Engaging English Learners Through Literature, Fairy Tales, and Drama

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ABSTRACT

Use of literature in the English language classroom deepens student engagement, and fairy tales add magic to the mix. This article details the benefits of engaging English learners in literature and fairy tales, and explores how drama can be enlisted to further mine their riches. An educator's case studies of language teaching through literature and drama projects are described, and the research question driving them highlighted: What is the impact of dramatizing literature on students' engagement in novels and second language acquisition? Research on the effects of literature, drama, and the fairy tale genre on second language education is reviewed. Reading and acting out literature and fairy tales hones all four language skills while also enhancing the Seven Cs life skills: communication, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, commitment, compromise, and confidence. Adding the frame of project-based learning to the instructional strengths of literature and drama forms a strong pedagogical triangle for second language learning. Fairy tales are easily enacted. English educators and learners can download free fairy tale scripts and spice them with creative twists of their own creation or adapted from film and cartoon versions. Providing maximum student engagement, tales can be portrayed with minimum preparation. Using a few simple props and a short script, English learners can dramatize The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, or Snow White in class with little practice. Engagement increases when teams act out tales on stage for an audience of family, friends, classmates, and educators. In fairy tale enactment projects, whether in class or on stage, students apply their multiple intelligences when choosing team roles: script-writing, acting, backstage, costumes, make-up, sound and lights, reporter, advertising, usher, writer's corner, or stage managing. The article concludes with a list of engaging language activities for use with fairy tales, and a summary of the benefits of fairy tale enactments for English learners.

Key words: English literature, drama, fairy tales

Literature and drama are each major power tools in the English language classroom. Combining them doubles their impact. The pedagogical strength of drama and literature squared has been summed up as follows: "By combining reading (literature) with seeing (drama), students find ways to immerse themselves in the actions, thoughts, and dialogue of characters, as well as the settings, sounds, and symbols in the literature" (Brinda,2008).The purpose of this article is to explore how engagement in literature, drama, and fairy tales benefits English learners. An educator's classroom experiences are presented as case studies which narrate how a turning point in teaching a classic literary text, an aha moment of spontaneous dramatization, sparked a research question: Would the use of dramatized literature projects enhance student engagement and make English language acquisition easier and more effective?

CASE STUDY 1: DRAMATIZING DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

Decades teaching English as a foreign language in Middle East university foundation programs led the educator to seize an aha moment and establish dramatized literature as an instructional centerpiece. The educator's turning point took place in spring 2012 when reading the first page of the simplified novel *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Dunayer,2005) with a class of intermediate (5-5.5 on the IELTS scale) English learners. The educator had been assigned to teach classic novels as an enrichment activity in a conventional foundation English academic reading - writing course.

The intense emotion, action, and verbs of specific movement in the paragraph under study presented golden chances for active learning.

> He put the glass to his lips and drank the mixture in one gulp. A cry followed. He reeled, staggered, clutched at the table, and held on. Staring and gasping, he swelled. His face turned black, and his features melted. 'I sprang to my feet and leaped back against the wall. My arms were raised to shield me from what I saw. I was overcome with terror. 'Oh God! I screamed again and again.' (Dunayer, 2005, p.122)

One student was reading the above paragraph haltingly, aloud. Struggling to utter the words, the student clearly

failed to understand them. Listening inattentively, the other students were even less engaged. Had they been engaged with the paragraph and the novel in general, they could have benefited culturally through the text's window on 19th century London, intellectually through engagement in plot, setting, characters, and theme, and as English learners through vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, and reading practice. However, the disturbing reality was that before the very eyes of the hopeful educator, students were missing a magical moment in English literature due to lack of engagement.

A revelation arose just in time. Could the scene depicted in the paragraph be enacted? The educator spontaneously requested two volunteers to stand, read, and enact the paragraph. Following a few seconds of surprise, two students were on their feet enacting the verbs of specific movement: reel, stagger, clutch, spring, and leap. Onlookers were energized, and in subsequent classes the whole class tried the actions in pairs. Embodying the actions, learners then explored ways to add dialog along with gestures, tone, and facial expressions. Experimenting with the use of classroom space beyond their chairs, students were up, active, enjoying, and engaged.

CASE STUDY 2: DRAMATIZING FRANKENSTEIN

Scrolling semesters forward, after staging novel scenes in class and as short flash performances in high traffic lobbies on campus, Halloween day in fall 2014 represented an opportunity for English through drama and the arts. The foundation English learners in the academic reading-writing course included several interested in acting and dance. The simplified enrichment novel was *Frankenstein* (Dunayer, 2005). Half of the semester had elapsed, and students had spent the daily novel hour actively reading, imagining, improvising, writing, and rehearsing novel-related vignettes. The idea of entertaining an audience on Halloween sparked intense interest, and students planned an outdoor performance for the central campus courtyard. They set about collaborating to create their performance agenda as well as flyers to circulate on campus. In the novel, Victor Frankenstein had told the creature to get out when he beheld the monster's unsatisfactory physiognomy, and students chose the Michael Jackson song "Beat It" (Jackson, 1982) to mirror that scene. They created a half hour outdoor show with the following sequence of silent courtyard actions performed by student actors to dramatic music, including "Beat It:" Dr. Frankenstein performs a heart transplant on the creature. The creature awakens and attacks the doctor. As they struggle and fight, a troupe of seven students in black and white make up, wearing bring reading to life monogrammed T-shirts and leather jackets separates the two scrappers, monster and maker. In V formation the troupe starts their flash dance to the tune of "Beat It." Following the dance, student actors playing the seven brides of Frankenstein wearing ghoulish make up and bridal gowns, stagger into the courtyard performing area, zombie-style.

Red velvet ropes cordoned off the crowd of over 100. Two students wore neon vests and served as security as the seven zombie brides frightened the crowd. The non-actors in the class put up quotes from the novel and related drawings on artboards flanking the performance area and stood on duty to answer questions and explain. These reminded the crowd of the novel's most dramatic statements and moments.

The audience of university students and staff passing by looked on enthusiastically, taking videos to share. The presenting class had become a team and they took pride in their performance. In subsequent days and weeks, class attendance, punctuality, and participation showed a marked improvement. Of his own accord, one student in the class created a trailer of the performance. The "Beat It" project applied the principle of multiple intelligences and learning styles as all members of the class contributed their particular talents to the project in small teams of their choosing: actors/dancers, sound, costumes, make up, posters and advertising, best essay judges in the Writer's Corner, and historian's log of rehearsals and photos. Meanwhile, in the writing component of the course, in depth knowledge of the novel was put to good use as students contrasted novel and film in their analysis/synthesis essay. English of the students, for the students, and by the students had taken center stage on campus through the Halloween Frankenstein enactment. The University newspaper, *The Voice of AUK*, devoted a full-page article to the Intensive English Program's Bring Reading to Life event of, describing it as follows:

> The play started with the scientist dissecting his beastly creation and then taking out a heart from a jar filled with preservative liquid and implanting the heart right into the creature. The creature then came to life and grabbed his creator and beat him up. It was at that moment that the dancers stormed the stage and broke up the fight. They then started dancing in a little routine to Michael Jackson's hit song *Beat It*. After the dance routine, female zombie-like creatures and brides-maids gave flowers to the creature. The performers then rushed and ran towards the audience letting out screams and shouts which effectively scared them. (Tineh, 2014)

Two years later in 2016, following more flash enactments of *Psycho* and *The Godfather*, as well as a stage enactment of *Pride and Prejudice*, English through literature and the arts developed into a foundation elective course on its own offered in the university's Intensive English Program. Dramatizing and drawing literature had brought English language teaching to life in foundation classes. The University approved a new elective foundation course called Bring Reading to Life focusing on English through literature and the arts. In spring and fall of 2016, English learners read, scripted, and enacted three classic literary texts on stage through this course, which is still on offer as an elective (American University of Kuwait Catalog, 2018, p. 197).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Engaging English Learners Through Literature

When students lose themselves in literature, they are immersed in authentic language contextualized in plot, character, setting, and theme. Through the medium of

literature, English learners can absorb grammatical, lexical, and orthographic elements of the language osmotically. Alongside this language development, literature enriches the student as an individual and a whole person about existential matters in life --love, hope, struggle, and strife. Literature opens the horizon of human experience to learners, inviting them to interpret, ponder, compare viewpoints, and wonder: "Who am I? What are my roots? Where am I going? What will I become?" (O'Shea and Egan,1978). At the same time, students can enrich their understanding of relationships, culture, and geography as they reflect upon the characters living within the pages. In his book *Literature and Language Teaching,* Lazar states: "Literature provides wonderful source material for eliciting emotional responses from our students and using it in the classroom is a fruitful way of involving the learner as a whole person" (Lazar, as cited in Mikešoá, 1993). Frey remarks that literature is "One of the richest gifts of people's culture that brings them together (Frey, as cited in Mikešoá, 1929). Contextualizing language through literature provides English learners with a win-win situation as they delve into themes that enlighten life and language. In his article, *Using Stories in Teaching English,* Khaleel notes that storytelling invites engagement because it is real language intended to be told, understood, and enjoyed by real people. Additionally, stories activate students' creativity and affective domains (Khaleel, 2017). Krashen, in his seminal research on language acquisition, highlights the need to lower students' affective filter in the classroom as a crucial requirement for new language intake. Stories can create this condition, thus fulfilling this need. Shazu highlights the potential use of literature as a springboard for a myriad of four-skills language activities as students read and reflect orally or in writing on the meaning of a poem, story, or novel. This researcher notes that, "Reading in literature is a combination of reading for enjoyment and reading for information. Therefore, it bridges the lacks in non-literary texts" (Shazu, 2014).

Engaging English Learners Through Fairy Tales

Fairy tales are folk tales showcasing fantasy beings, such as wizards, elves, fairies, and talking animals. Fairy tale heroes face a quest or test and often approach it through magic. Supernatural forces guide the hero through adventure, combat, fortune or misfortune, and eventually to a happy ending. Justice is done, virtue is rewarded, and the wicked are punished. Fairy tales are ancient and were bequeathed from one generation to the next for centuries before first being written down in seventeenth century France. Early audiences included adults as well as children. By the nineteenth century, these time-honored tales were being collected worldwide. During the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, fairy tales became a standard in libraries of children's literature but were still considered appealing to all ages (Lepin, 2009).

The late 1800s saw the earliest uses of fairy tales in language and literature classes (Mikešoá, 2006). As a unique form of literature, fairy tales offer the advantages of all literature to language pedagogy, as well as particular plusses. Linguists Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm collected and published their stories in the late 1800s in an effort to maintain the oral tradition of Germany. Entertaining children was not their intention; malevolent and brutal elements peppered their earliest tales. Over time, however, violence and cruelty faded away. Fairy tale versions suitable for all ages and audiences emerged and came to resonate through oral, written, film, and even cartoons versions (Hathaway, 2012).

Literature in general and fairy tales in particular could represent the solution to a problem faced by English language educators: the standard course books available may fail to engage students. Program authorities choose course books which instill reading skills such as skimming, scanning, and inferring via multi-paragraph articles on high interest themes such as travel, nutrition, art, and psychology. Comprehension exercises check students' understanding of main ideas and supporting details. However, although the subject matter is of high interest to administrators, it may not be to students. Traditional academic reading texts may fail to engage students in reading and may instead lead to boredom in class. In *Literature and Language Teaching*, Lazar writes "The texts traditionally prescribed for classroom use may generally be accorded high status, but often seem remote from and irrelevant to, the interests of our students. In fact, being made to read texts so alien to their own experience and background may only increase students' sense of frustration, inferiority, and even powerlessness" (Lazar, as cited in Mikešoá, 1993). As a result, students may fail to engage in the course books chosen for them and may even actively resist doing so, missing the benefits they are designed to foster.

Using fairy tales, on the other hand, attracts student engagement. Part of their magic as language class materials is that fairy tales are short and syntactically simple, thus easily approached. Tales in the language classroom take advantage of students' natural wonder, curiosity, and enthusiasm whereas common course books may not. They are especially suited to language teaching for several reasons, starting with their charismatic content. When the phrase once upon a time casts its spell, a portal opens, and students enter the world of magic and wonder. Wizards, goblins, and elves magnetize attention as they play out the power of good over evil, and wit, modesty, and honor over cruelty, royalty, and injustice. One researcher observed that whereas comprehension of traditional academic reading passages can be a passive process, fairy tales demand active reading by virtue of emotional involvement. Readers feel anger, sadness, fear, and frustration as they experience fantasy with awe (Higgins, as cited in Mikešoá, 1971). Furthermore, fairy tales enrich as they enchant. Ancient wisdom, history, culture, and values are transmitted in these stories. Students enhance their emotional intelligence and confirm the bedrock values of humanity as they see kindness quash evil and courage lead to victory. Justice is done in fairy tales. They transmit humankind's moral compass, trust in life, and faith in fairness. Heroes face danger and win in the end, and audiences witness right values triumph (Frey, as cited in Mikešoá, 1929).

From once upon a time to happily ever after, students remain in a state of fascination and flow. Language follows naturally. While spellbound, students absorb grammatical

patterns and vocabulary unconsciously. Sentences and clauses tend to be repeated in fairy tales providing language students repeated practice in phonology, grammar, spelling and vocabulary. Immersed in the story, students derive the benefits of language which is authentic and contextualized.

Grammar through fairy tales

Literature presents students with whole language learning opportunites in authentic context, from vocabulary to narrative to grammar. When students are engaged in story, they are acquiring language holistically, often without realizing it. "Pupils may be so absorbed in the plot and characters of a literary work that they acquire a great deal of language almost in passing" (Lazar as cited in Mikešóa, 1993). Khaleel states, "All skills, functions and structures may be taught by stories" (Khaleel, 2017). A form of literature, fairy tales are no exception. Lepin asserts that fairy tales are replete with opportunities to engage in and explore real language. He notes that since these ancient tales activate students' natural attraction to heroes, enchantment, and fantasy, language taught through them tends to flow and remain in memory. Structured in narrative form, fairy tales can be used to highlight past tense, regular and irregular verbs, and then feature present tense or imperatives when dialog is added. The predictability of narration as a rhetorical device quickens comprehension of fairy tales. With their vivid descriptions, fairy tales also contextualize adjective forms. Students can be asked to scan for adjectives and adverbs; this builds vocabulary in addition to students' grasp of comparative and superlative forms. For that matter, any form of grammar contextualized in an engaging fairy tale is more authentic than the disconnected sentences found in grammar books. The word order of interrogative versus affirmative structures arises organically through tales; students can be instructed to analyze the difference. Once engaged in a tale, linguistic elements brought to learners' attention tend to remain in memory (Lepin, 2009). Examples include structures repeated in classic fairy tale elements such as the imperative "Rapunzel, let down your hair," and the present perfect progressive "Who's been sleeping in my bed?" from The Three Bears, as well as the exclamatory "What big eyes-ears-teeth you have!" from Little Red Riding Hood. The commonly troublesome English structure too-plus-adjective can be correctly understood through the context of the too hot, too cold, and just right porridge in The Three Bears. Fairy tales are also ideal for conveying question structure and idioms (Haulman, 2012) and offer practice in direct and reported speech. Punctuation in direct speech can also be practiced through fairy tales, and students can be asked to convert direct speech to reported speech thereby practicing a range of tenses, time and place words, and pronouns (Lepin, 2009).

Vocabulary through fairy tales

Designed to entertain an audience, fairy tales represent fertile ground for vocabulary development. Lexical elements in fairy tales overlap with phonological elements involving alliteration, rhyme and onomatopoeia and thus tend to resonate in students' memory. A golden opportunity for language acquisition is the repetition of key words and phrases in fairy tales. Students anticipate classic repeated phrases, such as once upon a time, far far away, and happily ever after. Forests, castles, kingdoms, and cottages are vividly described, with unique vocabulary painting lively pictures in students' imaginations. Metaphors enhance the imagery in tales. Once engaged, students anticipate poetic devices and experience them in the context of magical plot elemets, readily falling under the spell of the pictaresque descriptions. Held in the web of meaning, fairy tale vocabulary is easy for English learners to absorb (Lepin, 2009).

Values through fairy tales

Engaging emotions and imagination as readers immerse in plot character, and theme, literature enlightens worldview and values in addition to language aspects. In the 1700s and 1800s, fairy tales evolved as instructional stories, inculcating honor and integrity in children (Haulman, 2012). In *The Young Misses' Magazine*, published in 1759, a French governess working in England compiled a collection of fairy tales published in France in the 1750s with the express purpose of training children and teenagers in morality and virtue. In the early 1800s, attempting to keep German culture intact from one generation to the next, the Brothers Grimm designed their collection of fairy tales in *Children's and Household Tales* to reinforce values and virtues among German youth. The personalities in fairy tales stand in stark contrast to each other as either virtuous or evil. Readers and audiences naturally identify with the virtuous characters and learn life values as heroes are hailed and culprits vilified. As characters try, try again, the tales show the power of perseverance, the difference between right and wrong, the importance of hard work, honesty and sacrifice, and respect for higher powers. Crucial to social control, fairy tales do more than entertain. They serve as a moral compass for audiences and point the way to lifelong values for civilized, successful life (Lepin, 2009).

Engaging English Learners Through Drama

Researchers discovered drama as a helpful approach to language teaching in the late 1960s. A modern researcher lists its strengths as follows: "Drama increases creativity, originality, sensitivity, fluency, flexibility, emotional stability, cooperation, and examination of moral attitudes, while developing communication skills" (Dervishaj, 2009). Grammatical, lexical, and syntactic building blocks create meaning through their use in quasi-real communication on stage. Students who perform their language skills for an audience tend to retain them. Modern language educators concur: drama fosters engagement, and engagement fosters language acquisition. With its dialogue and stage directions, all created to engage actors and audience, drama represents a strong arrow in a language learner's quiver (Fleming, 2009).

Engaging English Learners through Dramatized Fairy Tales: Advantages

What happens when the benefits of fairy tales as a compelling form of literature and the benefits of drama are combined in the language classroom? Literature alone, while authentic and

replete with language and life lessons, cannot be mined unless "we can get students to connect with a book on this kind of empathetic or emotional level. When students read a novel, whether young adult or classic, they only begin to enjoy it, care about it, respond to it, and want to read it critically when they have some personal stake in it. What's in it for them?" (Baxter, 1999). This is where drama comes in. A significant body of research validates the power of drama to engage students both intellectually and emotionally. Combining fairy tales and drama in the language classroom is a win-win situation. In class, dramatizing fairy tales can be achieved in two to three lessons with a few easily acquired props and a minimum of rehearsal time. Fairy tales can also be performed for school, family, and public audiences, adding more excitement to the experience. As a form of literature, fairy tales fascinate. Dramatizing literature creates engagement which, in turn, attracts language aspects. It follows that approaching fairy tales through drama also fosters language acquisition. All four skills – reading, writing, listening, and speaking – can be enhanced when English learners dramatize fairy tales in class or on stage.

Reading and writing benefits of dramatized fairy tales

For foundation and university students, dramatized fairy tale literature provides rich material for reading comprehension practice and character analysis (Hismanoglu, 2005). Research also shows that children and teenagers improve reading and writing through drama. More specifically, in US grades 4-12, results of 107 studies confirmed that "Drama instruction has a positive, robust effect on a range of verbal abilities. Clearly drama is an effective tool for increasing achievement in story understanding, reading achievement, reading readiness, and writing" (Hetland and Winner, 2000). The engagement achieved when dramatizing a fairy tale can be a springboard for writing scripts, paragraphs, essays, journals, and blogs, as well as reading articles and analyses related to the tale and its history.

Speaking and listening benefits of dramatized fairy tales

Acting as their respective characters, student actors must speak to be understood by both audience and co-characters and listen well to catch and react to crucial cues and lines. In a student actor's own words, ".when you pretend to be someone else, it's easier to talk in front of people" (Carson, 2012). This student comment reflects Krashen's (1981) research on lowering the affective barrier to promote learning of language skills (Carson, 2012). To be understood, student actors must perfect their pronunciation; mproved articulation is an outstanding benefit of enacting any form of literature, fairy tales included. Drama further enhances students' mastery over prosodic and semiotic features, such as gesture, posture, gait, expression, and gaze (Boudreault, 2010). Dramatizing fairy tales as a form of live literature involves intensive oral and aural practice throughout the project.

Memory benefits of dramatized fairy tales

Since Vygotsky's revolutionary research on the value of social interaction and play on cognitive development, neuroscientists have been studying how mood and emotion affect cognition and memory. Findings show that "learning in a positive emotional context increases retention" (Pogrow, 2010). Interpreting a scene from a fairy tale in English involves the whole person, mind, body, and soul, in the life-like use of language. Done as a group project, fairy tale dramaztization involves the whole class in an undertaking that is social, playful, and experimental. Under such Vygotskyian conditions, associated ideas and facts tend to remain in learners' long-term memory.

Grammar and vocabulary benefits of dramatized fairy tales

Through literature and fairy tales, English learners are exposed to the whole language in authentic context. With each turning page of a literary work, vocabulary and grammar come to life in learners' mindseyes. "Literature provides students with a wide range of individual or syntactic items. They learn about the syntax and discourse functions of sentences, the variety of possible structures, and the different ways of connecting ideas, which develop and enrich their own writing skills" (Hismanoglu, 2005). Through the process of dramatization, students revamp and recycle those same lexical items and syntactic structures when they choose the dialog they need for the script or create it anew from inspiration in the pages. Finally, students take the script they have written to the stage where they do their best to internalize the language they have placed there and find the acting skills necessary to convey its meaning and emotions to the audience (Fleming, 2006).

Multiple intelligences and learning styles benefits of dramatized fairy tales

English learners vary in their learning styles. The ground-breaking theory of multiple intelligences advanced by Gardner (1983) reminds us that a limited number students do well in traditional seat-based classroom activities designed to promote the acquisition of knowledge, which Bloom defines as remembering previously learned information, and comprehension, defined as demonstrating an understanding of the facts (Bloom, et al. 1956). However, these two domains are often based on memorization, and as a result the knowledge and comprehension gained tend to be ephemeral. Most English learners in fact do not thrive seated in traditional classrooms, but prosper instead via other learning avenues: visual, auditory, kinesthetic or tactile. Dramatizing fairy tales as a group project activates all these learning styles. The teamwork and multi-tasking involved in enacting a fairy tale, from reading the story to writing a script, viewing film and cartoon versions for ideas, choosing actors, sound and lights, music, costumes, backstage, and marketing/advertising, requires all of the multiple intelligences. Students choose the particular task which appeals to their learning style thereby finding and flexing their particular intelligence.

Life skills benefits of dramatized fairy tales

Language skills transmitted to English learners through dramatized literature come with a bonus package of

21st century life skills. The process of brainstorming, negotiating, collaborating, and experimentating all required to choose a fairy tale, cast roles, synthesize ideas, create a script, rehearse, decide how to act, conjure up costumes, commit to keep trying, and stay cool in the spotlight integrates crucial life skills and allows students to internalize them interactively. Included in the life skills package are the 7Cs: creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, commitment, compromise, and confidence (Koushki, 2017).

Transformative benefits of dramatized fairy tales

When English learners enact stories in class or for an audience, the experience can be transformative on several levels. Through the process of brainstorming, envisioning, script-writing, casting, trouble-shooting, and rehearsing, the teacher-centered classroom transforms into a beehive of student-centered activity where the teacher's voice is replaced by several student voices chiming in to plan, rehearse, act, and negotiate meaning. Furthermore, students bored by seat-based teacher-centered activities transform to live wires as they connect with each other, the audience, and the tale. Plot, character, and theme, which may have seemed boring when viewed flat on the surface of a desk, become highly charged and compelling. In the collaborative effort required to create, write about, and accomplish a fairy tale enactment, Bloom's learning domains shift from knowledge and comprehension of a literary work to higher order application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The experiential learning involved can also transform learners: leaders among students shift to higher confidence as they discover new inner strengths. The actors among them experiment with roles in life by transforming into other characters other times and places. Followers among students gain knowledge of backstage, sound and lights, costume and make-up, often resolving to take speaking roles next time as they gain self-confidence.

FAIRY TALE LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

Fairy stories lend themselves easily to a variety of language activities; a few examples follow.

Personal Creative Glossary

Students enter new words from the fairy tale in their personal glossary following any format they fancy, including drawings and designs. The Glossary should include a Quotations section for favorite fairy tale lines (Mikešoá, 2006).

Animated Choral Reading

In groups, students read aloud sections of the fairy tale, enhancing the experience with gestures, facial expressions, and varying voice intonation. Helping shy students to become more vocal, animated choral reading activates components of drama (Mikešoá, 2006).

Surprise Dictation

As classmates write, one student dictates a sentence from the fairy tale, but leaves half of it to be filled in. Students are free to complete the sentence in any way they wish, either predictably or with a surprise (Mikešoá, 2006), activating their knowledge of syntax and mechanics.

Listen Envision

One student reads a short scene from the fairy tale aloud, slowly and clearly. Classmates imagine and draw what they hear (Mikešoá, 2006), asking the narrator to repeat descriptive information as needed.

Hear What's Wrong

Using an illustration from the tale, a student displays it and describes it orally but with mistakes. Classmates listen carefully and compete to catch the incorrect elements (Mikešoá, 2006). The next step is to correct the mistaken information. This step can be oral or written. Corrections which are written can be reviewed in subsequent lessons to refresh learners' knowledge of the tale, and their memory of the mistake made. Spoken aspects can be recorded and played in subsequent lessons.

Seeing is Believing

To maximize engagement, the teacher reads the tale while students immerse themselves in it. Their goal is to let their imagination take the lead, visualize the action, and feel the emotions in the story (Mikešoá, 2006).

CONCLUSION

This article highlights an option for engaging English language learners in reading, writing, listening, and speaking through a creative, collaborative endeavor: dramatizing fairy tales. This approach dovetails education and entertainment while garnering the benefits of literature, fairy tales, drama, and project-based learning. The article traces an educator's case studies exploring the language acquisition benefits of literature dramatized as an enrichment activity in a foundation academic reading-writing course. Research in second language education through literature, fairy tales, and drama is described. Papers on this topic detail how English learners can enhance language prowess, powers of imagination, emotional intelligence, and cultural awareness by engaging and enacting a universal form of literature: fairy tales. Charismatic content and cultural enrichment add to the magic of fairy tales. Known and loved the world over, fairy tales distill the power of literature into a compact and accessible episode. While under their spell, students forget the struggles, disappointments, and sadness that may trouble and distract them. Within the tale, they witness good and evil, loyalty and betrayal, jealousy and selflessness, fear and heroism. They identify with the characters as good banishes evil, bravery is vindicated, and love survives. Powerful magnets to student

engagement, fairy tales illustrate universal values for life, thus mirroring the shared bedrock of humankind's culture. Unlike traditional English course books, fairy tales appeal to students' innate curiosity and attraction to fantasy. In class, dramatizing fairy tales can be achieved in two to three lessons with a few simple props and a minimum of rehearsal time. Fairy tales can also be performed for school, family, and public audiences, adding more excitement to the experience. Whether in class or on stage, fairy tale enactments provide students with both language skills and life skills benefits. By enacting fairy tales, students have a chance to shine.

Fairy tales represent a condensed and enchanting form of literature; drama and literature are known pathways for language acquisition. Combining all three – drama, literature, and fairytales, creates a powerful pedagogical triangle for English language education. With the phrase they lived happily ever after, students exit the portal back to the real world as they exit the stage, with enhanced self-esteem, refreshed cultural wisdom, and a host of language and life skills.

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