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Investigating The Effects of Radio Drama Activity in ESL Learning on Male and Female Students

Siti Aishah Taib¹, Nadzrah Sa'adan², Aminabibi Saidalvi³, Siti Nurmaisarah Fkhururazi⁴, Aini Ahmad⁵, Norhisyam Jenal⁶

^{1,2,3,4}Akademi Pengajian Bahasa, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Johor, Kampus Pasir Gudang, ⁵School of Languages, Civilisation and Philosophy, Universiti Utara Malaysia, ⁶Kolej Pengajian Kejuruteraan, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Johor, Kampus Pasir Gudang

Email: aishah711@uitm.edu.my, nadzr210@uitm.edu.my, aminabibi@uitm.edu.my, sitinurmaisarah@uitm.edu.my, a.aini@uum.edu.my, hisyam0324@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

Radio drama is becoming famous again due to the availability of numerous digital venues such as podcasts. Therefore, a study is conducted to find out the effects of radio drama on ESL learning according to the respondents' gender. The respondents were guided in creating and producing their radio drama whereby the language instructor monitored them during the process. After the successful production of radio drama, a set of questionnaires was distributed to find out the effects of radio drama on the respondents' English language skills and affective domain. 96 respondents answered and returned the questionnaire, and the data were analysed and presented by using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings revealed that there were significant differences between male and female respondents in reading skills, speaking skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Meanwhile, for affective domain, there was a significant difference between male and female respondents in motivation to learn English after the radio drama activity. Pedagogical implications of the study and future research are also discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Radio Drama, ESL Learning, Language Skills, Affective Filter Hypothesis, Gender Study

Introduction

Background of Study

Audio and radio storytelling are gradually regaining popularity, due to the various web venues enabled by digitization (Ek, 2016). Since portable listening devices have become more common, the number of people who like listening to audio stories like podcasts and audio plays has risen. Audio plays and radio plays are dramatised performances that use only acoustic sound to convey their message. A large ensemble of voice actors provides voices for the various characters and works together with musicians to create an audio play. An audio play may then be distributed via several mediums such as tape, CD, or the internet. On the other hand, as the name suggests, a radio play is aired over the radio. Additionally, the terms audio drama, audio theatre, radio drama, and radio theatre have been used interchangeably.

There are no visuals in a radio play; instead, listeners just focus on the sounds and spoken words (Maiullo, 2018). Speech has a dual focus: both the listener and the speaker are fully engaged in what is uttered. With no visual aids, the speaker must guarantee that his or her meaning is devoid of confusion and that each word and phrase are clearly expressed in order to be understandable. The style discourages quick or mumbled speech in favour of clear language to convey complicated concepts and activities.

Developing a radio drama can increase students' motivation for language improvement, while interschool podcasting and radio drama give students an authentic reason to interact and develop the play (Sze, 2006). Additionally, radio drama can foster student participation in a low-stress atmosphere that promotes oral communication and blends reading, writing, and listening abilities (Maiullo, 2018). Students can benefit from radio drama by honing their speaking, pronunciation, and intonation skills, as well as their collaborative abilities, as teamwork is required in developing a radio drama (Schuchat, 2005; Sze, 2006). Moreover, stimulating tasks and group dynamics (e.g., cooperating in small groups to accomplish a common objective) can improve language learners' motivation (Dörnyei, 2005).

Cooperative learning promotes teamwork since students have to work with their team members to accomplish their objectives (Chan, 2022; Taib et al., 2021). According to Olsen and Kagan (1992), student motivation can be elevated as a result of team accountability. Furthermore, cooperative learning often creates a more relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere than a conventional classroom environment. Consequently, students' affective filters might be lowered by this positive learning environment while learning a second language.

Gender has been a critical issue in research regarding language learning, especially in relation to how the disparities between male and female learners influence their language learning outcomes (Menard-Warwick et al., 2014). Disparities in language learning outcomes may indicate a comparative gender educational advantage/ disadvantage, and, more broadly, equality/ inequality in society (Chan, 2018). Numerous early studies disclosed females' superior performance in language learning (Ellis, 1994; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Spolsky, 1989), higher motivation for foreign language learning (Clark & Trafford, 1996; Powell & Batters, 1995; Sung & Padillar, 1998), and higher conformance to standard and prestige forms (Labov, 1972; Piller & Pavlenko, 2004; Trudgill, 1995), but little recent research has addressed the implications of radio drama on language skills and affective domain between male and female ESL learners. As a result, this study aims to investigate:

RQ 1: the effects of radio drama on language skills between male and female students,

RQ 2: the effects of radio drama on affective domain between male and female students, and

RQ 3: the significant differences between male and female students' perception on radio drama application in ESL learning.

Literature Review

Introduction

This section discusses radio drama in ESL learning, gender and language skills, gender studies on affective domain and the conceptual framework of the study.

Radio Drama in ESL

Drama exercises are unquestionably one of the most effective approaches and techniques for language teaching (Nikpalj, 2015). They equip students for future role-playing and

improvisation, together with language games that entail charade and simulation (Cindrić & Gregurić, 2019). Drama or theatrical exercises include attention, listening, memorization, monitoring, communication, interpretation, and language games, all of which help learners develop their word power and dexterity, fluency, and flexibility of English usage (Davies, 1990). Drama, in this sense, fosters adaptation, fluency, and communicative competence. Furthermore, drama exercises can take many forms when integrated into a lesson, including role-play, scripted-play, mime, and simulation. In language instruction, role-playing games are widely utilised to foster proficiency, spontaneity, and expression (Holden, 1981; Maley & Duff, 2009). Role-playing is primarily utilized to facilitate interaction, provide pleasurable experience, and thereby enhancing motivation (Ladousse, 2000). When the role-playing environment is significant and realistic, young learners effortlessly engage in "natural" communicative behaviours (Cindrić & Gregurić, 2019). Additionally, role-playing and dramatisations can also be recorded as an audio (audio drama) and broadcast on radio (radio drama).

Radio drama has long been acknowledged for its capacity to assist students improve their speaking abilities, particularly in terms of pronunciation and intonation (Sze, 2006). For instance, among Stanley's (2006) three proposed tasks for student podcasts, radio drama is featured, along with speech work and classroom discussions. Although producing radio drama is not a novel practise in ELT, with recent advancements in information technology, a compelling case can be presented to revive radio drama as an extra-curricular practice or reintroduce it into English language programme in schools. To begin, instead of cassette tape, recordings can now be done quickly on a computer or by using an MP3 recorder. Thus, aside from the technology, the recordings are completely free, and they may be copied, deleted, and distributed with a single click. Second, free and easy-to-use audio editing tools may transform editing process, which has previously been a tedious activity, into a joyful one. Moreover, incorporating digital sound effects clips, whether purchased or obtained for free over the Internet, is a simple process. Third, with the emergence of podcasting, a radio play can now reach thousands of authentic listeners worldwide, which is a tremendous motivator for students to develop a radio play.

Gender and Language Skills

According to research data from the past few years, female learners outperform male learners on various indicators of language achievement (Iwaniec, 2019), which include oral production accuracy (Chavez, 2014), general English examination (Gówka, 2014), accent judgements with regard to resemblance to native speakers (Polat, 2011), lexical accessibility (Fontecha, 2010), and vocabulary formation tests (Catalan, 2010). Meanwhile, in line with boys' poorer reading outcomes, a substantial literature reveals that boys are less attracted and involved in reading than girls (Hochweber & Vieluf, 2018). Boys have been found to show less positive opinion toward academic and leisure reading (McKenna, Conradi, Lawrence, Jang, & Meyer, 2012), give less value on reading (Durik, Vida, & Eccles, 2006), and possess lower intrinsic motivation to read (McGeown et al., 2012). Corresponding to vocabulary learning and gender, although some studies discovered that female learners utilized significantly more vocabulary strategies (Gu, 2002) due to their high motivation level (Catalán, 2003) and performed better than male students (Gu, 2002), a study by Lee (2007) revealed contradictory results, demonstrating that gender had no effect on the trend and occurrence of vocabulary strategy usage.

Gender Studies on Affective Domain

Numerous research conducted worldwide has revealed an association between language fear and gender. According to McLean and Anderson (2009), women experienced more fear and had a higher risk of developing anxiety than men. Wicks-Nelson and Israel (2006) also stated that anxiety was more visible in women than men. Self-confidence, competency, security, and superiority are among the characteristics that contribute to this phenomenon (Rafek, Ramli, & Hassan, 2018). Moreover, females are more vulnerable under specific conditions, whereas males have greater self-control and the ability to disengage from negative emotions. For instance, in her study on Japanese language class anxiety based on gender differences, Machida (2001) discovered that female learners were more worried than their male counterparts. In contrast, Kitano (2001) discovered that male learners were more apprehensive when learning a second language than female learners. According to the findings, male learners were more worried about speaking since they regarded their communication to be less proficient than female learners.

Conceptual Framework

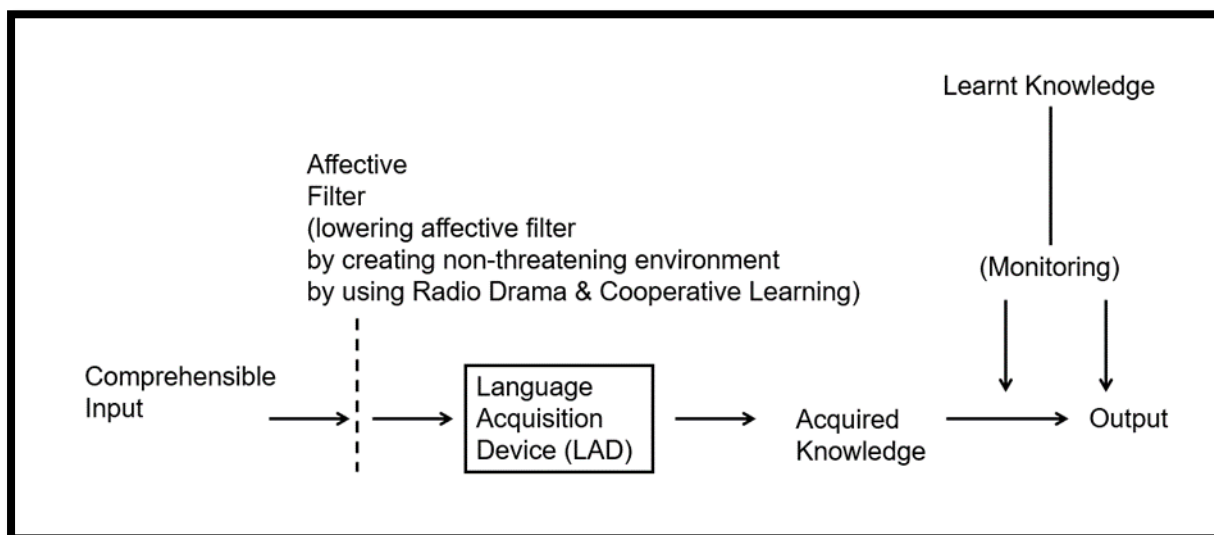


Figure 1- Conceptual Framework of the Study (Source: Krashen, 1982; Gregg, 1984; Olsen & Kagan, 1992)

This study (Figure 1) is based on the Affective Filter Hypothesis by Krashen (1982) and Gregg (1984). In the language acquisition process, the affective filter acts as a barrier when it is high. Therefore, by using Radio Drama and Cooperative Learning, a non-threatening environment is created to help lower the filter, hence more comprehensible input can be processed as the output. Moreover, learners' high motivation leads to better performance and high self-confidence, positive self-image and low anxiety level also help language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

Methodology

This study's population consisted of semester 1 students from UiTM Cawangan Johor Kampus Pasir Gudang. 112 students from 6 classes were involved in the study, but only 96 students completed and returned the questionnaire.

The instructor needed one class period to teach the radio drama's characteristics and production process. In addition, the instructor provided the students with some examples of

radio drama. Then, the students had to produce a radio drama that reflected 'Hope and dream.' Each production of a radio drama had a time limit of seven minutes. Students were also required to work in groups of at least three members to discuss and record the script. Additionally, the instructor recommended Audacity, a sound editing programme, for the students to use to fine-tune their recordings. Nonetheless, the students could use any platform to record and edit their sound. They had one month to finish the project. As a mentor, the instructor helped the students complete their radio drama project. After submitting their radio drama, they were asked to fill out a questionnaire.

The questionnaire (Table 1) contained 26 questions (20 Likert scale and 6 open-ended questions). It was divided into 4 sections: Section 1) Demographic questions, Section 2) Effects of Radio Drama on English Language Skills, Section 3) Effects of Radio Drama on Affective Domain, and Section 4) Radio Drama via Open Distance Learning. However, answers to only 15 related questions (Sections A, B, and C) were analysed in this paper to effectively address the research objectives.

Each instructor in each class distributed the questionnaire to the respondents. One learning session was allocated to conduct the survey after the successful production of the radio drama. For ease of access and data collection, the questionnaire was written in a Google Form. The Whatsapp application was also used to distribute the link to the Google Form.

Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed by using IBM SPSS Statistics 26 and descriptive and inferential statistics were utilised to present the findings. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine the normality of all Likert scale items, and Cronbach alpha was used to calculate their reliability.

Table 1-Distribution of Items in Instrument

| SECTION | | No. of Items |
|---------|---|--------------|
| A | Demographic Profile | 2 |
| B | Effects of Radio Drama on English Language Skills | 8 |
| C | Effects of Radio Drama on Affective Domain | 5 |
| D | Radio Drama via Open Distance Learning | 11 |

Findings

Introduction

This section presents the findings of this study. The first section presents the findings for normality tests and reliability tests. The second section presents the demographic data. The other sections present the findings according to the research objectives.

Normality Tests and Reliability Tests

The data were first tested for normality to decide the suitable tests and statistics to use in presenting the findings. Meanwhile, the reliability test measured the internal consistency of each scale, namely the Language Skills and Affective Domain scales.

Table 2-Tests of Normality

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|----|------|--------------|----|------|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Improveskills | .304 | 96 | .000 | .763 | 96 | .000 |
| ImproveReading | .296 | 96 | .000 | .769 | 96 | .000 |
| ImproveSpeaking | .314 | 96 | .000 | .743 | 96 | .000 |
| ImproveListening | .291 | 96 | .000 | .769 | 96 | .000 |
| ImproveWriting | .235 | 96 | .000 | .834 | 96 | .000 |
| ImproveGrammar | .256 | 96 | .000 | .793 | 96 | .000 |
| ImprovePronunciation | .318 | 96 | .000 | .744 | 96 | .000 |
| ImproveVocab | .248 | 96 | .000 | .792 | 96 | .000 |
| MotivatedtoUseEnglish | .202 | 96 | .000 | .805 | 96 | .000 |
| MotivatedtoLearnEnglish | .252 | 96 | .000 | .811 | 96 | .000 |
| ConfidenttoUseEnglish | .226 | 96 | .000 | .832 | 96 | .000 |
| ConfidenttoLearnEnglish | .263 | 96 | .000 | .805 | 96 | .000 |
| LessAnxioustoSpeak | .218 | 96 | .000 | .829 | 96 | .000 |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The Shapiro-Wilk Test (table 2) shows sig. .000 for every item, whereby the presumption of normality was violated (Pallant, 2016). Therefore, non-parametric statistics (e.g. median) were used to report the descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 3-Cronbach's Alpha for Language Skills

| Reliability Statistics | | |
|------------------------|--|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
| .920 | .922 | 8 |

The Cronbach's Alpha for Language Skills (table 3) scale was 0.920, suggesting very good internal consistency reliability.

Table 4-Cronbach’s Alpha for Affective Domain

| Reliability Statistics | | | |
|------------------------|--|------------|--|
| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items | |
| .939 | .939 | 5 | |

The Cronbach’s Alpha for Affective Domain (table 4) scale was 0.939, suggesting very good internal consistency reliability.

Findings for Demographic Profile

Gender

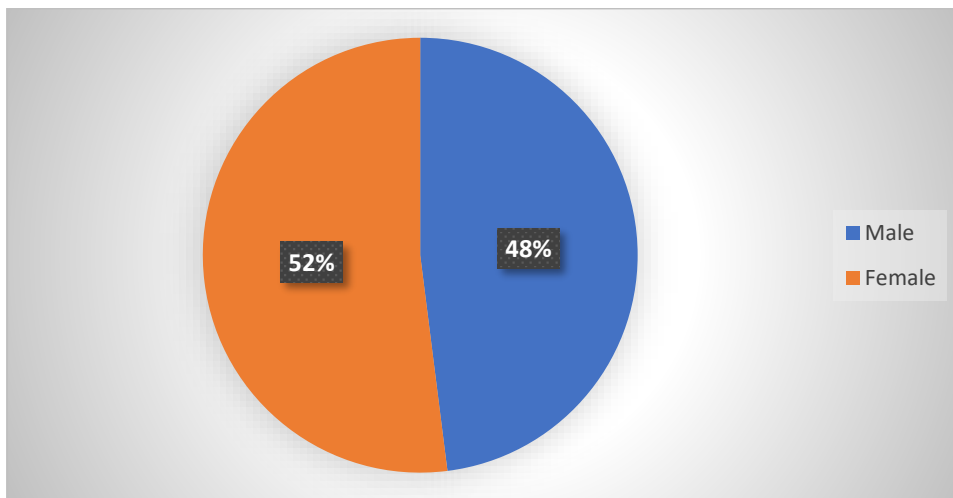


Figure 2- Percentage for Gender

A total of 96 respondents were involved in this study. 52% of the respondents were females and 48% of the respondents were males as displayed in figure 2.

Faculty

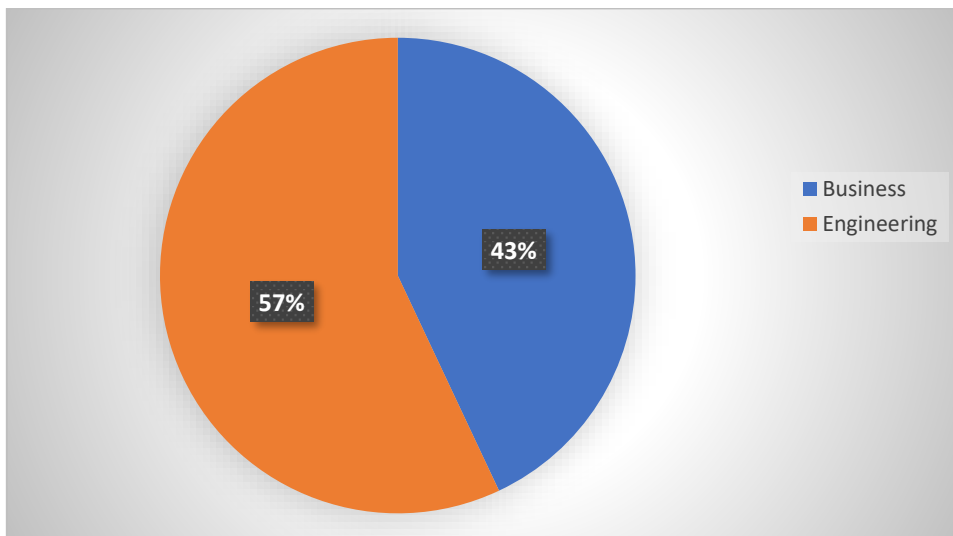


Figure 3- Percentage for Age Group

57% of the respondents came from engineering faculties while 43% of the respondents came from business faculty as displayed in figure 3.

Findings for Effects of Radio Drama on Language Skills between Male and Female Students

This section presents findings to answer research objective 1: to investigate the effects of radio drama on language skills between male and female students.

Table 5-Effects of Radio Drama on Language Skills between Male and Female Students

| Gender | | Improve Skills | Improve Read. | Improve Speak. | Improve Listen. | Improve Writing | Improve Grammar | Improve Pronunciation. | Improve Vocabulary. |
|--------|--------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Male | N | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 |
| | Median | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 |
| Female | N | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| | Median | 5.000 | 5.000 | 5.000 | 5.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 5.000 | 4.000 |
| Total | N | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 |
| | Median | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.500 | 4.000 |

Based on table 5, the female respondents strongly agreed that radio drama helped improve their English language skills in general ($Md = 5.00$), reading skills ($Md = 5.00$), speaking skills ($Md = 5.00$), listening skills ($Md = 5.00$), pronunciation ($Md = 5.00$), and agreed that radio drama improved their writing skills ($Md = 4.00$), grammar ($Md = 4.00$), and vocabulary ($Md = 4.00$).

On the other hand, the male respondents agreed that radio drama helped improve their English language skills in general ($Md = 4.00$), reading skills ($Md = 4.00$), speaking skills ($Md = 4.00$), listening skills ($Md = 4.00$), writing skills ($Md = 4.00$), grammar ($Md = 4.00$), pronunciation ($Md = 4.00$), and vocabulary ($Md = 4.00$).

Findings for Effects of Radio Drama on Affective Domain between Male and Female Students

This section presents findings to answer research objective 2: to investigate the effects of radio drama on affective domain between male and female students.

Table 6- Effects of Radio Drama on Affective Domain between Male and Female Students

| Gender | | Motivated toUseEng | Motivated toLearnEng | Confident toUseEng | Confident toLearnEng | LessAnxious toSpeak |
|--------|------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Male | N | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 |
| | Media n | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 |
| Female | N | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| | Media n | 4.000 | 5.000 | 4.000 | 4.500 | 4.000 |
| Total | N | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 |
| | Media n | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 | 4.000 |

Based on table 6, the female respondents strongly agreed that after the radio drama activity, they were motivated to learn English ($Md = 5.00$), confident to learn English ($Md = 4.50$) and they agreed that after the radio drama activity, they were motivated to use English ($Md = 4.00$), confident to use English ($Md = 4.00$), and less anxious to speak in English ($Md = 4.00$). Meanwhile, the male respondents agreed that after the radio drama activity, they were motivated to use English ($Md = 4.00$), learn English ($Md = 4.00$), confident to use English ($Md = 4.00$), confident to learn English ($Md = 4.00$), and less anxious to speak in English ($Md = 4.00$).

Findings for Significant Differences between Male and Female Students' perception on Radio Drama Application in ESL Learning

This section presents findings to answer research objective 3: to investigate the significant differences between male and female students' perception on radio drama application in ESL learning.

Table 7- Mann-Whitney U Test for Language Skills

| Hypothesis Test Summary | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|------|-----------------------------|--|
| | Null Hypothesis | Test | Sig. | Decision | |
| 1 | The distribution of Improveskills is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .273 | Retain the null hypothesis. | |
| 2 | The distribution of ImproveReading is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .022 | Reject the null hypothesis. | |
| 3 | The distribution of ImproveSpeaking is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .035 | Reject the null hypothesis. | |
| 4 | The distribution of ImproveListening is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .310 | Retain the null hypothesis. | |
| 5 | The distribution of ImproveWriting is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .173 | Retain the null hypothesis. | |
| 6 | The distribution of ImproveGrammar is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .157 | Retain the null hypothesis. | |
| 7 | The distribution of ImprovePronunciation is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .028 | Reject the null hypothesis. | |
| 8 | The distribution of ImproveVocab is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .018 | Reject the null hypothesis. | |

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .050.

Based on table 7, only four items had significant differences between male and female respondents which were radio drama helped improve reading skills ($p = .022$), speaking skills ($p = .035$), pronunciation ($p = .028$), and vocabulary ($p = .018$).

Table 8- Radio Drama Helped Improve Reading Skills

| Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Summary | | |
|--|--|----------|
| Total N | | 96 |
| Mann-Whitney U | | 1436.500 |
| Wilcoxon W | | 2711.500 |
| Test Statistic | | 1436.500 |
| Standard Error | | 124.725 |
| Standardized Test Statistic | | 2.297 |
| Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test) | | .022 |

A Mann-Whitney U Test (table 8) revealed a significant difference in radio drama helped improve reading skills of males ($Md = 4.0, n = 46$) and females ($Md = 5.0, n = 50$), $U = 1437, z = 2.30, p = .02, r = 0.23$.

Table 9- Radio Drama Helped Improve Speaking Skills

| Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Summary | | |
|--|--|----------|
| Total N | | 96 |
| Mann-Whitney U | | 1407.000 |
| Wilcoxon W | | 2682.000 |
| Test Statistic | | 1407.000 |
| Standard Error | | 121.850 |
| Standardized Test Statistic | | 2.109 |
| Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test) | | .035 |

A Mann-Whitney U Test (table 9) revealed a significant difference in radio drama helped improve speaking skills of males ($Md = 4.0, n = 46$) and females ($Md = 5.0, n = 50$), $U = 1407, z = 2.11, p = .04, r = .22$.

Table 10- Radio Drama Helped Improve Pronunciation

| Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Summary | | |
|--|--|----------|
| Total N | | 96 |
| Mann-Whitney U | | 1418.000 |
| Wilcoxon W | | 2693.000 |
| Test Statistic | | 1418.000 |
| Standard Error | | 122.122 |
| Standardized Test Statistic | | 2.195 |
| Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test) | | .028 |

A Mann-Whitney U Test (table 10) revealed a significant difference in radio drama helped improve pronunciation of males ($Md = 4.0, n = 46$) and females ($Md = 5.0, n = 50$), $U = 1418, z = 2.20, p = .03, r = .22$.

Table 11- Radio Drama Helped Improve Vocabulary

| Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Summary | | |
|---|--|----------|
| Total N | | 96 |
| Mann-Whitney U | | 1447.000 |
| Wilcoxon W | | 2722.000 |
| Test Statistic | | 1447.000 |
| Standard Error | | 125.009 |
| Standardized Test Statistic | | 2.376 |
| Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test) | | .018 |

A Mann-Whitney U Test (table 11) revealed a significant difference in radio drama helped improve vocabulary of males ($Md = 4.0, n = 46$) and females ($Md = 4.0, n = 50$), $U = 1447, z = 2.38, p = .02, r = .24$.

Table 12- Mann-Whitney U Test for Affective Domain

| Hypothesis Test Summary | | | | |
|---|--|---|------|-----------------------------|
| | Null Hypothesis | Test | Sig. | Decision |
| 1 | The distribution of MotivatedtoUseEng is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .067 | Retain the null hypothesis. |
| 2 | The distribution of MotivatedtoLearnEng is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .040 | Reject the null hypothesis. |
| 3 | The distribution of ConfidenttoUseEng is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .199 | Retain the null hypothesis. |
| 4 | The distribution of ConfidenttoLearnEng is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .147 | Retain the null hypothesis. |
| 5 | The distribution of LessAnxioustoSpeak is the same across categories of Gender. | Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test | .231 | Retain the null hypothesis. |
| Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .050. | | | | |

Based on table 12, only one item had a significant difference between male and female respondents which was the respondents were motivated to learn English after the radio drama activity ($p = .040$).

Table 13- Motivated to Learn English after the Radio Drama Activity

| Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test Summary | | |
|---|------|----------|
| Total N | | 96 |
| Mann-Whitney U | | 1413.000 |
| Wilcoxon W | | 2688.000 |
| Test Statistic | | 1413.000 |
| Standard Error | | 128.042 |
| Standardized Test Statistic | Test | 2.054 |
| Asymptotic Sig.(2-sided test) | | .040 |

A Mann-Whitney U Test (table 13) revealed a significant difference in motivation to learn English after the radio drama activity of males ($Md = 4.0$, $n = 46$) and females ($Md = 5.0$, $n = 50$), $U = 1413$, $z = 2.05$, $p = .04$, $r = .21$.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings and Discussion

This paper presents the effects of radio drama application in ESL learning on male and female students. To answer the first research objective, the findings revealed that females ($Md = 5.0$) scored higher than males ($Md = 4.0$) for all items in the language skills scale, except for radio drama helped improve writing skills, and grammar.

For the second research objective, the findings revealed that both females and males scored similar median ($Md = 4.0$) for all items in the affective domain scale except for 2 items. Females scored higher than males for the items motivated to learn English (female $Md = 5.0$, male $Md = 4.0$) and confident to learn English (female $Md = 4.5$, male $Md = 4.0$).

Lastly, to investigate whether the differences were significant or not, Mann-Whitney U Test was utilised to answer the third research objective. For language skills scale, four items had significant differences between male and female respondents which were radio drama helped improve reading skills ($p = .022$), speaking skills ($p = .035$), pronunciation ($p = .028$), and vocabulary ($p = .018$). These findings substantiate prior studies on gender in ESL learning whereby in reading skills, boys were less attracted and involved in reading than girls (Hochweber & Vieluf, 2018), showed less positive opinion toward academic and leisure reading (McKenna et al., 2012), gave less value on reading (Durik et al., 2006), and possessed lower intrinsic motivation to read (McGeown, Goodwin, Henderson, & Wright, 2012). For speaking skills and pronunciation, the findings corroborate previous studies whereby females outperformed males in oral production accuracy (Chavez, 2014) and accent judgements with regard to resemblance to native speakers (Polat, 2011). However, for vocabulary, while the findings support the studies whereby females utilized significantly more vocabulary strategies (Gu, 2002) due to their high motivation level (Catalán, 2003) and performed better than male students (Gu, 2002), they are also in contrast with a study that revealed

contradictory results, demonstrating that gender had no effect on the trend and occurrence of vocabulary strategy usage (Lee, 2007).

Meanwhile, for affective domain scale, only one item had a significant difference between male and female respondents which was the respondents were motivated to learn English after the radio drama activity ($p = .040$). In this regard, student motivation can be elevated as a result of team accountability (Olsen & Kagan, 1992). The respondents in this study also had to cooperate with their team members, and thus promoted teamwork in order for them to accomplish their objectives as revealed by previous research (Chan, 2022 & Taib et al., 2021). Consequently, students' affective filters might be lowered by this positive learning environment while learning a second language.

Pedagogical Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

The use of radio drama in ESL classrooms can be beneficial when conducted in an organised manner with guided monitoring by the instructors. Radio drama can help the students express their creativity and have fun in the process while communicating with their team members and learning English as a second language. The students are more motivated to learn English by producing their own radio drama as they are engaged with the learning process. The non-threatening learning environment also helps them focus on communicating in English instead of being anxious in speaking and making mistakes. Although female students scored higher than male students in motivation to learn English and confidence to learn English after the radio drama activity, the male students still reported positive score ($Md = 4.0$). Therefore, the radio drama activity in this study managed to help both genders in motivation and confidence to learn English. Thus, it is reasonable to consider radio drama activity as a lesson to be included in ESL classrooms. However, it is still crucial to provide specific instructions and samples especially for the students who are not familiar with radio drama. Technical processes in producing a radio drama can also be tedious and complicated, therefore, the instructors must be ready to help with these details. For beginners of English, it is advisable to keep the activity simple by avoiding a lengthy radio drama. Moreover, to cater to both male and female students, the topics should be equally interesting for them, hence, a ballot on topics and single-sex groups may be considered.

It is suggested that future studies investigate the use of qualitative methodologies such as interviews and observations to understand in-depth the learners' experiences and perceptions, as well as the learning process in using radio drama in ESL classrooms. Furthermore, investigating the students' performance according to language skills by conducting a quasi-experimental study with radio drama as a treatment might reveal interesting results.

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