA results of the post test scores

Scale and subscales	Source	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	P
Interpersonal skills (IS)	Pretest	271,135	1	271,135	12,742	0,003
	Group	**773,056**	**1**	**773,056**	**36,329**	**0,000***
	Error	340,465	16	21,279		
	Total	1602,947	18			
Skills to manage anger behaviors (SMA)	Pretest	12,833	1	12,833	1,584	0,226
	Group	**390,635**	**1**	**390,635**	**48,218**	**0,000***
	Error	129,622	16	8,101		
	Total	586,105	18			
Skills to cope with peer pressure (SCPP)	Pretest	23,528	1	23,528	5,124	0,038
	Group	**391,357**	**1**	**391,357**	**85,238**	**0,000***
	Error	73,461	16	4,591		
	Total	733,158	18			
Skills to control himself (SCH)	Pretest	264,075	1	264,075	23,80	0,000
	Group	**176,926**	**1**	**176,926**	**15,95**	**0,001***
	Error	177,525	16	11,095		
	Total	836,737	18			
Verbal explanation skills (VES)	Pretest	43,721	1	43,721	17,459	0,001
	Group	**304,472**	**1**	**304,472**	**121,583**	**0,000***
	Error	40,068	16	2,504		
	Total	537,684	18			
Skills to accept results (SAR)	Pretest	10,066	1	10,066	3,325	0,087
	Group	**113,546**	**1**	**113,546**	**37,509**	**0,000***
	Error	48,434	16	3,027		
	Total	219,684	18			
Listening skills (LS)	Pretest	56,097	1	56,097	13,207	0,002
	Group	**39,643**	**1**	**39,643**	**9,334**	**0,008***
	Error	67,958	16	4,247		
	Total	338,105	18			
Goal setting skills (GSS)	Pretest	11,160	1	11,160	21,157	0,000
	Group	**23,589**	**1**	**23,589**	**44,719**	**0,000***
	Error	8,44	16	0,527		
	Total	90,421	18			
Skills to complete tasks (SCT)	Pretest	14,761	1	14,761	7,298	0,016
	Group	**58,987**	**1**	**58,987**	**29,164**	**0,000***
	Error	32,362	16	2,023		
	Total	100,105	18			
Whole scale	Pretest	3020,857	1	3020,857	18,703	0,001
	Group	**14470,715**	**1**	**14470,715**	**89,592**	**0,000***
	Error	2584,299	16	161,519		
	Total	31840,947	18			

*p<0,05

DISCUSSION

The results of the instructional activities that teach social skills to pre school children reveal that they are effective for developing social skills of children (Unutkan, 1998; Powless ve Eliot, 2002; Avcıoğlu, 2003). The research findings of this study also support that drama activities, one of the effective methods to foster the development of social skills, also increase the social skillss levels of the students.

Metin (1999) conducted a research on the effects of drama on social-emotional development of the 5-6 year old children. His findings revealed that drama activities create meaningful differences on social-emotional development of the children. Uysal (1996) made a research on the effects of drama activities on the social development of the 5-6 year old children who attend kindergarten. Uysal worked with 48 children whom never received any drama instruction. The children were put into two groups of 24 to make up the research and control groups. The research group received creative drama program for 12 weeks. The teachers filled an observation form from the Portage Early Childhood Education Program's Social Development Control List, the part about the social development of children aged 61-72 months, for each child in the research and control groups prior to and after the instruction. The findings revealed that drama made positive contributions to the social development of children in the research group. Çoban Çalışkan (2007) researched about the effects of creative drama activities on the development of social skills levels of a group of children who have social skills problems and with their mothers. The research applied a controlled pre test post test design. The children were put into the research and control groups on the basis of having similar socio-economic level and gender. The same creative drama activities were given to the mothers of the children in the research group and this was expected to be a reinforcement for their children's learned skills. The findings displayed that there is a meaningful difference in the Walker-McConnell Scale of Social Competence and School Adjustment test scores of the students in the research group after the drama instruction in 'total', 'teacher-preferred social behavior', 'peer preferred social behavior', and 'school adjustment' scores whereas no meaningful difference was stated in the scores of the control group.

In his study Uşaklı (2006) conducted a research on the effects of the drama based group guidance on the peer relations, entrepreneurship and self respect of 5th grade students. He followed a drama based group guidance program that was based on friendship, entrepreneurship and self respect themes with the students in the research group for 16 weeks. The findings revealed that the drama based group guidance program changed the friendship relations of the children and increased their entrepreneurship and this effect was found permenant. Akın (1993) conducted a research on the effects of creative drama on increasing the socialisation levels of the 3th grade students. He gave the sociometric test to the research ve control groups in pre test post test design. The results showed that the level of socialisation of the 3th grade students differed meaningfully after a 10 week instruction. Kocayörük (2000) researched about the effects of drama on increasing the social skills of the 6th, 7th and 8th grade students and applied Social Skills Scale. He applied drama practise for one and a half hours, every day, for ten days. The results showed that drama activities were found effective in increasing the level of social skills of the students. Freeman (2000) conducted a research on the effects of creative drama on self concept and social skills of the 3th and 4th grade students. In his research The Solomon four group design was applied. Drama activities took place one day a week for 40 minutes for 18 weeks in the research group. The results showed that drama activities did not make a meaningful difference on the self concept and social skills of the students.

Uzamaz (2000) found that social skills training has positive effects on interpersonal relations of the students and Yukay (2003) found that it is effective on developing the social efficacy and self concept of the students. Özdemir (2003) showed that creative drama lessons are effective on developing the social skills of the students. Beales and Zemel (1990) showed that drama activities have positive contributions to students' social maturity levels. İpek (1998) showed that drama in education is effective on the social development of mentally retarded children. Yassa (1999) showed that creative drama activities are effective on developing the social interaction and self confidence.

RESULTS

Creative drama's positive effects on social skills levels of pre school students who attend kindergarten were displayed by many studies and drama's integration to daily plans and its being practiced is very important. Creative drama activities are amongs the methods that develop social skills (Jendyk, 1981; Landy, 1982; Courtney, 1995; Avcıoğlu 2005).

In this research the instructional support given to prospective pre school teachers regarding their drama application skills was found to have positively contributed to the social skills of the kindergarden students in which the prospective pre school teachers made drama applications. From this respect, it is thought to be important for pre school teachers to increase their efficiency in planning and putting creative drama activities into practice. In addition, it can be said that teachers' being more self efficient in drama may make them more willing to apply the drama method. At this point, it is important that prospective pre school teachers be aware of the importance and the positive contributions of creative drama activities on the development of social skills and many other skills while they are receiving education. By knowing the contributions of creative drama, it is assumed that prospective pre school teachers may be more willing to apply the method.

This study was conducted on 6 year old children, therefore it is suggested that the effects of creative drama activities on the development of social skills be researched on children of other pre school age groups. Also different studies about creative drama's effects on the other characteristics of pre school children can be conducted. It is hoped that the findings of this research will shed light on new studies about the creative drama and social skills acquisition of pre school children.

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