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PLAY, PRETEND, AND PROMOTE:

SUPPORTING EARLY CHILDHOOD PRESERVICE TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CREATIVE DRAMA

A Dissertation in

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ABSTRACT

Qualified teachers are a crucial component of preschool programs for improving young children's social, literacy, cognitive, and academic outcomes. Research shows that children are more sociable, exhibit a more developed use of language, and perform at a higher level of cognitive tasks if their teachers have bachelor's degrees and specialized training in early childhood education. To educate high-quality ECE teachers, they need to be prepared more adequately with skills, knowledge, and confidence in providing different subjects and skill sets, and one important area concerning play and creative drama.

Program policies and school cultures are critical in influencing teachers' views and practices of children's play. Teacher preparation programs focus on not only improving teachers' competence to negotiate the politics of play but also including how to play with children. Play activities and improvisation are powerful play practices for teacher education programs. However, most teachers do not know how to play with children or include play in their daily curriculum. These teachers are often afraid to be playful, to giving the appearance of looking silly, and not knowing what is going to happen next. To enhance teachers' playing skills, they need to gain more specific and play-based training during their education. This dissertation is timely in its response to ECE's field concerns. Creative drama is an alternative and useful way to respond to teachers' needs of play.

Creative drama is designed and implemented to enhance both children's and teachers' skills and abilities. Creative drama activities create an interactive and positive learning environment that enhances participants' social relationships and knowledge construction. This environment has possibilities and innovation, and failure, risk, exploration, experimentation, participation, ideation, and intrinsic motivation. Moreover, creative drama supports problem solving, change, and learning, and conversation skills among students. These skills are essential

for teachers to understand students' different skills, cultures, and needs. In this environment, the appearance of looking silly, and not knowing what is going to happen next is acceptable and manageable.

The purpose of this study is to focus on preservice teachers' professional training by incorporating creative drama into education activities. Another aim of the study is to discover preservice teachers' understandings, teaching practices, and professional development experiences and dispositions (attitudes and confidence) regarding play and creative drama. Twelve preservice teachers participated in the Creative Drama Module for 15 weeks. The primary data sources were the interviews, including the demographic questionnaire, weekly drama module reflections, teaching practices, the researcher's journal, and documents, including practice notes, drawings, and artworks. The study's findings indicated that participating in the Creative Drama Module activities promoted a deeper understanding of creative drama and play education and resulted in preservice teachers appreciating the module as a worthwhile experience. The four major themes that emerged from the data were: (1) creative drama beliefs and understandings, (2) confidence to act and to teach creative drama, (3) communication skills, and (4) professional preparation.

After receiving the Creative Drama Module training, the preservice teachers were able to provide a broad and deep definition of creative drama regarding make-believe/fantasy play, teacher-guided play, expression, and creativity. They start to like to act and feel more comfortable about being in front of people doing creative drama activities compared to their pre-module thoughts, attitudes, and feelings. They also stated that their relationship and communication skills were improved after they experienced and created their own creative drama activities with their peers. At the end of the study, these preservice teachers endorsed the idea that a broad age range of children at school need to be exposed to creative drama because children have different

learning styles, and they discover things in different ways. Therefore, teachers need to improve their social skills, and they also really need to play. Creative drama training helps serve these needs.

The findings of this study suggest that participating in a 15-week Creative Drama Module can improve PTs' confidence, skills, and competence in integrated creative drama activities into the curriculum. Moreover, the module gives preservice teachers and in-service teachers an idea about how they can use play in their future classroom by practicing creative drama. The Creative Drama Module enables PTs to practice, reflect, and reframe their understanding of play and creative drama.

The module increased the feeling of ability, ownership, and motivation of PTs to integrate play with their teaching such that they are able to speak about the importance of integrating play and creative drama into other areas. Furthermore, this module has the potential to be inserted into the play courses and different teacher education courses through including improvisations, role plays, and warm-up games that are considered to be integrated learning in teacher education.

Issues and challenges in teacher education are discussed; and this study shows some creative drama activities for teacher education programs. Teacher education programs can play a critical role in empowering preservice teachers' professional identities and supporting their skills, knowledge, and beliefs in powerful and meaningful ways. I recognize that there is a need for further research and understanding about creative drama and how teacher educators can insert creative drama activities into their courses. While this study provided an example of how creative drama activities fit in the play course, more creative drama examples in similar courses are needed to improve preservice teachers' understanding and practice of creative drama.

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Chapter 1

Statement of the Problem

1.1 Background and Purpose

Children spend much time in early child care and education in the United States (Belfield, 2012; Snyder, Dillow, & Hoffman, 2008). Qualified teachers are a crucial component of these environments programs for improving young children's social, literacy, cognitive, and academic outcomes (Barnett, 2003; Lobman, Ryan, & McLaughlin, 2005; Whitebook, 2003). Research shows that children have been found to be more sociable (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001), exhibit a more developed use of language (Dwyer, Chait, & McKee, 2000), and perform at a higher level of cognitive tasks if their teachers have bachelor's degrees and specialized training in early childhood education (Barnett, 2003; Bowman, 2011; Howes, 1997; Whitebook, Gomby, Bellm, Sakai, & Kipnis, 2009).

The early childhood teachers help young children and families make a difference in their lives by building a relationship with children, family members, colleagues at work, and colleagues in related fields. Teachers fragmentally apply their knowledge into environments, and they are always open to learning employing their diverse roles and responsibilities, including attending to the details of curricula, using teaching methods, and assessing critical outcomes for children (Hyson, 2014). For this reason, early childhood teachers need to be prepared with skills, knowledge, and confidence in addition to knowing about different subjects and content areas (Swartz & Johnson, 2018).

Teacher education programs increase teachers' skills of examination, evaluation, and reconstruction of knowledge. These programs also include knowledge about children's development and learning, and how teachers facilitate children's learning across content areas.

Learning and development are dialectically interrelated (Vygotsky, 1978b), and learning leads

development by creating learning environments. In these environments, students can do what they

have not done before (Holzman, 2009). Moreover, teacher preparation programs should support

these environments and help teachers to understand how they can apply their knowledge in

specific ways. These programs should also help teachers adapt teaching to meet the needs of

children with diverse backgrounds and with special circumstances on impairment.

Play is a fundamental piece of children's education. Teacher education (TE) needs to

learn how they can integrate play with their daily curriculum. Also, teacher education programs

support their competence in play and include more play practices. Preservice teachers in these

programs participate in well-planned activities and lesson related to learning and teaching. They

should also learn how to design playful learning environments, and practice strategies that

enhance learning and teaching through play. Consequently, preservice teachers can support the

development of play skills and knowledge of children, and they can respond to children's needs

and interests (Wood & Attfield, 2005).

Teacher education programs teach preservice teachers about the importance of play. But

to teach preservice teachers about play is not the same as helping them learn to be playful

(Lobman, 2001). Many in the field of teacher education know that preservice teachers in early

childhood education are often afraid to be playful, to giving the appearance of looking silly, and

not knowing what is going to happen next. During their schooling, preservice teachers engage in

non-playful activities. Not surprisingly, by the time students enter teacher education programs,

they have lost some of the play skills. As teacher educators, we need to find ways to show the

importance of play, but at the same time how to integrate play in the curricula.

Creative drama activities address this play problem. Creative drama activities foster

interactions with people and materials in which they can reach beyond their current

understanding. It aims to create an interactive and positive learning environment that enhances

participants' social relationships and knowledge construction. Since creative drama is unpredictable and non-replicable, the participants co-create and enact the stories instead of following a ready-made story (O'Neill, 1995). In creative drama, participants interact, negotiate, collaborate, and reflect their past and present knowledge and experiences. Creative drama activities create spaces for possibilities and innovation, and failure, risk, exploration, experimentation, participation, ideation and intrinsic motivation becomes possible in these spaces. These spaces support problem solving, change, and learning, and these spaces leads the way of conversation among students. Students' different skills, cultures, and needs are important for teachers to understand. Also, in this environment, teachers understand that the appearance of looking silly, and not knowing what is going to happen next is acceptable and manageable.

Creative drama also recognized the challenges of early childhood teacher education. Cooper (2019) described four pedagogical challenges in early childhood care and education. They are (1) teachers' limited understanding of scaffolding, (2) the depression of expressive language opportunities, (3) the need for more play in the curriculum, and (4) teachers' limited understanding of multicultural and social justice. In creative drama, teachers can address these problems. During creative drama games and improvisation activities, participants support and mediate and enrich each other's learning experiences and meaning making. Therefore, they can overcome the difficulties with the help of more knowledgeable others. Participants create scenarios collectively using children's books, songs, poems, and their own stories. They encourage each other to articulate their thoughts through informal conversations. This enhances their expressive language skills. Moreover, participants reflect on their past and present knowledge, cultural dispositions and attitudes, and experiences. They can also raise multicultural and social justice issues in their play. In this vein, this dissertation is timely in its response to ECE's field concerns about educating teachers to teach diverse students. Creative drama is an alternative and useful way to respond to differences among students.

Field has strong theoretical bases. Vygotsky (1978a) recognizes this interaction as the zone of proximal development – ZPD which is the distance between a person's actual developmental level and their level of potential development under adult guidance and/or peer (expert) collaboration. His theory emphasizes that expert-novice interactions contribute to children's higher levels of cognitive understanding Environments are where children and adults can take risks and support each other to do what children and adults do not know how to do (Holzman, 2000). They need to provide background information on their third lens. Therefore, teachers and children make meaning together by creating the joint activity of learning-leading-development continuously (Holzman, 1995). When ZPDs is created, children are performing ahead of themselves. They are performing both as who they are and who they are not can be becoming. Through the performance, players engage activities that they do not take in everyday life (O'Neill, 2008). Creative drama activities foster interactions with people and materials that provide the participants with ZPD state and expansions in which they can reach beyond their current understanding. It aims to create an interactive and positive learning environment that enhances participants' social relationships and knowledge construction. Since creative drama is unpredictable and non-replicable, the participants co-create the stories instead of following a ready-made story (O'Neill, 1995). In creative drama, participants interact, negotiate, collaborate, and reflect their past and present knowledge and experiences

Creative drama programs are designed and implemented to enhance both children's and teachers' skills and abilities, such as preservice teachers' oral communication skills, critical thinking creativity, self-confidence skills (Athiemoolam, 2013; Dere, 2019) as well as writing skills and attitudes towards writing (Erdogan, 2013). Moreover, the teacher's relationships and interactions with children and other adults increased after teachers exposed to creative drama activities (Lobman, 2005). Although teachers believe that arts-integrated work such as creative drama would be helpful for their students, they expressed that a lack of professional development

(Flynn, 2010; Oreck, 2004) and time constraints (Stinson, 2009) were main problems to engage it into their practices. Teachers reported that they did not feel comfortable using the creative drama method, and they had difficulties in integrating this method into their curriculum and implementing it (McLauchlan, 2007: Metinnam, Kelessoglu & Ozen, 2004). To solve these problems, teachers need to have many different learning opportunities in their preservice education. Creative drama integrated courses expand their understanding of the characteristics of professional development and enrich their teaching repertoire with new ideas, skills, and confidence (Oreck, 2006). Creative drama training includes hands-on instructional strategies, and preservice teachers engage in planning, action, evaluation, and reflection with their pedagogy.

The primary purpose of this dissertation study is to examine how preservice teachers change their understanding with respect to children's play and educative process. Other aims of this study are to describe how preservice teachers participated and potentially benefitted from creative drama activities, and to find out how these actives impact their participation in play and to discuss how these activities contribute to their skills of creating, implementing, and evaluating playful curriculum. The study also aims to find the strengths and weaknesses of implementing a specially designed the Creative Drama Module in supporting these teachers as they constructed an understanding of creative drama education. Preservice teachers need opportunities to enhance their content and pedagogical knowledge through university education. Therefore, attention in this study is given to teacher preparation within the framework of the Creative Drama Module, including play activities, improvisation, and discussion through hands-on classroom experiences. Simultaneously teaching and performing creative drama activities while also researching, I position myself to better understand existing problems and seek for better directions to support professional preparation for teachers with drama techniques.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this case study of preservice teachers' engagement in the Creative Drama Module:

1. What are the preservice teachers' understandings of creative drama?

a) perceptions of the usefulness of creative drama activities in their future classrooms?

b) perceptions of the challenges of creative drama activities in their future classrooms?

2. Does creative drama support preservice teachers' skills in creating, implementing, and evaluating a playful curriculum?

1.3 Significance of the Study

ECE teachers need to be prepared more adequately with skills, knowledge, and confidence in providing different subjects and contents. Teacher education programs also need to focus on the practices of children's play. Play activities and examples, and improvisation techniques are powerful practices for teacher education programs. In this study, essential issues in teacher education and creative drama are highlighted. This study aims to contribute to creative drama, teacher education, and research.

This study highlights the perspectives of preservice teachers, thus adding to the creative drama literature by examining preservice teachers' understandings and experience of creative drama activities. Creative drama research has heavily focused on young children and early with some studies with preservice teachers about language teaching. This study extends the creative drama literature by focusing on the implications of creative drama in early childhood teacher education settings and providing preservice teachers' perspectives and experiences on creative drama.

This study aims for more understandings about creative drama activities that can inform the development of new approaches to teacher education programs and curriculum integration techniques for preservice teachers. This study provides creative drama techniques and activities for preservice teachers to be applied in their Preschool - 4th grade classrooms. This research discusses the developmental nature of creative drama and the potential play skills of the preservice teachers. This study holds that it is essential to more deeply explore preservice teachers' understanding of play considering creative drama. Furthermore, preservice teachers are encouraged to implement creative drama activities, and their professional learning is supported.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

Case study: An exploration of agents and contexts that are bound by time and space.

Creative Drama: Creative drama is an interactive process of persons and materials that generate a dramatic environment (including activating dialogue, theater games, image work, and role play) where students learn topics by playing roles and using other dramatic techniques while conducting a topic-related investigation.

Preservice teachers (PT): Preservice teachers are individuals who have education major studying but who have not yet completed their training to be a teacher.

Role Playing: This is the act of pretending to be somebody else, of taking on a role which may be from a script or a character you have created.

The Creative Drama Module: a set to be part of a course or learning unit that contains weekly creative drama activities focusing on the development of both content and pedagogical understanding of the preservice teacher reachable through active participation.

The Zone of Proximal Development - ZPD: ZPD is the distance between a person's actual developmental level and his/her level of potential development under adult guidance and/or peer collaboration.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

As you encourage the growth of artistic achievement through the medium of creative drama, you strengthen the cultural life of our nation and all nations. The inclusion of the arts in the education of children contributes to the enrichment of mankind.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

2.1 Early Childhood Teacher Education

2.1.1 Early Childhood Teacher Education

Children spend much time in early child care and education in the United States (Belfield, 2012; Snyder, Dillow, & Hoffman, 2008). Qualified teachers are a crucial component of these programs for improving young children's social-emotional, literacy, cognitive and academic outcomes (Barnett, 2003; Lobman, Ryan, & McLaughlin, 2005; Whitebook, 2003). As the American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education Focus Council on Early Childhood Education report states, 'High-quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers are essential for addressing pervasive and persistent educational problems such as low reading and math achievement, particularly of children from low socioeconomic circumstances' (2004, p. 3). Teachers with bachelor's degrees have richer language, more sensitive and less punitive teacher-child relationships, and more engaged children than teachers with less education have (Bowman, 2011). Research also shows that children have been found to be more sociable (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001), exhibit a more developed use of language (Dwyer, Chait, & McKee,

2000), and perform at a higher level of cognitive performances if their teachers have bachelor's degrees and specialized training in early childhood education – ECE - (Barnett, 2003; Bowman, 2011; Howes, 1997; Whitebook, Gomby, Bellm, Sakai, & Kipnis, 2009).

ECE teachers help young children and their families and make a difference in their lives by building a relationship with children, family members, colleagues at work, and colleagues in related fields. They fluently apply their knowledge in environments, and they are always open to learning more as they go along. They have diverse roles and responsibilities, including managing the details of curricula and teaching and assessment methods, and knowing critical outcomes for children (Hyson, 2014). Despite these differences, the starting point for most early childhood teachers is a professional understanding of young children regarding child development theory, and research, the curricula, and teaching practices (Bredekamp, 1996). Teachers also must have cultural awareness and an ability to change their teaching to accommodate different groups of students. Since the turn of the millennium, there is increasing recognition of diversity and minority groups (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, indigenous people, unassimilated migrants, those with disabilities) and of children being reared in a range of family circumstances (extended, sole parent, gay, and stepfamilies).

Moreover, teachers need to be more flexible in their expectations and evaluation of children in play. Similarly, teachers also need to be less judgmental as to why families might see play as a benign home activity, but have concerns about too much play in preschool and kindergarten, where they would prefer to see a skills-focused curriculum (Cooper, 2019). For these reasons, early childhood teachers need to acquire specialized skills, knowledge, and professional dispositions (e.g. confidence) in addition to mastering different subjects and content areas. Moreover, it is important to consider how coursework and field experiences can help teachers to be ready to work with children with different linguistic and cultural background and various abilities and exceptionalities (Daniel & Friedman, 2005; Swartz & Johnson, 2018).

Teaching is a comprehensive profession that includes recognizing professional responsibilities, understanding students' different skills, cultures, and needs, and being aware of a life-long learning journey. Besides, a century ago, John Dewey defined teaching in his book entitled *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902) as accessible, engaging, and compelling ways for children to interpret the fundamental concepts and methods of tasks. Although teachers cannot wholly control what students learn, they can increase their students' experiences with boosting their physical and social environment. In order to enrich the students' surroundings and develop their students' learning, teachers should interact with their own teaching experiences and create their meanings from what they teach (Dewey, 1938/1963). Teacher education programs, for this reason, need to help teachers create their teaching knowledge and utilize this knowledge in the practice as well as understand students' different skills, cultures, and needs. Teacher educators need to create learning spaces and innovative methods to engage, motivate, and prepare diverse preservice teachers for these diversities (Entwistle, 2011; Kinzie, 2011).

Teacher education programs improve teachers' examination, evaluation, and reconstruction of knowledge. These programs have two concepts: (1) Knowledge for Teaching: The "What" of Teacher Education and (2) Program Designs and Pedagogies: The "How" of Teacher Education (Darling-Hammond, 2006). The knowledge for teaching includes (a) knowledge of learners and how they learn and develop within social contexts, (b) understanding of curriculum content and goals, and (c)understanding of and skills for teaching, including content pedagogical knowledge and knowledge for teaching diverse learners. Program Designs and Pedagogies consist of (a) a common, clear vision of good teaching that permeates all course work and clinical experiences, (b) well-defined standards of professional practice and performance, (c) a strong core curriculum taught in the context of practice and grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development and learning, and (d) an understanding of social and cultural contexts, curriculum, assessment, and subject matter pedagogy. The programs are

also following the foundational components of the Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP). DAP is built upon fundamental principles: knowing children well; establishing challenging and achievable goals; using teaching practices that align with the children's ages and development; and research-based, child development knowledge (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009)

Teacher training programs include children's development and learning, and how teachers facilitate children's learning across the content areas. As Vygotsky explains, learning and development are interrelated and dialectic (1978b), and learning leads development by creating learning environments. In these environments, students can do what they do not yet know how to do (Holzman, 2009). Moreover, teacher preparation programs should support teachers to understand how they can apply their knowledge in specific programs. These programs should also help teachers consider the program adaptations for the needs of children who have diverse backgrounds.

In addition to teacher education programs, professional organizations are another source of information about what teachers should know and be able to do. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has been working on improving the qualifications of early childhood teachers and standards of practice in programs for young children since it was founded in 1926. NAEYC is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and the world's largest professional organization of early childhood educators. NAEYC's mission is to act on behalf of the needs, rights, and well-being of all young children from birth through age 8.

NAEYC's vision is to set standards and implement systems for assessing and recognizing programs that meet these standards. For NAEYC, all children deserve high-quality early childhood education and teachers. Early childhood teachers are most effective when they have the specialized education and continuing supports that allow them to meet the diverse needs of all young children and are recognized for the critical contributions they make to the nations' future (Bredekamp, 2011; NAEYC, 2011). For this reason, NAEYC established standards for teacher

preparation at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate-degree levels (NAEYC, 2011). NAEYC recognizes early childhood associate's degree programs in institutions of higher education through its Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation program and early childhood baccalaureate and advanced degree programs in schools of education accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation accredits programs serving children birth through kindergarten that meet NAEYC's early childhood program standards (Bredekamp, 2011). These standards goals give a critical role in ensuring high-quality experiences of young children and their teachers (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009). Many presented over 20 years ago, still remain current goals of the field. NAEYC outlined six core standards that describe what all early childhood professionals should be prepared to know and do: Promoting Child Development and Learning; Building Family and Community Relationships; Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families; Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families; Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum; and Becoming a Professional.

In this study, creative drama helps preservice teachers achieve these standards. Preservice teachers in early childhood degree programs need to understand young children's characteristics and needs, and the multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning. These teachers are also learning how to create a healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging environment for each child. Creative drama provides developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools for these preservice teachers to connect with children and families, and this creative drama atmosphere positively influences each preservice teachers and their future children's development and learning.

In addition to NAEYC, other professional organizations are important sources of information about what teachers should know and be able to do. The National Board of

Professional Teaching Standards (2016) recommended essential knowledge for teachers, such as understanding young children, promoting child development and learning, and implementing integrated curriculum, assessment, and multiple teaching strategies. The Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy of the National Research Council (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001) also addressed that teacher education programs specific foundational knowledge of development of children's social and affective behavior, thinking, and language; knowledge of teaching and learning and child development; information about how to provide rich conceptual experiences that promote growth in specific content areas; and knowledge of effective teaching strategies, subject matter content, assessment procedures, and the variability among children. These organizations addressed extensive content knowledge in preparation for teaching young children (Bowman, 2011), and this professional development increases the quality of early education (Burchinal, Hyson, & Zaslow, 2011).

Despite content standards, there is a gap between professional standards and the practice of teachers. In October 2011, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan noted that two-thirds (approximately 62 percent) of new teachers reported feeling unprepared (as cited in Banks, Jackson, & Harper, 2014, p.9). In the study of teachers' perceptions of their professional preparation, Ryan, Ackerman, and Song (2005) found that less than half of 689 teachers felt that their skills helped them to work with children. Ray, Bowman, and Robbins's (2005) study looked at diversity requirements in 226 bachelor's-level early childhood teacher education programs across the country, only seven percent of programs report that they require students to teach in a diverse setting. Small percentages of teachers implement practices they learned during their professional development, and they did not receive ongoing support for their implementation (Suhrheinrich, 2011). They did not feel that their professional development improved their professional competence (McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, 2016). La Paro & King (2019) discussed that traditional methods of professional development, which are one-shot

lectures, workshops, in-service days, and professional conferences, provided little opportunity to implement and practice content and applications for teachers. These are very important because it is evident that teachers need to have different professional development methods.

In concordance with this idea, Lobman, Ryan, and McLaughlin (2005) recommended cultural diversity and special needs of children and domain-specific knowledge should be considered for teacher education programs. For this reason, they created the preschool teacher certification program that encouraged teachers to play and improved repertoire of pedagogies in New Jersey, and their study showed a promising effort. Ryan and Northey-Berg (2014) have addressed that program policies and school cultures are critical in influencing teachers' views and practices of children's play. An obstacle to forming positive attitudes about play is when school readiness or academic learning is more important than playing according to the school administers and parents; teachers have had a hard time to give priority to playing.

Teacher education programs teach preservice teachers about the importance of play. But to teach preservice teachers about play is not the same as helping them learn to be playful (Lobman, 2001). Many in the field of teacher education know that preservice teachers in early childhood education are often afraid to be playful, to giving the appearance of looking silly, and not knowing what is going to happen next. During their schooling, preservice teachers engage in non-playful activities. Not surprisingly, by the time students enter teacher education programs, they have lost some of the play skills. As teacher educators, we need to find ways to show the importance of play, but at the same time, how they integrate play in their curriculums.

Creative drama activities address this play problem. Creative drama activities foster interactions with people and materials in which they can reach beyond their current understanding. It aims to create an interactive and positive learning environment that enhances participants' social relationships and knowledge construction. Since creative drama is unpredictable and non-replicable, the participants co-create the stories instead of following a

ready-made story (O'Neill, 1995). In creative drama, participants interact, negotiate, collaborate, and reflect on their past and present knowledge and experiences. Creative drama activities create spaces for possibilities and innovation, and failure, risk, exploration, experimentation, participation, ideation and intrinsic motivation becomes possible in these spaces. These spaces support problem solving, change, and learning, and these spaces leads the way of conversation among students. These skills are important for teachers to understand students' different skills, cultures, and needs. In this environment, the appearance of looking silly, and not knowing what is going to happen next is acceptable and manageable.

Creative drama also recognized the challenges of early childhood teacher education. Cooper (2019) described four pedagogical challenges in early childhood care and education. They are (1) teachers' limited understanding of scaffolding, (2) the depression of expressive language opportunities, (3) the need for more play in the curriculum, and (4) teachers' limited understanding of multicultural and social justice. According to Cooper (2019), teachers have a limited understanding of scaffolding, and they do not know how to use mediations properly towards children's new behaviors and ways of thinking. Copple and Bredekamp (2009) expressed that teachers need to know how and when to scaffold children's learning. They need to provide enough assistance for each child to perform at a skill level. Then, they need to reduce this support gradually when a child begins to master the skill. Teachers also set the stage for the next skill of children. During this individual mediation, they encourage children to articulate their thoughts through informal conversations with teachers and peers. Using songs, rhymes, chanting, nursery rhymes, read aloud books, and dramatizations augment young children's oral and expressive language. For the academic vocabulary acquisition, teachers need to remember that, when fostered, word meanings arise naturally in early childhood classroom and across the curriculum.

Another challenge in early childhood teacher education is the need for more play in the curriculum. The threat to play in modern preschools and kindergartens is limited to not only imaginative play but also physical, rule-based play, such as Simon Says and games with rules in the such as Candy Land. Academic needs and expectations cause the diminishment of all types of play. Furthermore, preservice teachers are less exposed to these play types in the field. Teacher preparation programs need to help preservice teachers understand and rewarded for their work around play's academic underpinnings and long-term impact.

The last challenge is teaching young children how to operationalize multicultural and social justice education in ways meaningful to children under 8. A few teacher preparation programs can have adequate time to studying multicultural practice in depth. This limitation can lead to a lack of background knowledge and teachers' performance to show surface differences among peoples and cultural groups in the field (Derman-Sparks & Edwards, 2010). Teaching multiculturally is not limited to personal events. It needs to include holidays, home life, cultural dispositions and attitudes, home-town plants and animals, equity, fairness, social expectations.

With using creative drama activities, teacher educators can address, discuss, and diminish these challenges. During creative drama games and improvisation activities, participants mediate and enrich each other's learning experiences and meaning making. Therefore, they can overcome the difficulties with the help of more knowledgeable other. Participants create scenarios collectively which using children's books, songs, poems, and their own stories. They encourage each other to articulate their thoughts through informal conversations, which enhances their expressive language skills. Moreover, participants reflect on their past and present knowledge, cultural dispositions and attitudes, and their experiences and they can raise multicultural and social justice issues in their play. Therefore, teachers use this form of play enriched with collaborations and interactions in their curriculums. In this vein, this dissertation is timely in its

response to ECE's field concerns about educating teachers to teach diverse students. Creative drama is an alternative and useful way to respond to differences among students.

2.1.2 Play in Early Childhood Teacher Education

Young children understand their environment by exploring the world through sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell, engaging in imaginative play, observing and interacting with others, looking at children's books, and expressing ideas through language and art. Moreover, social interactions and explorations of objects play a significant role in their learning process. Dewey thinks that purposeful interaction with the environment helps children construct the meaning of life (1938/1963). Both Vygotsky (1934/1986) and Gardner (1999) agree that social interactions and personal ways of thinking influence meaning making. Lobman (2010) added that 'in play, children are not alienated from their creative abilities. Rather than being passive recipients of knowledge, they are the active creators of the very activity that produces opportunities for learning and development' (p. 203).

In early years' settings, involvement is the crucial element of the teaching and learning process. Theodotou (2015) found that when a child is involved in an activity, external factors cannot distract the child, and the child persists to complete the activity. An effective learning and teaching process not only is linked with a child's involvement but also is associated with teacher's engagement. In order to help teachers learn how they can integrate play into their daily curriculum, teacher education programs must support preservice teachers' competence in play by including more instruction and practices connected with play.

NAEYC emphasizes the importance of play in children's lives and education (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009). Nørgård, Toft-Nielsen and Whitton (2017) asserted "Play is ubiquitous and normal in childhood, but play in adulthood is less well understood, even more so when it comes

to being playful in higher education" (p. 274). For this reason, early childhood teacher education (ECTE) programs need to create spaces and experiences for preservice teachers as adult learners to explore and to experience play in higher education settings. These programs can thereby develop preservice teachers' skills, understanding, and awareness about play and learning (Blom & D'Amico, 2020).

When teachers receive in their training program well-planned play-related approaches to learning and teaching, they can learn how to design playful learning environments, and practice strategies that enhance learning and teaching through play. As a result, new teachers are in better position to support effectively the development of specific skills and knowledge of children, and respond to their needs and interests (Wood & Attfield, 2005). They are in a better position to apply constructivist theories. In the classroom, constructivism in encouraging students to ask questions, investigate, and to come up with problems on their own and to solve problems. Students are supported to follow their path in creating their knowledge. Children reflect on their actions and their ability to explain shows how their understanding is changed. In such teacher education programs, each student's learning path is different. Teacher education programs having play is related to constructivism and supports preservice teachers' learning and meaning making.

2.1.3 Theoretical Frameworks for Early Childhood Teacher Education

Constructivism is a theory that explains how people learn and construct their understanding and knowledge of the world by experiencing and reflecting (Von Glasersfeld, 1989). According to Waite-Stupiansky (2017), constructivism was named after Jean Piaget's theory because "it represents his idea about how learning occurs" (p. 4). In constructivism, interactions with the environment are significant to make meaning making during the learning process (Dawson & Lee, 2018). In this process, people are active creators of their knowledge by

asking questions, exploring, and analyzing what they know. They build new knowledge using their previous learning and make meaning from their experiences. Constructivism take a place on the short-term learning and long term in stage-like qualitative development.

Constructivism has roots in the work of Dewey (1938/1963), Piaget (1962, 1969), and Vygotsky (1962). John Dewey did not believe in memorizing and direct teaching in the schools. He thought that students need to engage and practice in the real world. He proposed that students should learn by doing, and that knowledge is constructed through experience and social interactions (Edwards, 2006; Livingston, 2003). Students and teachers learn together, which reflects shared voices in negotiated learning experiences. Piaget (1962, 1969) expressed, in viewing constructivist presence at work on the short term, that learning is a dynamic process during which learners actively construct knowledge by creating and testing their theories of the world.

Constructivism explains how people learn and construct their understanding and knowledge of the world by experiencing and reflecting. In constructivism, interactions with the environment are significant to mean making during the learning process (Dawson & Lee, 2018). Vygotsky (1962) believes that knowledge is constructed from interactions with others. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory considers the development to be a complex interplay between the processes of natural, biologically determined development and the cultural development created by the interaction of a growing individual with other people (Bodrova & Leong, 2015). He states that language is the primary tool to promote thinking, develop reasoning, and supporting cultural activities like reading and writing. His theory is built on the relationships between thought and language. This relationship starts in early infancy and take shape when the child uses the gestures, sounds, and spoken word to reflect what she thinks. As the child develops, she builds more interaction by using more speech. Children solve their problems with their languages, eyes, and also hands. Vygotsky figures that the speech can be a repertoire of problem-solving strategies.

With using language, children can solve problems strategically and think to own their own (Vygotsky, 1978a). Fisher (1995) also agrees that children interact and collaborate with others and understand situations. Therefore, they bring together ideas and build new information on their previous learning.

Children's learning is boosted when they engage and interact with other people. Vygotsky (1978a) emphasizes that these interactions contribute to development and children's higher levels of cognitive understanding. He explains this increased understanding with the concept of the zone of proximal development - ZPD. ZPD is the distance between a person's actual developmental level and the level of potential development under adult guidance and/or peer collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). ZPD is a process or an activity where children can complete a task that is too difficult to succeed on their own with the teacher's help. Vygotsky called 'zone' because he assumed that children's development is a continuum of skills and competencies at different levels of mastery. The skills and competencies are limited in the Zone, but they will develop. While the lower limit of the Zone is that what children can learn independently, the upper limit of the Zone is that what children can learn by watching and talking to expert peers and teachers. Proximal refers to describe those skills and competencies which are closest to emerge at a specific time.

The teachers' assistance, guidance, and directions in children's ZPD are called mediation. Mediation gives children opportunity to practice their skills on the same task on their own and achieve new learning with help from adults and expert peers. Children solve problems collaboratively and co-construct their knowledge with their teacher's or peers' support (Bredekamp, 2011) in a cultural context (Karpov, 2005).

Vygotsky (1987) also makes the connection between ZPD and play, 'In play, a child through he behaves beyond hid average age, above his daily behavior, in play it is as though he were a head taller than himself' (p.102). He indicates that in play, children can do what they do

not yet know how to do in non-play situations by rules and imaginary situations. During their

play, children create an imaginary situation, take on and act out roles, and follow the rules.

Daniel Elkonin was a colleague of Vygotsky who continued his work on play and developed a

comprehensive theory. Elkonin's theory provided a children's play framework with various

cognitive, speech, and emotional deficits, studies of specific mental functions as they are

manifested in play, and studies of social development (Bodrova & Leong, 2015). Elkonin

enriched Vygotsky's idea that play creates a child's ZPD with concrete details about the

mechanisms involved in elevating a preschool child to the level where he is "a head above

himself." Elkonin (1978) described play as the "giant treasure chest of creativity" available to a

growing individual. Elkonin (2005) described the main structural elements of play as roles,

pretend actions, the use of props, and the relationships children enter as they play. The center of

make-believe play is the role a child acts out. During pretend actions, children use props and

build relationships between play partners. Play partners engage in play specific communication,

stepping into and out of the roles they are playing. Therefore, children maintain flow of play by

setting the rules.

Children not only are rule followers but also discover that they are rule and role creators

(Newman & Holzman, 2013). When ZPDs is created, children are performing ahead of

themselves. Moreover, older children and adults do not stop being who they are, but they are also

not totally constrained by who they are during performing (Lobman, 2011).

Newman and Holzman (2013) expand Vygotsky's ZPD theory and propose a concept of

learning and development as a creative improvisational activity. ZPD is a range of abilities what

the child already knows with more advanced participation, and it facilitates the child's

development. Therefore, adults can mediate learning and teach new skills within the child's ZPD.

Newman and Holzman (1997) explain, 'the ZPD was Vygotsky's extraordinary discovery of the

proper unit of study for understanding uniquely human activity, most especially learning and

development and their relationship, and, thereby all 'mental' activities' (p. 65). The dialectic

relationship between the activity of creating the ZPD and the development itself that creates ZPD

occurs:

> Improvisation is an activity of collaboration, transformation, and discovery. Performing improvisationally is working with everyone and everything available in a continuous creative process. In a Vygotskian sense, improvising is a zpd for performing conversation. Like the language games that adults and children who are learning to speak play, it is the creative activity of making meaning together. Just as children become speakers through this process, adults too become more creative and collaborative communicators when they are supported to "babble." Improvisation creates a developmental stage that shares the following features with Vygotsky's zpd: 1) It supports participants to embrace the unexpected and take risks, 2) It develops their capacity to listen, respond, and build with others, 3) It provides a context for them to interact in new and creative ways, 4) It focuses attention on the "how" and not just the "what" of communication and conversation (Newman & Holzman, 2014, p.24).

ZPD is creating environments where children and adults take risks and support each other

to do what they do not know how to do (Holzman, 2000). Therefore, teachers and children make

meaning together by creating the joint activity of learning-leading-development continuously and

with activism (Holzman, 1995).

Newman and Holzman (2014) called this meaning making as a theory of performance,

which means that a child is a 'head taller' than himself in his performance. Babies and toddlers

learn through playing, and gradually they perform whom they are becoming. When they play,

they are performing both as who they are and who they are not. Through the performance, players

engage in activities in ways that they cannot do in everyday life (O'Neill, 2008) and create a

space for development. Teachers need to learn how to set up the environment and materials with

children, to work in this space promising new and higher forms of child development.

2.1.4 Sociocultural Constructivism in the Classroom and the Role of Teachers

A sociocultural constructivist classroom is an environment in which children become active learners who make choices and explore experiences that boost their development. Children are challenged developmentally appropriate tasks, demands and questions, and to improve academic, physical, social, and emotional growth. In these classrooms, teachers encourage group work respectfully. They create an atmosphere where children explore multiple themes and subjects within a topic in flexible time.

Play is the highest level of preschool and kindergarten development (Elkonin, 2005; Vygotsky, 1987). During play, children create rules of play and imaginary situations, and also children can follow rules that adults create for them. Therefore, children can extend their play with adult guidance (Vygotsky, 1987). Children's development of abilities depends on their interactions with their peers, siblings, parents, teachers, caregivers, and other individuals. Interactions within play help children understand that other players have perspectives different than their own. Play helps children increase their social and emotional competence and participate in activities and school settings. Consequently, the theory suggests that teachers of young children need to take play seriously as a powerful engine of development (Bodrova & Leong, 2015).

The primary role of teachers in this environment is to guide children by facilitating activities and providing learning opportunities. Teachers start a conversation by asking questions and stimulating children's curiosity (Bada, 2015). Teachers in sociocultural constructivist classrooms not only observe and explore children's skills but also guide, encourage, and support them as they build relationships with them. Teachers also contribute to children's learning and cognitive growth by creating learning contexts, facilitating activities, and encourage children's engagement. DeVries and Zan (1994) suggest that teachers need to engage children as active

participants in the educational process and develop lessons based on their interests and thoughts and with using play.

Vygotsky also relies on play's power and says, 'In play, a child is always above his average age, above his daily behavior; in play, it is as though he were a head taller than himself. As in the focus of a magnifying glass, play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form; in play, it is as though the child were trying to jump above the level of his normal behavior' (1966, p.16). Vygotsky's definition of play includes socio-dramatic or make-believe play that has three factors: children create an imaginary situation, take on and act out roles, and follow a set of rules determined by those roles (Bodrova & Leong, 2015). These features are essential for developing children's higher mental functions. According to Vygotsky (1997/1983), development of higher mental functions as a gradual process involving the transition from inter-individual ("inter-mental") (amongst people) or shared to individual ("intra-mental"). Higher mental functions are shared, meaning that they are co-constructed by the child in interaction with another person. For young children, most higher mental functions still exist only in their inter-individual form as preschoolers share them with adults or with older children through the process of co-construction. Therefore, teachers need to promote these functions in children's play. The question is how teachers should play and use play with children.

Considering these ideas, researchers and theorists agree that teachers should use guided play more than before in their curriculum. Guided play provides context of activities that children find engaging and motivating through gentle adult mediating (Weisberg, Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, Kittredge & Klahr, 2016). This play experience has two elements: child autonomy and adult guidance. When children direct their own play and exploration, teachers set up the environment and use open-ended comments and suggestions for their learning goals. Teachers still support children's choices and decisions. Early childhood teachers believe the benefits of this play (Lynch, 2015; McLane, 2003; Nicolopoulou, 2010; Sisson & Kroeger, 2017). However, in

limitation of time and pressure of the testing system force them to narrow their curriculum (Lynch, 2015; Nicolopoulou, 2010). An important question is how teachers support children's ongoing play if they think they do not have time, or they do not know how to play. Some research has proved that teachers are involved in children's play.

Trawick-Smith and Dziurgot (2011) developed the teacher-child interactions model, which emphasized how teachers meet children's needs during play. In this model, teachers observe and assess the needs of children and then become involve, if it is needed. After these researchers observed and analyzed teachers' behaviors, they grouped them as direct guidance, indirect guidance, observation, or no interaction. Direct guidance is a response to a play behavior in which an adult asks, demands, physically guides, or in other ways prompts a child to behave in a certain way, and/or in which the adult performs a task for the child. For example, when a child is building Legos, teacher is taking the structure out of the child's hands and removing a section of blocks with saying "Here, let's change this a little. And let's put this here. That will help you." Then, she adds two new pieces to the structure and says "There. It gives more support. See? It looks much better." Indirect guidance is a response to play behavior in which an adult guide and/or enhances a child's activity, without demanding, directly asking for, or in other ways imposing a specific play action or content, and in which the child is able to remain fully in control of the play. For example, when a child is holding a leaf-shaped template and a marker at the art table, but is not using them, a teacher is saying to herself (loudly, so the child can hear), "Let's see, I think I'm going to trace my shape." She takes a marker and performs this action as the child watches. Observation is a response to play in which an adult watches the behaviors of a child for at least five seconds without intervening. No interaction means a response to play in which an adult does not interact, physically or verbally, with the child, and does not watch the child continuously for more than five seconds.

Loizou, Michaelides & Georgiou (2017) used this model in their study with preservice and in-service teachers. In the study, these teachers' play interactions were video-recorded during children's socio-dramatic play in the classroom in five weeks. At the end of the study, in-service and preservice teachers involved in children's play used indirect guidance mostly. Gmitrova (2013) observed both direct and indirect teacher involvement within children's pretend play during two months. In her study, there were 368 kindergarten children and 92 kindergarten teachers. After the study, she suggested an intervention schema that helps teachers to involve children's pretend play: the teacher first selected the most preferable pretend play themes related to educational goals, then used a direct intervention showing children how to perform the main role of a play scenario, and finally through indirect intervention, they joined children's play in order to support and enhance it.

In order to learn more about how build and enrich collective play activities between children and adults, Lobman (2005) also conducted a study to evaluate the use of improvisational ('improv') theater workshops as a professional development tool for helping teachers to become more responsive to children's play. She organized the improve workshop with seven teachers and used to generate data from participant observations, semi-structured interviews with each teacher, and a focus group at the end of the training. Analysis of the data suggested that this workshop helped teachers enhance their ability to respond directly to children's play and to create something collective. Lobman and Clark (2015) expanded the theory of improvisation and added dramatic activities. They divide dramatic activities that teachers and children can engage in together into three categories: (1) Child-led dramatic play with teacher participation, (2) Creative drama activities that are teacher-led, but child scripted, and (3) Teacher-led structured or scripted drama activities. In child-led dramatic play, children create scenes and teachers provide space, materials, and time, observe them, and mediate their actions. However, in this role, teachers can be disruptive by interfering with play. Teachers disrupted play less when they participated as co-

players than when their roles were as the adult outside of play (Lobman, 2003). In her study of toddler (1-2 years) and preschool classrooms, Lobman found a similarity between responsive teaching (teachers listen to children and enhance and expand on their ideas) and techniques used by improvisational actors and comedians.

Similarly, Bredikyte and Hakkarainen (2011) trained prospective teachers to develop and deepen children's existing play themes. They found successful play interventions could motivate children to begin play and then adults to participate with them using improvisational script. In this intervention, children's dramatic play was enhanced and increased in complexity.

Secondly, creative drama is an experience-based and improvisational method. In this approach, the teacher leads, and children script the dramatic process. Vivian Paley and Gunilla Lindqvist's styles are two examples of creative drama. In these two approaches, teachers take a more active role, and teacher-children collaborations are promoted by sharing fantasies, relationships, and lived experiences. Instead of ending or showing the performance, creation, and the process of dramatization are the primary goal of these approaches (Lobman & Clark, 2015). Paley used children's own stories for dramatization, and children were the actors. She first observed children's fantasy play stories and then put them into a narrative form and helped children to dramatize them. During the storytelling activities, teachers facilitated the story dramatization and asked questions about it. Thus, children's storytelling process was improved, and teachers encouraged children's imaginative play (Paley, 1986; 1990).

Different than Paley's method, in Lindqvist's approach, the teacher is a performer, and the children's literature is the content. The teacher starts the dramatic experiences by choosing a character or prop from the specific story and encourages children to engage with active dramatic dialogues, which is called 'playworld' (Lindqvist, 1995). Marjanovic-Shane and colleagues (2011) implemented playworld performance based on C. S. Lewis's The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe with a mixed kindergarten/first grade classroom. After many weeks, children gained

meaningful, collaborative, intellectual, social, and emotional experiences with their teachers. To sum up, creative drama such as a Paley or Linquvist's activity gives freedom to both teacher and children, empowers children-teacher relationships and collaborations, and improve their play experiences.

While child-led and child-scripted dramatic activities and creative drama are improvisational and process-driven, teacher-led drama activities are structured to be successful for the achievement of specific social or academic goals. In this approach, there are two drama activities, Sociodrama and Readers Theater, which are still collaborative and playful. Sociodrama is a process of creative drama that helps participants resolve everyday social issues by using roleplay (Moreno, 1943). In this process, teachers stop the process and ask the other children for solutions to the problem. Children evaluate solutions and decide the best way to deal with conflicts without teachers' specific decisions or manipulations (Lobman & Clark, 2015).

The other approach in the structured teacher-led drama activities is readers theaters. Children read a text without props and express themselves through the text (Zambo, 2011). Children interpret the author's characterization of the text that enhances their literacy skills, motivation, and self-confidence.

These three categories of dramatic activities are play-based and creative and are ones that hat teachers can implement in their classrooms quickly and efficiently. In these activities, teachers have different levels of involvement; however, all of them expand both teachers' and children's experiences, repertoire, and creativity.

2.2 Creative Drama

2.2.1 The Brief History of Drama in Education

For easy referencing, 'Creative Drama' (McCaslin, 2006) is used as a term to describe educational programs, procedures, and techniques that use dramatic arts. The other terms refer to 'Creative Drama' as: drama in education (Bolton, Davis, & Lawrence, 1987; Marjanovic-Shane, 2008); process drama (O'Neill, 1995); playworlds (Lindqvist, 1995; Lobman & O'Neill, 2011; Marjanovic-Shane & Beljanski-Ristić, 2008; Marjanovic-Shane et al., 2011; Nilsson, 2009); theater-in-education (Jackson, 1993); and improvisation based education (Lobman & Lundquist, 2007; Sawyer, 1997).

The first dramatic activities in educational context were seen at the end of the 1800s with settlement houses. Younger immigrant children came to the center hoping to find a place where they could connect drama to their own lives in Chicago. At that time, The Drama League of America was founded in Illinois, and Drama magazine started to deliver articles about drama activities in 1907. After many educators began contributing articles to the magazine, drama activities were introduced at schools (McCaslin, 1987).

British educators Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote contributed to drama education most in the mid-twentieth century (Campbell, 2013). Way (1967) promoted differentiated, and individualization instruction and Heathcote (1984) encouraged teachers to take the opportunity for action and exploration of concepts through drama (Bolton, 1979). Heathcote brought her ideas to America in the 1970s, and teachers were mesmerized. She gave them another way to approach drama within their school curricula (Wagner, 1998). In 1966, at the Anglo-American Seminar on the Teaching of English, Heathcote explained that drama as telling a story to show what is happening in a classroom with improvisation. During the 1990s, classroom drama

practices became widespread. Heathcote and Bolton (1995) the book of Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert approach. Saldana (1995) also developed a teacher resource for enhancing children's ethnic literacy through drama. He used informal dramatic activities from his students' diverse cultural backgrounds.

2.2.2 The Nature of Creative Drama and ZPD

Creative drama is the act of becoming someone or something other than yourself (Moore, 2004) and the expansion of experience and learning (Heathcote, 1984). Creative drama aims to create an interactive and positive learning environment that enhances participants' social relationships and helps knowledge construction. In creative drama, there are two fundamental approaches: creative drama for supporting personal development and using creative drama as a part of teaching methodology. Creative drama includes the creation of a dramatic environment (including activating dialogue, theater games, image work, and roleplay) where students learn the subject by playing roles and using other dramatic techniques while conducting a topic-related investigation (Saglam, 1997). Creative drama is unpredictable, and the scenes cannot be replicated because, during the process, the participants co-create the story or script instead of following a ready-made story (O'Neill, 1995).

Creative drama provides opportunities for participants to create their drama representations through which they can express their goals, identity, and values. Participants do not need to be scared of failure or performance-based evaluations. Instead, creative drama helps students to construct group creativity and creative interactions; thus, students learn to work cooperatively. Moreover, through drama, students improve their understanding that contributes to their overall intellectual growth and personal development. Creative drama can make a powerful contribution toward raising self-esteem and promoting communicative competence (Peter, 2003).

Moreover, creative drama increases children's narrative comprehensive and their ability to connect to a group experience socially and emotionally.

San (2003) defines creative drama activities as participants reorganizing their cognitive patterns regarding an experience, an event, an idea, an abstract concept or behavior in a group setting through theater or drama techniques such as roleplaying or improvisation. Using theater techniques can cause confusion between drama education and theater education. There is a technical difference between them (Wee, 2009). While theater education focuses on actors' formal performance in front of an audience, drama education considers participants' exploration and meaning making processes. In the 1950s, Slade and Way distinguished drama in education from theater activities. They believed that drama is rooted in children's play and developed the child from within through creative expression. At the same time, teachers encourage children to play during drama activities (Johnson & O'Neill, 1984). Heathcote and Bolton believe that instead of being an observer and encourager, teachers should take on responsibilities and roles during the group work (Heathcote, 1984; Heathcote & Bolton, 1995; O'Neill, 2008). Similarly, Bolton (1985) expresses that drama is spontaneous and builds on collaboration between students and the teacher to create fictional worlds where they explore their roles and issues.

This students-teacher collaborative creation is informed by social constructivism. Creative drama is a meaning making process of children by interpreting their physical and social environments through generating new knowledge. This new knowledge comes from their present and background knowledge and experiences (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). In creative drama, participants interact, negotiate, collaborate, and reflect on their past and present knowledge and experiences. Social constructivism lens is useful to view in creative drama because participants are aware of what they know and how they organize new information (Good & Brophy, 2003). Successful creative drama can be seen as following the basic rules of social constructivism which are being content-oriented, authentic, process-related, and learner-centered (Okandan, 2019). Creative

drama fosters independence and learner autonomy, and creates opportunities in which participants make choices and take roles. In creative drama learning becomes more memorable (Vygotsky, 1987). Moreover, during creative drama activities, participants mediate and enrich each other's learning experiences and meaning making. Therefore, they can overcome the difficulties with the help of more knowledgeable other. This collaboration between participants happens within participating ZPD. Each is mediating one's own and the other's performance that leads to everyone's development. This is performance as developmental Vygotskian idea.

ZPD is a range of abilities what the child already knows with more advanced participation, and it facilitates the child's development. Therefore, adults can mediate learning and teach new skills within the child's ZPD. Here children and adults take risks and support each other to do what they do not on one's own. (Holzman, 2000). Therefore, teachers and children make meaning together by creating the joint activity of learning-leading-development continuously (Holzman, 1995). Newman and Holzman (2013) called this mean making a performance development theory, which child acts and intends 'head taller' than himself (Vygotsky, 1978b) in his performance. Through the performance, children and teachers engage activities that they do not perform in everyday life (O'Neill, 2008) and creates a space for development. Teachers need to learn how to with children work in this space for new and higher forms of development.

This sociocultural collaboration between students and teachers occurs in every stage of the drama. These stages are (1) Preparation-warming up, (2) Improvisation, and (3) Evaluation. In the preparation-warm-up stage, the body and senses are used intensively, and self-oriented activities are done. For creating group dynamics, various activities such as games and movement are implemented. Teachers lead students to be a part of the games and encourage them to play by playing. The improvisation part is to create a purpose, an idea, with the use of improvisation and roleplaying (taking a role) techniques by a group or based on the experiences of group members

(Adiguzel, 2013). During the improvisation, teachers' roles are to work with students, to help them take responsibility for their roles, to encourage them to share their experiences and let them create. At the evaluation-discussion stage, teachers and students evaluate and discuss the outcomes, significance, and qualities of the activities as well as students' feelings and opinions.

Teacher education is also a collective teaching experience process. The interaction between teacher educators and preservice teachers is the core of teacher education. Teacher educators mediate preservice teachers' learning and experiences and teach new skills within the ZPD. Through this interaction, preservice teachers can go beyond their actual developmental level and acquire new understanding. Creative drama provides the participants with ZPD in which they can reach beyond their current understanding. Because of the dynamic relationship between learning and development, ZPD allows preservice teachers to push their limits and exceed their current developmental level by performance. In this study, a focus on investigating the activity of creating the ZPD constructs a unique perspective on understanding how teachers participate in and create creative drama activities. During these activities, they engaged in both the activities which I led and collectively created activities.

2.2.3 Creative Drama Process

In school settings, teachers begin creative drama instructions with simple activities or theater games as a warm-up (for a sample lesson, see Appendix A). Teachers begin with the warm-up games which include children and adults' games in order to create an atmosphere where students take roles and feel confident. There were many warm-up games played in the present study such as 'Dance Game,' 'Name and Object,' 'Superhero in Me,' 'My Power,' 'Shapes,' 'Hat Game,' 'Bush Telegraph,' 'Wall Hopscotch,' and 'Simon Says.' Some games like 'Name and Object' and 'Superhero in Me' aimed to facilitate the learning of names and the building of

relationships. Some games initiated conversations like 'Bush Telegraph' and 'My Power', in order to create dialogues. 'Dance Game,' 'Hat Game,' 'Wall Hopscotch,' and 'Simon Says' developed group belongings. Others aimed to make groups for the improvisation parts.

The teacher and children develop and enrich experiences by bringing appropriate materials: music, pictures, and other visual aids. If they are available, colorful costumes and stage lights help motivate drama players to play and start improvisation (McCaslin, 2006). During improvisation activities, teachers are responsive in the environment. Students and teachers stay in the moment and give and receive offers from each other spontaneously as performers. They create something new collectively (Lobman, 2003; Sawyer, 1997). In order to explain this collaboration between the teacher and children, Napier (2004) declares ten rules to guide improvisation: (1) do not deny, (2) do not ask questions, (3) do not dictate action, (4) do not talk about past or future events, (5) establish who, what, and where, (6) do not negotiate, (7) do not do teaching scenes, (8) show, not tell, (9) say Yes, and then say and, (10) do not talk about what you are doing. Also, Spolin (1963) explains the main characteristics of improvisation as (1) spontaneity, (2) using everything, (3) giving and receiving offers, and (4) creating scenes collectively. The primary characteristic of improvisation is spontaneity with players staying in the moment. Because improvisation builds on performers' willingness to use any ideas, performers can create from almost anything. If one performer creates a scene, others must accept all offers and then receive and respond to these offers. Moreover, there is no one right response to an offer; however, the unexpected ones generate more fun and improve the dialogues more.

Teachers need to see themselves and children as improvisers. They can expand their creative interactions by using improvisations instead of child-centered or teacher-directed activities. There are many strategies that teachers can use to develop inquiry, imagining and modelling skills, to improve creativity, to encourage collaborations, and to understand scenes. These strategies also provide opportunities to increase character development and storytelling,

which are components of performance skills. These strategies are 'Conscience Alley, Cross-Cutting, Flashbacks and Flash Forwards, Forum Theater, Hot Seating, Image Theater, Mantle of the Expert, Marking the Moment, Narration, Role on the Wall, Role Play, Soundscape, Spotlight, Still Images & Freeze Frames, Story-telling, Tableaux, Teacher in Role, Thought Tracking' (Neelands, & Goode, 2015, see also Appendix B).

In this study, role play, and teacher-in-role, dramatization, and improvisation were used. Role play is the basis of all dramatic activities. Preservice teachers use their past or present experiences and travel to any location by empathizing with a person or an object. Therefore, involvement and confidence are increased among preservice teachers. The teacher-in-role technique allows a teacher to be in the role of the preservice teachers to guide the group into the story. The teacher also encourages preservice teachers to take ownership of their learning. This teacher guidance is crucial in creative drama because the teacher is responsible for sequencing tasks and shaping the drama (Wilhelm & Edmiston, 1998).

Furthermore, dramatization helps preservice teachers better understand the text or children's books and the feelings of the characters. Preservice teachers read the text and then distribute the roles. During dramatization, preservice teachers can see the process and purposes of writing and creative expression of ideas and feelings. Moreover, they are provided opportunities to build social skills, and they can work through ideas and experiences (Paley, 1990). Creative drama contributes to a general pedagogy of play in the classroom.

Improvisation is when preservice teachers take new roles and use their skills and create their performances in play. They create together collectively and experience how not to focus on their ideas, goals, or egos. Rather, they focus on making offers top others (O'Neill, 2013; 2014). Preservice teachers accept and build on other preservice teachers' offers and thus learn to work together to create scenes. Building on Sawyer (1997), a pioneer researcher who used improvisation techniques with children, Lobman developed. In one of her many studies, (2005),

she found that preschool teachers often did not know how to use improvisational play in their classrooms. Lobman (2005) organized improvisation workshops to help teachers learn skills in responding directly to children's play. At the end of the workshop, teachers noticed some of their weaknesses (such as not listening, trying to control where the activity is going, or being critical of other people's offers) and tried to improve them.

As mentioned before, creative drama is multi-step process. At the evaluation-discussion stage, teachers and preservice teachers need to evaluate and discuss the outcomes, significance, and qualities of the activities as well as preservice teachers' feelings and opinions. In this study, participants sat in the circle and shared their feelings, ideas, and experiences. They also drew pictures, made postcards, and created stories, images and statues reflect on their experiences

2.2.4 Creative Drama Research

All these techniques and games are essential for teachers to have in order to successfully implement drama activities in their classrooms. They need to understand the importance of being a model and give appropriate responses while adapting expectations based on individual children's expressed abilities and needs. During drama activities in the classroom, teachers need to encourage children to take roles, ask questions, and make comments. For these reasons, teacher training is important in implementing successful drama sessions. Poor quality or unplanned drama activities negatively affect students' motivation, encouragement, willingness, and learning (Mages, 2008).

According to Anderson (2014), effective teaching in drama shows four features: (1) active engagement, (2) awareness of current pedagogy (3) appreciation of the aesthetic and artistic sense, and (4) meaning making as an outcome. Active engagement and participation serve to construct knowledge and meaning making, thinking, and reflecting, making a bridge between

knowledge and transformative understandings. Aesthetic and artistic senses are developed, and they nurture the art form and the pedagogy. A well-taught drama session with these features applied helps teachers to teach creatively, be open and flexible to experience, be willing to take risks, and able to think and work collaboratively.

Moreover, Heathcote (1984) believed that teachers who use drama techniques in their daily curriculum can expand her/his students' understanding of life experiences. Creative drama helps them reflect on their ideas and express concerns that enable them to make sense of their worlds more genuinely. Heathcote used drama by starting with a discussion with children. She took the facilitator role, in which she can step out of role and stop drama for conversation and then resume the improvisation. Teachers can follow this method to maintain children's attention and learning process and also encourage children to study topics more. Social studies, science, history, current events, and moral and ethical problems become the drama topics, and teachers help students to see below the surface of the topic in order to gain a better understanding of it. Others have found that creative drama programs enhance both children's and teachers' skills and abilities. As one example, Yasar and Aral's (2012) study, 40 of 80 5 and 6 year-old children received drama sessions a total of 24 education sessions, twice weekly for 12 weeks, while the other 40 children did not receive. Comparing to pre- and post-test results, drama sessions received children's skills in creative thinking, self-awareness, and creative expression were increased.

Similarly, Momeni, Khaki, and Amin (2017) also used a pretest-posttest control group design with 52 children between the ages of 4 to 6 to measure their creativity skills. The researcher implemented creative drama activities for two months in 15 sessions with the intervention group children. The creativity level of the children in the two groups (intervention and control), before and after the intervention, was measured, and the intervention group children's creativity level was significantly increased. Cetingoz and Canturk Gunhan (2012) also used the same design with six-year-old children. After the teachers filled out Social Skills

Evaluation Scale (SSES), it was found that there was a statistically meaningful difference in social skills between the results of the children who received drama education and those who did not.

Using pretest-posttest control group design, Erbay and Omeroglu (2013) implemented creative drama education for 12 weeks in sessions of 45 minutes twice a week with 6-year old experimental group children. The control group children did not receive any drama sessions. Research findings from the auditory reasoning and processing skills test indicated that creative drama education improved preschool children's reasoning and processing skills. Lindberg (2015) implemented the creative drama curriculum with students aged three to six years old. Findings from instructor observations as well as parent and teacher survey date showed that the creative drama program was successful both in creating an alternate artistic program for preschool students and in enhancing their social and emotional skills. Overall, the results of these studies suggest creative drama has positive effects on children's social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

In Lee, Patall, Cawthon, and Steingut's (2015) meta-analysis study, they analyzed 47 drama-based intervention between the years of 1985-2012. This study's interesting finding is that drama based intervention had positive and significant impacts in PreK-16 educational settings. Creative drama is widely used as an innovative pedagogy in content areas. As an example, Walan and Enochsson (2019) used creative drama in science education with 4-8 years old children. Here 25 children listened to a story without pictures. After the story was told, a play was performed with the children, telling the same story they just had listened to, and the children also made drawings. Individual interviews with children revealed that they learned the names of immune system cells, its working system, and that viruses cause colds.

Creative drama also helps children learn foreign languages. In Goksel's (2019) study, the drama based approach included drama strategies and improvisational activities used twice a week over six weeks. Participants were 12-year-old students. Results indicated that their French

language and literacy skills improved. In another study, children who were exposed to creative

drama interventions had better vocabulary achievement than did the control group (Joseph, 2014).

Kaf and Yilmaz's (2017) study also showed the creative drama implementation at social

studies. In the study, there were 42 fourth-year students in the experimental group and 39 fourth-

year students in the control group. The experimental group students attended 15 hours creative

drama integrated social studies lesson while the control group students were taught traditionally.

The teachers filled out Attitude Towards Social Studies Scale. Findings indicated that the creative

drama method had a significant effect on social studies achievement and students' attitudes

towards social studies.

Creative drama also may have positive effects on children's math achievement. There is

limited research with elementary grade students on this. Fleming, Merrell, and Tymms (2004)

investigated the impact of the drama project on children's reading, mathematics, attitude, self-

concept, and creative writing in primary schools. At the end of the experiment-control group

design study, children who participated in the drama project showed increased math achievement

and self-concept comparing to the control group children. These studies provide evidence for the

claim that creative drama develops children's social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

Drama lessons include movement and rhythms, pantomime, improvisation, and speech.

The teacher should help students to develop greater awareness of themselves as they create

dramatic situations. Characters and their relationships are analyzed by students with insight

motivation. Therefore, the teacher's first job is to create an atmosphere in which children feel

comfortable and secure while working and playing together. Children need to trust their teachers

and groups and belong to the group. When children trust each other and their teachers, their self-

confidence and communication skills are improved. In Cawton and Dawson's important study

(2009), 27 teachers experienced the drama based professional development program, and these

teachers evaluated their own practices with using scales and measures. These teachers reported

that this program helped them to integrate arts into the curriculum, to raise student engagement, to encourage them collaboration, and to develop hands-on instruction.

In the literature, there are more drama studies conducted with in-service teachers. In Lobman's (2005) study, seven early childhood teachers participated the improv workshop, before and after the individual interviews and the focus group interview at the end. The workshops took place for 1.5 hours a week for 6 weeks and were located at the early childhood center. At the end of the study, teachers reported that their students' interactions and their skills of creativity, taking risks, and listening and accepting ideas were improved.

Furthermore, drama works through feeling and thinking, helping to construct teachers' own identities (Wales, 2009). The ability to understand self and others is also supported through drama. During drama sessions, teachers need not only to understand children's skills and abilities but also to improve their leadership skills by using imagination (McCaslin, 2006) and considering children's opinions (Wee, 2009). Moreover, O'Neill (1995) affirmed that adopting various performing roles helps teachers to invite children to create and maintain the drama session, ask open-ended questions, animate expressions, and respond to children's ideas enthusiastically. Culham (2003) also observed the benefits of creative drama activities after using teacher-in-service workshops. After the workshop, the teachers started to use non-verbal cues to demonstrate caring and concern for their students, built up the classroom community, and let power dynamics shift by becoming participants alongside the students.

In Lee, Cawthon, and Dawson's (2013) extensive research, 12 elementary (Kindergarten through fifth grade) and 18 secondary (sixth through twelfth grade) teachers in a public school received intensive professional development program in drama-based instruction. Through after-school small group training sessions and one-on-one mentorship, teachers learned and implemented drama-based teaching techniques in their classrooms. Results indicated that self-efficacy was not necessarily predictive of greater integration of the training. Some teachers with

high self-efficacy (mostly elementary school teachers) were found to implement at higher levels while others (often middle and high school teachers) were not. Additionally, elementary school teachers had higher initial self-efficacy for engaging their students and managing their classrooms while secondary teachers had lower self-efficacy in these domains.

Stanton, Cawton, and Dawson (2017) extended the previous study to explore the relationships of teacher concerns, self-efficacy, and level of comfort with the implementation of drama-based instruction within a large-scale initiative. This initiative aimed to increase learning opportunities through the arts. Participants were 23 elementary school teachers and 55 middle school teachers who participated in two programs: (1) a year-long, small intensive professional development training program for teachers, including four trainings, one-on-one mentorship by a university drama specialist and in-class training and support for each individual teacher participant; and, (2) a year-long full campus professional development training model, which included two 3-hour training session. After the teachers completed surveys and measures, it was found that investment in targeted, on-going and in-depth training that included mentorship and training from artists in teachers' classrooms offered the potential for greater teacher self-efficacy and pedagogical growth than multiple short-term, one-time training. These studies are very useful in considering about the training time and length of creative drama.

Creative drama integrated courses expand their understanding of the characteristics of professional development and enrich their teaching repertoire with new ideas, skills, and confidence. The New York City study investigated the personal characteristics and the factors that supported or constrained arts to use in teaching (Oreck, 2006). In the first phase of the study, 423 K-12 teachers filled out the survey to find out their teaching practice and to identify attitudes and personal characteristics related to arts use. Then, six teachers were selected to conduct interviews based on their responses to the survey and the researcher's knowledge of their background and school setting. These teachers participated in art and drama based professional

development programs. The significant result of the study was that teachers were able to incorporate the arts into their teaching because artistic approaches were congruent with their educational values, their deep caring about children, and their general attitude toward life.

In some of the studies, teachers reported that they did not feel comfortable using the creative drama method, and they had difficulties in integrating this method into their curriculum and implementing it. In Metinnam, Kelessoglu, and Ozen's study (2004), 22 social studies teachers were interviewed about their views on using drama as a teaching method in social studies education. The teachers reported that they were avoiding to use creative drama activities because they did not have enough support and time. Similarly, McLauchlan's (2007) study unearthed the same reasons about her personal drama experiences. Teachers believe that arts integrated work such as creative drama would be helpful for their students; however, they expressed that a lack of professional development (Flynn, 2010; Oreck, 2006) and time constraints (Stinson, 2009) were main problems when seeking to engage it into their practices. To solve these problems, teachers need to have many different learning opportunities in their preservice teacher education. Creative drama integrated courses expand their understanding of the characteristics of professional development and enrich their teaching repertoire with new ideas and thoughts (Oreck, 2006). Creative drama training includes hands-on instructional strategies, and preservice teachers engage in planning, action, evaluation, and reflection with their pedagogy.

As an example of study with preservice teachers, Athiemoolam (2013) introduced drama activities to 63 preservice teachers in three workshops and four follow-up classes with using many drama and theater techniques over a year. The findings from observations of their dramatic presentations and informal interviews with them showed that these preservice teachers oral communication skills, creativity, and confidence were enhanced and they indicated that they would implement drama activities in their future classes. Similarly, in Erdogan's (2013) study,

preservice teachers participated in 21 hours of creative drama activities and were asked to write while during the activities. The findings of the study suggested that the creative drama method improved the preservice teachers' writing skills and attitudes towards writing.

Topcuoglu Unal (2013) worked with 35 preservice teachers who were taking theater and drama applications course. These teachers answered 20 open-ended questions about theater and drama ideas and reported that their self- esteem, cooperation, social, empathy skills were enhanced after they took the course. Other studies of preservice teachers found that preservice teachers who received creative drama techniques are motivated to learn foreign languages (Celik, 2019). Creative drama decreased communication apprehension and enhanced confidence in understanding authentic language (Okandan, 2019). Moreover, Dawson (2018) found that performative drama based experiences increased 37 participant college students' sense of belonging in the classroom. Their understanding of the importance of the body in learning and understanding themselves as learners was enhanced after analyzing assignments, grading notes, and post-course interviews.

Additionally, drama-based training has a positive effect on delivering equity and diversity for preservice teacher. In Hayat and Walton's (2013) study, the drama and theater company delivered seven creative drama sessions. Moreover, the actors also provided challenging scenarios and discussions about the roles responsibilities, behaviors, and attitudes of the key stakeholders. This study's finding indicated that preservice teachers highlighted that drama-based training had a positive impact on their learning of diversity issues (for example, disability, gender, harassment, and bullying). In addition, Hogan (2014) used process drama with preservice teachers to understand that participation in process drama may assist preservice teachers to develop an enhanced sense of moral character, agency and virtue ethics. The researcher led three two and half hour drama sessions in six weeks, asked preservice teachers to write their reflections, and then let them discuss their experiences in a focus group. According to the

preservice teachers' experiences, drama activities helped them to be prepared for difficult conversations on ethical dilemmas. According to these studies, creative drama enhances preservice and in-service teachers' communication, interaction, and moral reasoning skills, as well as managing creativity. In another study, the researchers delivered the undergraduate drama course in six weeks. They kept field notes journal and preservice teachers also wrote their experiences in this journal, as well. Preservice teachers indicated that they examined cultural exclusion, social justice, and leadership perspectives in new ways during creative drama sessions (Kana & Aitken, 2007).

This chapter has provided a review of the research on early childhood teacher education essentials, teacher education programs and challenges, and the need for a playful curriculum. Constructivist theories and their implications in education were reviewed and discussed. Additionally, the chapter included a historical overview. Theoretical frameworks were presented relevant to creative drama, including the definitions, practices, and procedures, and drama research conducted with children and teachers. While teacher education programs seek powerful and effective methods to prepare preservice teachers for their future schools, creative drama offers valuable alternative methods to create environments in which children and teachers can construct their knowledge together and develop an understanding of children's needs and interests. The studies and information I examined above provided some examples and background of how teacher educators can incorporate drama in their teaching repertoires

Chapter 3

Methodology

The present chapter presents the research context and the methods and procedures used to investigate the research questions that are presented in chapter one. This study is designed to discover and to better understand preservice teachers (PTs)' perceptions of creative drama and how PTs participate and potentially benefit from creative drama activities as well as to find out how these actives impact their participation in play. The chapter seeks to outline various methodological considerations, including the present study's overall design, who the participants were, the contexts in which the research took place, and the procedures undertaken for data collection and analysis. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the study's validity and reliability.

3.1 A Qualitative Case Study Design

This study embraced the framework of qualitative research by employing a case study method. According to Merriam (1998), a case study is a holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit to understand and improve the practice. It also provides examples of real people within real situations (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Yin, 2012). Conducting a case study thus helps researchers to create a robust picture and understanding of a phenomenon. Accordingly, in this study the case is to explore and describe PTs' perceptions, their teaching experiences, and their evaluations and reflections about creative drama education while participating and evaluating the use of a 15-week Creative Drama Module embedded in a three-credit course on play as an

educative process. Carroll also (1996) suggests that a case study approach is useful in creative

drama when the researcher is interested in and deeply involved in the structure, processes, and

outcomes of a project. More specifically, Carroll states, 'It fits research on drama education well

because drama is a non-reproducible experience, by its very nature as a negotiated group art form.

PTs in a drama education session or series of sessions create a unique set of social relationships

that becomes a single unit of experience capable of analysis and study' (Carroll, 1996, p. 77). As

the primary purposes of this study were to discover how do the PTs change their understandings

and perceptions and early emergent skills regarding creative drama in education, the case study

design provided an opportunity to look at the purposes and phenomenon strictly and to have an

in-depth understanding.

3.2 The Researcher's Role in this Study

In conducting the study, I took on the role of instructor, researcher, implementer and

interviewer in *ECE 479 The Young Child's Play Educative Processes* course. I implemented the

Creative Drama Module, did pre- and post-interviews, helped the PTs' lessons and

implementations, and recorded PTs' reflection as well as my field notes. I also tried to share

power by enabling PTs to contribute to the themes and improvisation activities through their own

creative pieces based on their experiences.

3.3 Location

The program took place in a large public university in the northeastern United States. The

Child's Play as Educative Processes (ECE 479) is a required course designed for Elementary and

Early Childhood Education (EECE) major who is also in the PreK- to 4 certification program.

PTs took this course after their first two years of a four-year curriculum to have a bachelor's

degree in EECE.

3.4 Participants

Out of 20 PTs in the class, a total of 12 PTs participated in the research study. By given

the demographics of the program, all of the volunteer PTs were female. There were seven

sophomores, four seniors, and one junior. The PTs' ages were between 19-22 years. Purposeful

sampling was used; because this Creative Drama Module was integrated with the play course and

was relative ease of access afforded in collecting relevant data. Table 3-4 provides primary

Table **3-4**: Biographical data of the PTs.

Preservice Teachers	Ages When Study Began	Semester When Study Began
PT 1	19	Sophomore
PT 2	20	Senior
PT 3	19	Sophomore
PT 4	21	Senior
PT 5	20	Junior
PT 6	19	Sophomore
PT 7	19	Sophomore
PT 8	20	Sophomore
PT 9	20	Sophomore
PT 10	20	Senior
PT 11	19	Sophomore
PT 12	20	Senior

biographical data of the 12 PTs enrolled in the study.

3.5 The ECE 479 -The Child's Play as Educative Processes Course Information

The course aimed to prepare teachers in the area of early childhood education and to help meet some of the early learning PA standards for licensure to teach preschool, kindergarten, and first through fourth grades. The general purpose of the course was to provide fundamentals principals of theories of child play development and prepare teachers to support play activities by learning about play and on integrating developmentally appropriate practices within educational settings. The main objectives of the course were to examine current knowledge about theory, research and practical applications in the area of children's play in Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings, to explore the relations of play in ECE with state learning standards (SLS), to acquire and develop play observation, assessment, documentation and communication skills, to learn how to make suitable situational arrangements for children's play in indoor and in outdoor play settings, and to learn about and understand various teacher play facilitation strategies and techniques and to be able to make sound judgments about their use. This course was a weekly three-hour session. PTs discussed their weekly play topics and played different games for 75 minutes. A complete description of the original with in-class activities and assignments is in the syllabus which can be found Appendix C.

3.6 The Creative Drama Module

The Child's Play as an Educative Process course was divided into two parts. In the first part, the main instructor followed his syllabus (between 2.30 - 3.45 pm), and I implemented the Creative Drama Module in the second part (4.00 - 5.15pm). This module was designed for the Pre-4th grade PTs and their professional development in enhancing their play and creative drama skills. Each week, there was a theme and the subject (see Table 3-6 for module outline). These

themes were based on the Pennsylvania Department of Education PreK to 4th grade standards (https://www.pdesas.org). Moreover, the module involved different academic subjects that were conducted in PreK to 4th grade. The module consisted of three stages. These stages were used each week in this order:

1. Preparation-warming up: In this active step, senses were used, intensively and self-oriented activities were done. For creating group dynamics, various activities such as games and movement were implemented. All PTs played together.

2. Improvisation: This step was composed of the activities in which a topic was shaped, revealed, and developed. Mostly, PTs were assigned in groups and created their improvisations in their groups. In the end, they shared their improvisations in front of other groups.

3. Evaluation-discussion: At the third step, PTs evaluated and discussed the outcomes of the creative drama activities, their essence, significance, and qualities. All PTs expressed their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and recommendations in the big group settings.

After these three stages were implemented, PTs wrote and discussed their reflections about the theme, their participation, and my guidance and support by replying open-ended questions.

Table **3-6**: The Creative Drama Module Outline.

Spring Semester (2017)	Concept
Week1	Introduction (Preservice Teacher Interviews)
Week 2 Jan 18	Creative Drama – Basic Principles I- Group Participation
Week 3 Jan 25	Creative Drama – Literacy
Week 4 Feb 1	Creative Drama – Play Transformation – Superheroes
Week 5 Feb 8	Creative Drama – Math & Social Sciences
Week 6 Feb 15	Creative Drama – Literacy
Week7 Feb 22	Creative Drama – Science
Week 8 March 1	Creative Drama - Science
Week 9 March 8	Spring Break
Week 10 March 15	Creative Drama – Art
Week 11 March 22	Creative Drama – Informal Learning Sites @PAM
Week 12 March 29	Peer Teaching
Week 13 April 5	Peer Teaching
Week 14 April 12	Peer Teaching & Evaluation
Week 15 April 19	(PT Interviews)
Week 16 April 26	(PT Interviews)

3.7 Data Collection

This study was granted exempt status by the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix D) prior to the onset of data collection. Informed consent for each PT was gained (see Appendix E). I informed PTs during the initial contact about the nature of the study, researcher and PT roles and expectations, and protections of PT privacy in the first week of the classes. In order to protect PTs' rights, written consent forms, including a description of the study and all data collection methods and activities were obtained from each PT. PTs' participation was voluntary, and if they

wanted to withdraw from the study or decline to answer any questions, they would do without

any penalty. In the study, multiple data sources were used to provide an in-depth perspective of

the issue investigated. I collected data through interviews, including the demographic

questionnaire, weekly drama module reflections, teaching practices, the journal, documents

including practice notes, drawings and artworks, and photos. The details of each data collection

process are below:

3.7.1 Preservice Teacher Interviews

PTs were interviewed individually with the questionnaire requesting demographic

information (e.g., degree, courses are taken, drama and out-of-school teaching experiences) as

well as content understanding perceptions, and confidence about drama activities (see appendix

F) in the first week of the semester. At the end of the semester, PTs were interviewed again to see

any changes in their responses of content understanding, their perspective, and their confidence.

3.7.2 Weekly Drama Module Reflections

PTs participated in 90 min drama activities (see Table 3-6 for the module outline)

covered the knowledge and indoor and outdoor (The Palmer Art Museum) activities. After each

activity, they wrote and discussed their reflections as a part of the Creative Drama Module plan

based on several open-ended questions: (1) What did you explore in this activity? (2) What was

your favorite part of this activity, and why? (3) What was the most challenging part of this

activity and why? (4) If you were the teacher, how would you use this activity in your

curriculum? (5) What changes/additions would you make to this activity? (6) How would you

describe your participation in this activity? and (7) How was the leader's comments and participation?

3.7.3 Researcher's Journal

Researcher's Journal: Each week, I wrote my reflections and evaluations into three parts: (1) Researcher's self-evaluation, (2) Activity evaluation, and (3) Evaluation of PTs. In self-evaluation, I made comments on the sufficiency and efficacy of materials, presentation of activities, and using mimics, gestures, and body language. The activity evaluation included the dimension of using time, appropriateness of content and use of spaces by the group, and modification of improvisation activities that occurred during the practice. The last part of the researcher's journal involved observation of PTs' activeness, feelings, and thoughts/ideas about the activity.

3.7.4 Peer Teaching

During the last three weeks of the semester, four or five PTs in groups prepared a half-hour drama plan and implemented it to the class in the classroom. The main goals of teaching practices were to build an understanding of drama knowledge, help PTs create a drama plan for their future PTs, and increase their confidence and adaptation to drama plan practices. After they implemented their plans, they wrote their own reflections and other students' feedbacks to them.

3.7.5 Artworks, Class Documents and Photos

Documents involved PTs artworks and drawings in weekly drama activities as well as their drama plans for teaching to peers. The photos were taken during weekly drama activities as well as PTs' practices in order to provide more robust data. Table 3.7 provides a summary of the data collection for the study.

Table **3-7**: Summary of Data Collection.

Method	Purpose	Research Question	Time
Preservice Interviews	-To grasp PTs' initial understandings of creative drama -To identify if PTs have developed any new understandings of creative drama -To gather PTs' reflections of Creative Drama Module and their own creative drama practices	RQ1 RQ2	Week 1 & 15
Weekly Drama Module Reflection	To understand PTs' conceptualization of play during drama module	RQ2	Week 2- 14
Researcher's Journal	To better understand PTs' experiences of play and creative drama activities and analyze in-depth in order to better support for their professional learning.	RQ 2	Week 2- 14
Peer Teaching	To unveil PTs' creative drama understanding and to strength their confidence and adaptation skills of creative drama practices	RQ1 RQ 2	Week 12-14
Artworks, Class Documents, and Photos	-To elucidate PTs' thoughts, concerns and understandings about creative drama activity planning -To help provide more robust data, including visual information about PTs' engagement in the Creative Drama Module	RQ1 RQ2	Week 2-14

3.8 Data Analysis

This study's findings were reviewed in relation to the research questions discussed in chapter one by using collected data and considering points from the literature review. To that end, data analysis focused on how PTs perceive creative drama and how they participate and potentially benefited from creative drama activities; the challenges and affordances of creative drama implementation experienced by PTs; and whether PTs' use of creative drama activities with their future students.

Interviews, weekly drama module reflections, teaching practices, the journal, artworks and class documents, and photos were carefully organized into different computer files on my personal computer and web-based storage. This process helped in the next step of the coding procedure and data analysis. All interviews were digitally transcribed from the audio recording to a spreadsheet database. Both the actual words that were spoken by PTs and the PTs' nonverbal communication were recorded in a written form both the actual words spoken by PTs and the PTs' nonverbal communication as recorded in written form in my notes during the interviews. The transcripts were reviewed and listened to the audio files simultaneously to provide the correct transcription of the interviews. The resulting transcription was then coded. The researcher's journal, weekly reflections, and artworks and class documents were digitally copied and entered into a separate database and organized into the weekly folders. All photos were organized by time and date for ease of accessibility.

I coded the data by hand and did not use any software or algorithmic aids in the study. Some aids (e.g., highlighter, different colors of sticky notes) facilitated the coding procedure. During the coding procedure, the data sources were divided into four categories: (1) the

interviews, (2) peer teaching, (3) weekly reflections, and (4) the researcher's journal. Each of the four categories was coded separately. I developed five codes for all semi-structured interview transcriptions, weekly teaching reflections, and the researcher's journal. After the initial coding phase was completed, the ensuing data was re-analyzed, and additional sub-categories additional were embedded. These codes were (1) creative drama background, (2) creative drama beliefs and understandings, (3) confidence to act and to teach creative drama, (4) communication skills, and (5) professional preparation. These codes were emerged from the data. Table 3-8 illustrates the data categories for this study.

Table **3-8**: The Categories of Analysis.

Main themes	Emerging sub-themes	Initial codes	Source of data
Creative Drama Background	- Related learning experiences or opportunities from childhood - Creative drama experiences in their educational life	Sports, art, dance, pretending, creativity, theatre, emotions, dolls, costumes, puppet shows, scripts; Theatre 101	Pre-Interview
Creative Drama Beliefs and Understandings	- Children's participation to creative drama activities - Importance in PreK, K, and Grades - Benefits and disadvantages of creative drama - Creative drama and curricular subjects - Reframing the definition and settings of the creative drama - Creative drama knowledge	Thinking outside of box, imagining, playing with others, perspective, transition to older grades, social norms, learning experiences, making friends; social, emotional, language, literacy, cognitive, physical learning; math, science, literacy, language arts, reading, fun factor, realism, academic success, play, acting, pretending,	Pre-Interview Post-Interview

	- Significant components of drama - Play-creative drama relationship	playing, imaginary play, imagination; expression, enjoyment, prompts, confident, outside of box; more scripted more practiced, using imagination, dramatic play, creativity, different interpretation, writing	
Confidence to act and to teach creative drama	- Confidence of acting - Confidence when be in creative drama - Confidence when teach creative drama with PreK, K, and Grades - Competency of teaching creative drama	Shy, laughing, in front of people, depends on who be with it, nervous; cool, definitely, older children, harder, participation, judgement, curriculum-focused; more information, making learning fun, peers, spaces, personal reasons	Pre-Interview Post-Interview The Researcher's Journal
Communication Skills	- Receiving and giving offers - listening - nonverbal communication - participation in group activities	more comfortable when talking to each other, knowledge the classmates better, connection, contact, conversation, contact, out of the personal comfort zone and talk, listen to each other in groups, communicate with social skills	Post-interview Weekly Reflections Peer Teaching The Researcher's Journal
Professional Preparation	-Practicing teaching skills -Appreciating different perspectives -Improving teaching practices	Proficiency in specific subjects, confidence to teach movement, feedback from multiple sources, reflecting on teaching skills -Engaging the activities	Post-interview Weekly Reflections Peer Teaching

		-Learning by doing	The
		-Being in charge of your own learning	Researcher's Journal
		-Involving in more than listening	
		-Teaching the class	

To prevent codes from seeming abstract or vague, researchers will often develop a codebook or code tables that describe each code with a concrete definition and examples from the data (Creswell, 2013). This code table can then be used by multiple researchers within the project or future researchers conducting similar studies. Walther, Sochacka, and Kellam (2013) suggested Inter-rater reliability (IRR) as a means to "mitigate interpretative bias" and ensure "continuous dialogue between researchers to maintain consistency of the coding" (p. 650). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that an IRR of 80% agreement between coders on 95% of the codes is sufficient agreement among multiple coders.

To begin to determine our IRR after establishing the initial code table, I asked my colleague who is a Ph.D. student in Curriculum & Instruction Department and has creative drama leader certification. She is familiar with teaching courses with creative drama and also working with preservice teachers. It is acceptable to assess IRR on a sample of the texts to be analyzed, especially when costs prohibit multiple codings of every text (Krippendorff, 2004). However, there is little agreement as to how large a sample of texts is appropriate. Some recommend using 10 percent of the set of documents (Hodson 1999), while others argue that as few as 5 to 10 pages of one set of transcribed field notes is sufficient (Miles and Huberman 1994).

I have 12 students' pre- and post-interviews, including nineteen questions. First, I listened to all records and coded all pre- and post-interview questions. My colleague randomly

chose four interview transcripts (two pre-interviews and two post-interviews) and coded (approximately % 12.5 of my transcripts, 16 pages-length) with the coding scheme. The interrater reliability for five main areas (Creative Drama Background, Creative Drama Beliefs and Understandings, Confidence to act and to teach creative drama, Communication Skills, and Professional Preparation) varied between 85 % - 100 %. Then, we compared the results and discussed coding differences.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

In this study, several validation strategies were to document the accuracy of the study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative researchers should conduct at least two of the validation strategies. The validation strategies, suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018) that were followed throughout this study included content validity, data triangulation, independent coder, and external audits. For content validity, I piloted the interview questions to address the content and the level of difficulty of the questions. The triangulation in this study was done by using multiple sources of data, including interviews, weekly drama module reflections, teaching practices, artworks and class documents including practice notes and drawings, and photos. The independent coder for evaluating consistency in coding provided an external check of the study process and asked questions about methods, meanings, and interpretations. I discussed the data with a faculty member who was familiar with the topic. This person served as examining an external consultant both the process and the product of the account, assessing accuracy (Creswell, 2009), but had no connection to the study.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study is to examine how do the PTs change their (a) perceptions about creative drama, (b) perceived benefits of creative drama, and (c) perceived competence to integrate creative drama and play across the curriculum. The study also aims to find out about the strengths and weaknesses of implementing the Creative Drama Module in supporting PTs as they construct a conceptual knowledge, skill set, and understanding concerning creative drama education. In this chapter first I discuss Pre-interviews giving information about the PTs' background information, beliefs and understandings about creative drama, and also their confidence to act and to teach creative drama. Then, Post-interviews are discussed for the result about PTs' beliefs and understandings creative drama, their confidence to act and to teach creative drama. Finally, I present the results of the Weekly Reflections, Peer Teaching, and the Researcher's Journal with its self, activity and PTs evaluations.

4.1 Pre-Interviews

Twenty female PTs who enrolled in ECE479 Child's Play as Educative Processes course participated in the study. All of them joined the Creative Drama Module; however, 15 of PTs consented to participate in the study. Of the 15 who consented, one PTs did not want to participate in pre-interviews, and two PTs did not want to participate in post-interviews. Therefore, the number of participants in the study was 12. All 12 PTs (mean age 19.9 ± 0.90) were in Elementary and Early Childhood Education and seeking PreK-4 certification. There were seven sophomores, one junior and four seniors. Not one preferred teaching preschoolers. The

majority of PTs (n=8) planned to teach between 2nd and 4th grade, and the other PTs' choices differentiated between kindergarten and the first two grades.

I explained the modules and the research during the first class of ECE479 in the spring semester 2017. This course met for three hours every Wednesday afternoon. The pre-interviews were held during the first and second weeks of classes before the second class the course. The first three interview questions began with information about PTs' school years, ages, and degrees, and these questions were used in only pre-interviews. The other questions were the same with post-interview questions, and they aimed to obtain information on themes of PTs' creative drama background and current participation, their beliefs and understandings about their and children's participation in creative drama activities, and their confidence and communication skills to teach those activities.

4.1.1 Creative Drama Background

Questions 2 and 3 aimed to collect PTs' background information about creative drama. Half of PTs (n=6) stated they did imaginative plays, pretend plays, dramatic plays and performances in their preschools and at their homes. Three of PTs could not retrieve their preschool memories. Three PTs claimed they did not remember or they thought they did not have any memories related to creative drama in their childhood or later. The excerpts below show some of their descriptions.

> …We put on shows on Jewish holidays (with) dressing up costumes, (and) singing songs about our heritage and stuff (PT2).

> …When I was growing up, I was playing a house with my friends and pretend(ing) (that) we were teachers, moms and (others) (PT11).

Eight PTs stated that they also had memories in kindergarten. Unlike preschool creative drama activities, these kindergarten memories were of more structured puppet shows, and teacher-directed pretend games in the playground or during recess time. Two of these eight PTs' memories were of the scenarios involving toys. Some descriptions are shown below.

> I (did) more. (It was) structured puppet show again. (The) teacher say(s) let's pretend and you're at the playground and gives you environment to play imaginatively (PT4).

> I definitely remember. I have (an) older sister and two older brothers. Especially (with) my sisters, we had always dressed up in (our) basement and we were consistently making up random scenarios (and) playing them. I (thought) at the school, play (was) more structured (PT12).

PTs also talked about creative drama experiences while attending elementary schools. The majority (n=9) remembered their elementary school memories; however, three of them thought they did not do anything that could be related to creative drama. Four of them mentioned they acted when given a script.

> They gave us a paper and a script, (and) everyone stands at the stage (PT3).

> I actually got into theatre when I was in fifth grade. At 3rd grade, we had a great play which I realized I really liked to do that. And then (at the) 5th grade, one my friend told me 'hey you should do audition to the musical' and I did and I ended up the lead roles. I was in 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. I absolutely loved it (PT6).

PTs were asked to recall their middle school and high school memories of creative drama in the following question. The majority of them (n=9) said that they did not participate in any creative drama or theatre activities since these art classes were considered an elective. One PT noted plays and her roles played while in middle and high school.

> (At) the middle school, I continued to (play at) the theatre. I actually skip(ped) the 6th and 7th grade. (During) the 8th grade, I (was doing) the school play. In (the) high school, I was in Thespian (group), and I did. I was in 'Our town' for sophomore year in (the) high school. I did make-up and costuming (works) and a lot of background scenes work as well as (being) on (the) stage. I (played at) 'Singing in the Rain', 'Crazy for You', and 'Tubic tap Shows.' (It was) really fun. And I (attended) the classes about theatre and acting, (included) improvisation activities (PT6).

PTs also were asked whether they took any college course on creative drama or theatre previously. PT10 reported that she took Theatre 100, an introductory course to the living art of the theatre that began with the script as the source of production aesthetics, and then analysis of textural context, structure, genre and provision of tools relating to the imaginative impulses of the theatre artist and the audience. PT10 said, 'I took theater 100, which is a cool class'. Since this course covered the basic rules of theater without creative drama information and PT was not given any creative drama feedback, this course neither affected this PT's participation nor her acting preferences. The remaining PTs (n=11) reported that they did not take any course related to creative drama.

4.1.2 Beliefs about Creative Drama

Questions eight to 13 elicited responses that were useful data to characterize PTs' beliefs about creative drama. These questions elicited statements to infer respondent's thoughts about the importance of creative drama in PreK to fourth grade, the benefits, and disadvantages of creative drama, and assumptions regarding the relationship between creative drama and curricular subjects.

The majority of PTs (n=11) considered that creative drama was significant in the preschool years. They believed that young children learn about themselves and others (n=2), and also develop empathy toward others (n=1). Creative drama improves their creativity (n=2) and increases their energy level (n=1). Moreover, five PTs expressed that preschool children gain learning experiences with creative drama. According to the two PTs, these children learn social norms and increase their social skills as well. The excerpts below show some of their descriptions.

I think (creative drama) is super important, especially (for) that age (preschoolers). Because the preschool kids (need to have) energy and I think that's a great way for them (to play and use their energy). And I think for the preschool age, it is about an energy and kind of figuring out social norms, friendship, sharing and etc. (PT6).

I think it is very important (to) experience it. In the B. Center, all (children) did. It was not really that they were learning, it was not a structured learning (as) we learned ABCs. They were playing (at) all day and they are learning through play. I definitely think that it is very important for preschool (PT12).

Only one PT stated preschoolers could not create schemas and images at that age.

Therefore, she thought creative drama was more prominent after kindergarten age.

Hmm, preschool… I think it is not as important as in kindergarten. Because in my HDFS class, we talk about when kids (preschoolers) start to make creating schemas like kindergarteners. I still did not understand, we were not fully developed in the areas of imagining and playing. But, (in the) kindergarten, … they (are) able to combine imagination and ideas with other kids, so then that's why they can play and creative drama and play (with) each other more. I think it is more important (than preschool age) (PT9).

When PTs were asked to express their opinions about the importance of creative drama in kindergartens, all stated that creative drama was essential during the kindergarten year. Creative drama helped children to have a smooth transition to the elementary grades (n=1), to increase children's creativity (n=2) and imagination (n=3), and to improve social skills (n=4). Some students reported more than one of above benefits.

The (children) are still growing. They are still. They have not really developed who they are. So, I think probably until middle school, you probably need to have creative play, because they (children) have some many opportunities that (they) can do with creative play. There is so many things you can do with it. … I (do not mention) Broadway show. If you think that so many different ones and they are still creative drama. But, (Broadway show) are different, (because they have) plot lines (PT2).

I think (it is still important), because they are younger and their imagination (is younger). They are still in creative stage. I think it is good (for their) brains (PT5).

All PTs explained that creative drama was important in kindergarten years, seven PTs also recommended for children in primary grades for the same reasons as for kindergarten.

(It is) so important. Because, you have to (do). You do a lot of imagining things like scenarios in your head, so that's how you make friends (PT4).

I think it becomes more (about the) social norms. Because, I believe that when you get into those grades, it is more about 'let's play house, let's play doctor.' (Creative drama) is that (what) you're looking at and you know. You're taking advantage of that while pretending to be yourself and putting yourself into those children's shoes and it (gives) you (children's) perspectives (PT6).

I think it (is) also important. I feel like they have no more things, so they have more ideas they should expand on about. So, they do not lose their creativity and imagination (PT9).

The remaining (n=5) mentioned that creative drama in the primary grades was not as necessary as it is in the earlier years. A few thought primary grades focused more on academic subjects (n=2) and sports (n=1).

I do not think as important (as), because they are at the age (that) they have certain friends, (they) play sports and stuff. But, it is still important (PT10).

Probably not (very) important. (The more important thing is that) they are learning academically (PT11).

The answers of eighth and ninth questions (What are the advantages and disadvantages of playing creative drama activities for young children?) ascertained the benefits of creative drama for young children. From the PTs' responses to these questions, I discerned three themes: social-emotional benefits, (n=11), cognitive and language benefits (n=12), and physical benefits (n=2). The following excerpts indicate the benefits of improving the social skills of children, cognitive and language skills, and physical skills of the children.

I think (the) social skills (are) learning how (to) do. (Thinking) outside the box and be(ing) creative are not (being) structured to point and they are fun. They are young and they should not (have) all education. … They're learning and having fun while they (are doing) (PT1).

Well, I would say imagination (and) sense of energy. I mean (the) kinesthetic learning and visualizing things are so important for young kids. So, I think that's again imagination again (PT7).

Himm, I said it gets brain thinking and thinking outside the box, and expressing (PT8).

There is (a) lot of advantages. I think social and emotional regulation (is important, when) working with other people. If a kid (is) playing with an object or having work with the toy and that is all about a physical development. (Also, it has benefits for) cognitive (development), if it is a puzzle (PT12).

On the other hand, only two PTs identified creative drama's possible disadvantages.

Because I feel like after a while (the) schools get so structured, maybe you'd thought what you will … not as creative as in a way. For instance, Santa Claus. You believe in Santa Claus (for) a long (time), and then you (found) it is not real. So, (it) could be a disappoint(ment) (for) kids (PT4).

Hmm. Disadvantages. If the child is shy, she (does) not want to be and she feels she has to. Because, it may be required, but I think it is good for children (PT5).

Furthermore, PTs were asked to define the role of creative drama in teaching curricular subjects. The majority of the PTs' (n=10) statements revealed they believed that creative drama could be used as a tool for teaching curricular subjects. Four PTs also indicated that creative drama helped to teach literacy and language across all ages. Three PTs wanted to learn ideas about implementing creative drama during math and science lessons since it is hard to conceptualize creative drama for children in these academic subjects

I think math is probably the hardest to incorporate that into, because it (math) is so much writing numbers and formulas. But, I know I had read books and acted out. And it definitely is important and definitely could be use with other subjects, such as history. Since I think they can go (with) some science projects and art scene. But, (it incorporates) more with social studies and literature (PT1).

I think it might hard to. I do not know. Maybe (we will) learn out (at) this semester to apply this to Math and Science. I think it will be easier with language arts and writing, but it will be interesting to see how you apply to math and science (PT5).

However, three PTs thought that teaching curricular subjects with creative drama was unrealistic in K-4, and did not know how creative drama met state standards.

I mean I think that creative drama make it more fun but I do not know how (we incorporate) with all these standards. I do not know how realistic it is. Especially in K-4 (PT11)

4.1.3 Understandings of Creative Drama

Questions one, six and seven of the interview tapped into the PTs' understandings of creative drama, in terms of the definition of creative drama, components of creative drama, and the connection between play and creative drama. Although four PTs did not have any idea about what creative drama was, eight PTs built a bridge between creative drama and other art forms, such as art, music, and theater.

> I believe it is a learning. (It is) not just a content or structured based. (It is) an art, music and acting things (PT1).

> I would say that it is different experiences through play. It is in terms of not necessarily playing with your hands or putting on a show like you'd see on Broadway (PT2).

> I would say (that it is) a lot of emotions and but not only emotions, maybe theatre and play. That's how I go it (PT4).

> I do not know what creative drama is, but I am interested to find out. Creative sounds imaginative and drama, and maybe play (PT8).

In relation to creative drama education understanding, PTs gave components of creative drama along with 'thinking outside of box' (n=4), 'pretending' (n=4), 'expression' (n=2), 'enjoyment' (n=2), 'imagination' (n=3) 'being confident' (n=2), 'creativity' (n=2) 'showing emotions' (n=1). The excerpts give verbatim descriptions.

> I think it is (an) expression, it is (a) freedom to learn your own way, because it is a syllabus (to) check points and do homework. Creative drama seems more (that) everyone gets a chance to (think) what they enjoy and do on your own way (PT1).

> I think (the components are) being confident within yourself and being able to express yourself without worrying about judgements, (and) just following your passion (PT2).

> Just being imaginative, and being creative as possible, thinking outside of the box (PT8).

PTs were also asked to define the relationship between creative drama and play (4th question). Most of the PTs (n=10) referred to creative drama as a form of play. In these PTs' responses, imagination and creativity were needed in both play and creative drama.

I feel (that) when kids play, they also act out certain things, because I know. I used to play at school. I used to play a house or with my Barbie dolls (to) make scenarios for my dolls and create different situations (PT4).

I think (they are) very similar. I think for both, you need your imagination and creativity. … But, you definitely need play with creative drama and you need creative drama with play (PT6).

Only one PT recognized creative drama and play as two separate concepts. The excerpt below shows the perspective of this PT.

Drama is more like scripted and (needs) more practice, but play is (that a) 'do your own' (PT10).

4.1.4 Confidence to Act and to Teach Creative Drama

The final section of the interview (questions 4, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18) had items that prompted PTs to convey their perceived confidence in involving and implementing creative drama. The 4th and 5th questions aimed elicit replies to infer PTs' perceived confidence in acting. Eight PTs stated that they did not like to act, and ten thought they were not good at acting. A couple PTs said that they could be good act acting but not in front of people.

Like acting? Hmm. I do not really necessarily like it. But I guess I would not act in front of a whole theatre, but if it is (for) kids, I (can) like acting someone else. Not in front of a lot people, I guess (PT9).

I cannot act, I am nervous, though (PT10).

The answers to 11th question (*How comfortable do you feel when you are doing creative drama? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that?*) gave data to infer PTs' confident levels when doing creative drama. Most PTs (n=12) rated their confidence level moderate between 4 and 6 (out of 10 highest), and only one PT said she was super comfortable with college friends.

I think I feel okay. But I do not think it is my strength. Like 5 (out of 10). I have never really (been) into. I am not a creative person; I am not into art or anything (PT2).

Hmm. I cannot. I would say probably 4 (out of 10). Because I am really nervous I cannot place myself into someone else. I cannot (know) even who I am, I am trying to figure out (PT10).

I was also curious about their perceived confidence level when they would teach creative drama with PreK, K, and Grades 1-4. All PTs asserted they would be very confident when they teach creative drama to preschool children with a rating between 7-10 confident levels.

I think (I am) pretty comfortable, because it is easy with them (children). They do not care about who's watching. So, you can face what you are implementing and how they are acting in the class. Like a 8 (out of 10) (PT1).

I feel very comfortable with that. Because, most children like doing (it) when they get excited. I get excited then. I'd say 9 or 10 (out of) (PT12).

I also assessed PTs' level of perceived confidence with teaching kindergarten creative drama. Although four had the perceived confidence level as indicated with preschoolers, eight expected that practicing creative drama in kindergarten classrooms would be harder than in the preschool classrooms. Only one PT explained the reason below:

I think it's getting harder (at) kindergarten. (Because), you have to teach certain things (at) certain times. I know every day, we have math. It is harder when you are so strict when you follow these common cores or standards strictly. Like 6 or 7 (out of 10) (PT1).

Interestingly, PTs' ideas became different when discussing creative drama in primary grades and 4th grade. Seven expressed that teaching creative drama would be harder when children were older, because then PTs would focus more on the students' academic curriculum. Remained thought they would feel very confident to teach creative drama even if students were older.

I say 5(out of 10). I think it is harder to implement with that age group, because there are so many curriculum things to need to be address(ed). And it is harder as they get older, I guess (PT8).

I probably go down for it and say 8 (out of 10), (It is) still high, because they're growing older and recognizing more things. As they get into 5th grade puberty so they getting judging. (to be judgmental). I am still very confident with being able to implement that I am psyching myself more out because I know they are getting older (PT6).

The next question stated, 'As a teacher, would you be competent to implement creative drama classroom? Why or why not? Can you tell me more about that?' All PTs indicated their concerns about not having enough knowledge on the topic, but they had a desire to implement creative drama in their future classrooms.

Himm, I feel I would need to learn more about it definitely, but I like the idea (PT9).

I mean that is obviously important and (does) not use enough. would not know how I (will) implement in my classroom, but I want to (PT11).

4.2 Post-Interviews

Post-interviews were administrated after the module was implemented. They aimed to obtain information on PTs' beliefs about the creative drama and also children's participation to creative drama activities, understandings on creative drama education as well as about the confidence to teach creative drama activities. Post-interviews evaluated beliefs and understandings of creative drama, and confidence to teach creative drama and thoughts about professional development.

4.2.1 Beliefs about Creative Drama

During post-interviews, PTs were asked to respond to questions about the importance of creative drama in PreK to fourth grade. PTs considered that creative drama was significant in preschool to 4th grade. PTs believed that children need to have deep exposure to creative drama

because children have different learning styles and they discover things in different ways (n=2),

children need to improve their social skills (n=4), and they need to play (n=4).

> I think it is important. Because, I think that students are so focusing on technology and they have no time to sit back or (having) an actual conversation or face to face interaction. I think it provides (to improve their) social skills and contributed cognitively. Because, they are thinking outside of the box, they have to make all these connections to learn the lessons. (This is) how I am going to interpret to make in drama. So, I think it is definitely important because I think students think of learning as one way strictly. Creative drama shows them how they can be versatile (PT2).

> I think it is so important, it is so important for kids at that age to be involve (in) creative dramatic and play. So, they can really have a chance to discover, explore, create and really use your imagination and kind of get out of comfort zone. And learn more (PT6).

> I think it is really important. Especially, after doing this class, I see why it is so important. And how easy it is to put in the classroom to make any changes you should (PT9).

> I find it very important (for preschool). Because it is way that children are always play(ing), actually doing improvisation. Because they are looking at how they parents are acting daily life and they could even explore careers. They may be want to persuade, like playing doctor or anything else. IT does not really (to) have a script, but there (are) certain aspects (that I) am going to perform surgery. I (can perform as a) teddy bear. Even with (a) second grade, during the school day, there is not a lot of opportunity to play, unfortunately. Any time down, I always see a group playing - teacher and students- that students (are) sitting up and teachers (are) reading books (PT5).

4.2.2 Understandings of Creative Drama

Third, fourth and the additional third questions (What do you think are the significant

components of creative drama, How would you make a connection between creative drama and

play, 3. Was there anything you learned better because of creative drama) aimed to gather PTs'

understandings of creative drama, in terms of the definition of creative drama, the connection

between play and creative drama, and also what PTs learned from the module. The majority of

PTs (n=10) explained creative drama with the word 'expression.' They defined components of

creative drama along with 'creativity' (n=6), 'imagination' (n=5), and 'different interpretation'

(n=3). Moreover, three PTs made a bridge between creative drama and writing. The excerpts

below show some of their descriptions.

> I believe that creative drama is (a way of) teaching children through lessons that allowed them to express themselves in creative ways, (such as) drawing, singing, dancing and acting (PT1).

> I think creative drama is engaging in, acting out and playing a game, but also learning at the same. I think I did not realize (before) than you can actually be in creative drama. I thought it was more a break in the day, just a fun thing to do, but you can actually learn valuable social skills through creative drama (PT11).

> I think I feel (that) it is not acting, but it is incorporating and expression (rather) than writing something down. It is (a) drawing pictures or doing a skit, (such as that) we did the freeze-frames, we did not technically act; but doing something other than just writing (PT12).

> PTs were also asked to illustrate the relationship between creative drama and play. Seven

of PTs referred to creative drama as a form of play. They classified for creative drama, with

educational play (n=4), make-believe/fantasy play (n=2), and teacher-guided play (n=1).

> I think creative drama and play are different. But I think (they) both intervene; because, play defines in many different terms in a broad spectrum. Creative drama can be play and make believe play. For example, if you are doing fairy tale language arts or something, they are overall the same things (PT2).

> I feel like, it is almost like teacher-guided or teacher-directed play, not so much free play. I think teacher has an influence where they kind of either set the tone or the theme (PT4).

> I think creative is a mostly play, of course you can put in educational elements in. Creativity drama is fun and I think creative drama has a lot of play (PT9).

> According to the other PTs (n=5), creative drama and play were the same in that both

needed creativity and imagination (n=4), and also costumes (n=1).

> I think creative drama is a play, because you get a chance to be silly, you get a chance to be creative, you get this chance to use your imagination, I think that's what play is (PT6).

> I think that they are really connected, because creative drama engages play by being creative. Play and creativity go hand in hand. You have to (be) willing to be out of comfort zone, and think outside of the box (PT8).

PTs stated that creative drama helped them and children socialize (n=12) and enhance communication skills (n=5). They also highlighted that they learned ways how to incorporate creative drama into the daily curriculum (n=12).

> Yes. I think kids can learn social skills through creative drama because they are playing with other kids and they're learning how to play with other kids and communicating and using their social skills. (How about you?) Yeah, I did the same. I was able to talk to different people, we were with different people in different groups each time, so I met with new people. (How did it affect you in general?) I thought it was really nice, because (at) a lot classes, you do not know everybody, so this is a good way to getting know everybody. I guess (I can) learn better (PT6).

> Yeah, I did not really know much about it until you came to ECE class. But, I learned a lot things, games and warm-up activities (that) I can use (them) in (my) classroom, especially to muscle memory things and use your body which is pretty cool. It is good to get student' interest, before actually setting down and starting a lesson. I definitely like warm-up games in the beginning, just getting students to move around with motion and get them ready to sit down and focus. Because sometimes they're so anxious or they don't want to do something, not sit at the desk. So, creative drama would be really to get them focus and also do something not like textbook really did (PT8).

> I think it is really nice. I said (there are) lectures all day and I think that it got me (to) know my classmates a lot better. It is really nice to write lesson plans which I was not used to write (PT1).

> It is like a helping class bonding, with the group work, the small group work you had a work in. It definitely (helps) lesson planning and (including) different standards in the grades (that) we want to implement with it for. It shows us different lessons (can) do (with) creative drama and it show us how to do it (in) different ways. I like the discussion part, too (PT4).

Only one PT mentioned an adverse effect of the Creative Drama Module. The excerpt below shows her description.

> Probably just the fact that, people (who are) surrounding me were not on the same level of creativity and background (of) creative drama. Because I know personal experiences (can be) so much fun when you have really with creative energetic people. When they're really willing to do it. Sometimes with this group of people in the sleepy time of the day, you're tired because you have to upload a paper at that same energy level and you cannot focus the model (PT6).

4.2.3 Confidence to Act and To Teach Creative Drama

The questions about acting (Do you like to act? Explain, Do you think you are good at acting? Explain, How comfortable do you feel when you are doing creative drama? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that? How comfortable do you feel when you implement creative drama with preschool children, K children and primary grades children? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that?) were intended to gather PTs' beliefs about creative drama after the module was implemented. The first question aimed to examine their confidence in acting. All but one stated they liked to act and they thought they were good at acting. The excerpt below shows their thoughts.

> I think I definitely warmed up to. I would not say I am like a full fledge actor like I would be in a show, but I think I definitely will do within my classroom and can be full open to the scenario. I think it is (a) good interpretation to learn (PT2).

> Yeah. I have got a lot of experiences through (this) research and I had to think outside of the box and (creative drama) definitely made me more comfortable with acting and saying in front of class. I'd say average after standing up and putting on freeze frames and stuff you have to be creative (PT8).

> I (am) actually fine and it (is) very entertaining. It is your own personal perspective and to take on a new type of role, so you really do not take yourself. I am embarrassing myself but more as you're exploring like new ideas, maybe get off your own idea and comfort zone and try something new (PT12).

Two PTs thought they were not good at acting in; however, they liked to act, and they could do it.

> I do not like to act but I like the activities, I would like to use in my classroom (PT7).

> I do not think I am good at acting. But I think I like to act, it was kind of refreshing coming once a week. It is just like play games, have fun and a stress-reliever in a way (PT11).

Asked about confidence levels during their involvement in creative drama, all PTs expressed they felt more comfortable when they were in front of people and while doing creative

drama and activities. The following excerpts indicate their thoughts about doing creative drama

with their peers.

> I mean throughout each week, I got more comfortable specially working with my group members. So, (in the) beginning I was maybe 5, by the end, it is 7 or 8. I did not feel comfortable when standing up (in front of) the class. But, in the beginning it was kind of weird. It is like a different one normally we do (S8).

> I think for the most part, I knew my classmates and I got better and I felt more comfortable. But in the beginning, I felt definitely little more not as comfortable as now (PT9).

> I would say either 8 or 9. It depends when and where (we) are doing creative drama. Actually, when we were (in the) warm –up (activities) outside of the Palmer (Museum), I was a lot more self-conscious in performing. I feel less confident, comparing to when we were in the classroom (PT12).

With one exception PTs thought they did not want to participate at first; however, they

liked to be involved later in the semester. They were also asked about factors that affected their

participation. Six disclosed personal reasons (such as sickness, cold weather, and mood), four

mentioned space (indoor/outdoor), three revealed that their peers' reactions affected them. Two

told that the topic could be reason and one exclaimed that my leadership was really helpful for

their participation to the module. The following exemplified responses about participation.

> The personal reasons: I personally like always (do it). Sometimes, like one day, I was not really feel well and sick, I did not want to participate. I personally always like to participate. Except maybe one or two days like a rough day, or a cold day (PT1).

> The space: For the most part I liked. I did outside the Palmer museum like more hesitant, because we were outside, other people could see us. It was not being at the museum, it was being outside the museum, it was more uncomfortable. More comfortable in the classroom (PT12).

> The peers effect: I think the room is fine. The room is pretty big I thought that was a good room to do. I think maybe the classmates. Some of people (were) tired or they did not want to do what everyone (was) excited. Because on some days (I) was not on the mood, (it) decreased my participation (PT9).

> The topic: Probably, like topic. If I was really into the topic. I really like (to play) the game (PT10).

My leadership: Overall, you are very energetic about what we're doing that day. So, it really helped us even get energizing to us try something. That really helps if actually people (are) doing appreciate or want to act. Your skills make us safe. Safe environment (PT5).

4.2.4 Communication Skills

Excellent communication skills, such as listening, and interpersonal, verbal, and nonverbal expressive communication skills, are required for teachers in their profession. Teachers facilitate learnings and information, guide children to accomplish their responsibilities, and encourage children to solve their problems effectively. To be successful in this teaching and learning process, teachers need to develop their own communication skills effectively.

In the Creative Drama Module, the first week aimed for group collaboration, and conversation and the following weeks include different warm-up games and games about building communication and conversation skills (for an example lesson see Appendix A). During the post-interview, all but one expressed the importance of communication skills they gained through the Creative Drama Module by answering different questions. Through the creative drama activities, they connected and talked to each other, and did activities within the groups more comfortably (n=8), built a group bonding (n=4), and their anxiety was lessened (n=3).

> I said in the beginning, I wasn't comfortable by doing the creative drama. I got closer to my classmates. I don't feel awkward anymore. I don't mind talking to anyone probably I wouldn't talk to people my class besides people I already knew. As a teacher, you should try get whole class (to) be friend. They don't have to be the best friends. They are going to have people feel comfortable in the classroom and feel like okay to be themselves and that's how I feel after. Because kids are anxious, they don't feel safe, comfortable or to be themselves (PT9).

> I think it was a change of pace what I am used to like every day college classes. I think being have fun, and be with my friends or classmates is refreshing, changing paces from usual. (What do other things help you?) I think I created a bond in our class and creative drama becomes people to be friends probably I wouldn't have been friends with. I definitely learn how to communicate better, when having to come up with different scenes. You have to be a leader; sometimes other people take charge. (Do you think it is important to know each classmate in the classroom?) Yeah. I think so. Actually, in this

program, I feel there (are) not that many people, so it is good to know as many people as you can. It helps with other classes. It is good like a way to format community (It affects your learning?) Yeah, definitely, I think it is in a positive way. We all like working together to achieve the same thing, we can bounce ideas off like others. It is helpful (PT11).

4.2.5 Professional Preparation

All PTs discussed at the post-interview that they deepened their understandings of the pedagogical ideas about creative drama by participating in the weekly creative drama activities. During the peer teaching, they found opportunities to apply their developing understanding in practical context (See section 4.4 for further analysis). PTs found the Creative Drama Module was useful for their own and children's development in many areas and in many layers. The following are exemplifying PTs' reflections.

(For PTs)

I think it definitely taught me how I would be able to use them in the classroom. It is useful because if I did not know about it, I would probably never use it in the classroom once I am a teacher. I think it is useful now because now I am able to I put implement in my classroom. … I think it is really nice to getting let go like I said lectures all day and I think that it got me know my classmates a lot better and it is really nice to write lesson plans like I was not used to writing (PT1).

And I think for me it is even (at) twenty years old, it teaches me that you can step away (from) the book and interpret your own way, it is still okay to show your understanding in different way (PT2).

As a teacher, yes. I think it is a way for your children to see that you are playful and in a way to get information from them (rather) than a traditional lecture, tests and etc. It is useful because they think it's a game when the teacher can be assessing in that way. It is useful for them to express themselves, too (PT4).

During the sleepy time of the day, it can be quite hard to pay attention, but once you start doing creative drama, your energy rises and you get more excited and you get more (in) general pumping, and it something that it helps you focus (on) more. It is useful because as you grow older, you learn that. I mean you lose (a) sense of fun and get more into work. I think that is so sad. I think you should be able to still have that energy and excitement as when you were (a) kid to when you are an adult. I think it is important for adults to be fun and creative; otherwise, you just have a dull life (PT6).

(For children)

> Yeah, I think definitely it would be useful for children, because all the kids are learning in different ways to get them out of their seats, and get them in different groups (S1).

> I think for the children it is definitely useful. Because as I said before, it steps aside their comfort zone and (It helps) think different ways to block interpret of their own stories (PT2).

> Children (are) definitely hands-on. I mean they need it. (It is) so important for them to play and (a) create story and helps with literacy, with history, but it is very sneaky. You do not realize it is, but it could be acted something happened yesterday subconsciously, not even realize it. So, it is so important for them through specific subjects, it helps them (PT6).

Moreover, two PTs indicated that the module was useful since I shared my energy and confidence to PTs. Therefore, they thought they were in a safe place to act out.

> You are very energetic about what we're doing. It really helped us energizing, and try something (PT5).

> I feel like you always so well planned out you know what you are doing. You are always writing everything connected all activities, it made it flow so nice. I mean I think the quality is good and useful (PT12).

Consistent with other data sources, they also expressed that the module matched with their learning needs. According to PTs, the module provided different ways to directly apply what they learned about creative drama into classrooms, as well. All PTs would like to implement creative drama activities in their future classrooms. Two of them also stated that their implementation would depend on the state standards and the school principles. The following are reflections.

> Yeah. I think the students that I taught would love this, like my teacher did things like this, not like specifically building on we did just do one thing but if I would do, they would love these activities. I definitely (think) it is (effective). Because kids like things like we did 'under the sea' lesson, kids go on playground that day and continue like pretending to be 'under the sea' like that, so build outside of the classroom also (PT1).

> Yes, I think so. Because I will definitely build my previous skills. I have had my social skills and everything. I think it is important for the future, I will also implement into my classroom for the student benefits. It made (me) feel comfortable enough to put it my

own classroom and be able to implement in different subjects, because we did make up our own, such as language arts, science, social studies. Having an exposure to different interpretations help me to use (in my future classes) (PT2).

Obviously to see how much time you have and you can do it. We really like lesson-based plans and incorporating a quick game into would be easier (PT3).

Like I said at first it did not think it would contribute my professional development. I did not want to teach younger grades, I thought that play was for younger grades, but now I definitely see that you can make the roles and (make it) more sophisticated for older students, I think that works very well. At first, I did not plan being a preschool teacher, I want to teach 3rd or 4th grade, now I can see how creative drama can be effective for the older kids, too. Because, I think they can kind of relax and enjoy themselves, but also learn and may not be realizing what they learn. It is social, too. So, it can develop those skills and they can develop creativity (PT4).

It is an introducing another way to teach kids, another fun way to get them in engaged. You need all those experience. It is from our experiences, common core, (and) standards. We have 15 minutes to recess for actual play. I definitely would love to (implement) but it depends how the school district sets up with our curriculum. If it is acceptable, then it will be fantastic I would love to implement it. But if it is not possible or children are already overwhelmed, it may be a bit difficult to add more actual play. When they are actually doing it, you (are) not just standing up and reciting the book, they (are) actually experiencing it or making sense of on their own way (PT5).

Being with kids, you need to be energetic, and you need to be imaginative to help them or facilitate them with discovery with the help of creative drama. I know I am going to definitely use creative drama and play in my classroom. I need that (it has to be a) part of my class, I need my kids to have fun and be creative and imaginative. I personally love being goofy, silly, just being myself and acting out things (PT6).

If I was allowed to, I would like to implement. It depends on the school, if it lets me, yes. I think it is really effective with mostly (for) the younger (PT7).

Creative drama has (a) different style of teaching I have never heard of. I am used to traditional, (such as) the textbook. You learn from this. You know what I mean. So, creative drama enhances my profession career, and make me unique. Definitely some activities I want to take into consideration in my classroom incorporate into the curriculum (PT8).

I think so. Because it gave me more idea what kinds of things kids like, instead of thinking 'wow' kids probably like this. I think it gave me more professional perspective and what kind of things actually (I can) do. I think creative drama helped me see things differently. I think after seeing what you can do with it, it is easy. I think it would be more fun as a teacher to do worksheet or do on the board. I feel I teach them in a fun way with creative drama. Fun for me and fun for them and I think they would remember stuff they learn better (PT9).

Yeah. I want to be teacher. This is definitely something that I include in my classroom. Definitely something that I need it to be able to specially to teach I need to go out and up

front of bunch of people, and act out scenes. I like how you let us also (implement) your own plans. I learned a lot of games (during) the entire semester (PT10).

I think learning (creative drama) in a different, and unique way is helpful for me. I do not take notes, PowerPoints, and slides. I think it is more creative and it helps you learn better. I think that a lot of modules we did, I can see myself in implementing into my classroom or just different aspects of it. Just like creating good environment, inclusive environment to everyone feel welcome and to both also learn new things (PT11).

Yeah. Definitely. Especially at the end, everybody came up with their own creative drama activities and created own. Seeing other people's styles definitely helped me be aware of ways to teach certain subjects. It was a nice resource to everybody else's how they're incorporating to different subjects into it. It will make the learning more memorable for (also) the kids, just more enjoyable which is obviously important want them have fun. It helps the mindset. Honestly, the mindset the modules really help with. I would love to implement the module. I know that it is effective for kids. Instead of children sitting at the desk and struggling write one to two sentence, they cohesively wrote 3, 4,5 sentences on small that space exploration in creative drama (PT12).

All but one did not have time to practice the module activities, with only one PT having the opportunity to try one warm-up game in the classroom.

Yeah. Actually. We had to do (in) one my classes morning greetings (PT12).

During the post- interviews, PTs reported benefiting from participating in the Creative Drama Module. Furthermore, they articulated their ideas and suggestions about the module, weekly reflections, and peer teaching. These parts are explained in the following.

4.3 Weekly Reflections

Each week, the weekly creative drama lesson was implemented taking between 60-75 minutes. After the discussion part in the circle sitting, PTs were asked to fill out the weekly reflection form (sample weekly reflection see Appendix G). All PTs in the classroom discussed that they gained more understandings of the creative drama components by participating in weekly creative drama activities and peer teachings. Moreover, they stated they saw opportunities to apply their developing understanding in a practical context.

Figure **4-1**: The Improvisation activity at Week 2.

According to their weekly reflections, PTs mostly explored the main themes of the

module's activities. The excerpt below shows their weekly reflections.

In this activity, we explored different physical activity games, get-to-know-your games, and

collaborative imagination games (PT9- for the second week).

> I explored different types of play and games I could use in my future classroom (PT7 – for the second week).
>
> How to work as a team and collaborate to come up with solid ideas and creative ones (PT10 - for the third week).
>
> The understanding of strength and weakness. It explored how no one person is perfect (PT2 – for the fourth week).
>
> We explored creativity in the creation of our superheroes (PT8 – for the fourth week).
>
> We explored music, individual creativity and imagination and team work (PT12 – for the fifth week).
>
> We explore fairytales and our inner-creativity (PT1 – for the sixth week).

Science and dramatic play; climate change/global warming out (PT6 – eighth week).

Ways to promote healthy ways reserve the earth /save it (PT12 – eighth week).

Body movement, parts, obesity (S3 – ninth week).

How to use improvisation in order to make a scene about a painting (PT2 – tenth week).

Art work and creating a story to go with it in different periods (PT4 – eleventh week).

Figure **4-2**: The Freeze-image activity from Week 5.

PTs also indicated their favorite parts of each lesson. They stated that these activities

developed their creativity and extended their comfort level (See Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2).

My favorite part of this activity was getting to know my classmates better through being silly and working together (PT9 - for the second week).

My favorite activity was the freeze picture because it really challenges us as a group and had us work together'(PT6 – for the second week).
I like the improvisation and writing, acting and drawing! This incorporated so much creativity in different modes (PT4 - for the third week).

(My favorite one is) making cleaning fun (PT1 – for the fifth week).

I like making an alternate ending because it allowed us to work together to create something (PT1 – for the sixth week).

The drawing - because it was helpful to me since I'm a visual learner (PT7 – eight the sixth week).

I like coming up w/ solutions to reduce global warming w/ my group by drawing and writing! (PT4 – eight the sixth week).

My favorite part was making the song because it was fun, catchy, and memorable (PT6 – ninth week).

Creating songs because it was fun to turn everyday nursery rhyme turn it academic (PT5 – ninth week).

The first activity because it was silly and got everyone laughing while doing it (my favorite) (PT7 – tenth week).

Taking a 'field trip' and being in a new setting (PT1 – eleventh week).

'Coming up with a creative story based on the picture' (PT11– eleventh week).

'I liked that each group had different time periods and instructions' (PT12 – eleventh week).

Moreover, PTs also shared the most challenging parts of the module's activities. They mostly mentioned the games as a challenging part, but some PTs talked about their comfort level that was the most challenging part in the first weeks.

The most challenging part was feeling comfortable enough with each group member since we did not know each other before this (PT8 – for the second week).

The most challenging part was being open and willing to fully interact in the activities. I sometimes get uncomfortable around new people (PT12 – for the second week).

The most challenging part was creating the story using the alphabet. It was hard to think of a sentence using the next word (PT3 – for the third week) (See Figure 4-3).
The most challenging part was coming up with a story ending because not the whole group agreed (PT1 - for the third week).

The most challenging part of this activity was learning to compromise ideas of our final story because everyone had different opinion (PT8 – for the third week).

Looking back on previous knowledge I learned about the 80's via music videos and TV dramas/history documentaries' (PT12 - for the third week).

It was challenging for me to sing 'row row' in a sad mood because it is not usually a sad song' (PT11 – for the fifth week).

I did not love the freeze-image because it limited expression of our ideas (PT1 – for the sixth week).

The most challenging part was the combined stories and making snap shots because it was hard to act out (PT12 – for the sixth week).

The most challenging part was figuring out what affects global warming has on the earth and acting it out (PT6 – eighth week).

The most challenging part was the skit because it was hard to think of an end of the story in the 16th century (PT6 – eleventh week).

Acting out the 'commercial' because I do not like to act (PT5 – for the fourth week).

The most challenging part was the combined stories and making snap shots because it was hard to act out (PT8 – for the sixth week).
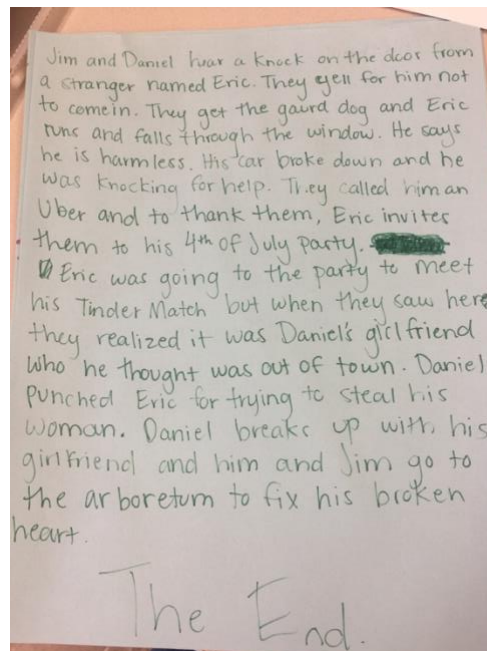
Figure **4-3**: One of the PT groups' stories from Week 3.

Furthermore, they provided suggestions in order to change the activities, and they gave examples of how they could implement the same lessons in their future classrooms. The excerpt below shows their suggestions:

I would use this activity into my curriculum during group projects or even circle time in the morning to wake everyone up (PT9- for the second week).

I plan to use alternate ending activities to promote creativity and group work to promote social development (PT12 - for the third week). (See Figure 4-3).

None, I would keep it the way it is just change depending on the age of children you're doing with (PT7 - for the third week).

I would incorporate different books/comics into the lesson, make a unit about heroes and helping others (PT12 – for the fourth week).

I would have them decorate the hats so they could make it personal (PT1 – for the fifth week).

This would be a great lesson for collaborative group work and story making (PT12 – for the fifth week).

Have background info on their fairy tales (PT11 – for the sixth week).

I would allow children to draw their story as well as acting it out (PT12 – for the sixth week). (See figure 4-4).

I would use this when teaching about sustainability and climate change (PT6 – eighth week). (See Figure 4-5).

I would use it make students aware of ways to save the earth in science class (PT8 – eight the sixth week).

Add more games, real global warming solutions and objects (like reusable water bottles) (PT9 – eight the sixth week).

I would add a physical activity of students tracing their bodies on paper and labeling important body parts (PT8 – ninth week).

I would add that are need to draw students body on a big paper and locate the body parts (PT4 – ninth week). (See Figure 4-6).

I think it would be cool to collaborate with the school art teacher to see what they were learning and incorporate that into the classroom (PT12 – tenth week).

I would use it with older kids because I think little kids get a little rowdy and too excited (PT6 – eleventh week).

I would change being indoors because small children cannot be out in the cold (PT1 – eleventh week).

Figure **4-4**: The Week 6's Improvisation Activity.

Finally, PTs evaluated their participation and my leading skills. All of them thought they participated and followed the rules in most weeks. Their participation also was sometimes affected by others.

I did not feel like I participated much because my other group members were adamant about their own ideas (PT9 – for the fourth week). (See Figure 4-7).

I enjoyed participating and I liked that it was mostly entire class playing together (PT9 – for the fifth week).

Good, everyone participated (PT7 – for the sixth week).
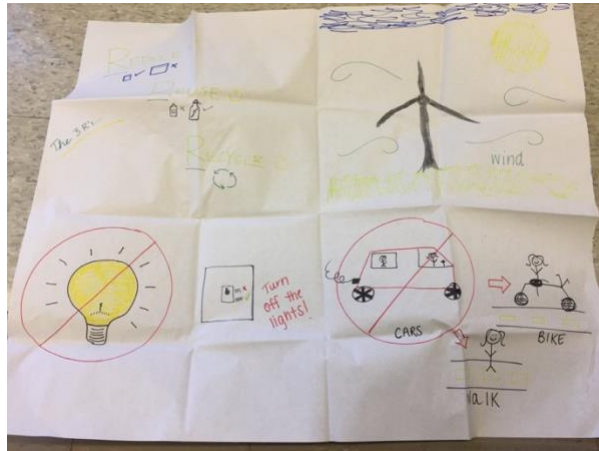
Figure **4-5**: The Example of PTs' posters from Week 8.

Additionally, they found my directions were clear and understandable.

> The leader gave encouraging comments and gave examples to help us understand the games (PT9- for the second week).

> Very good. Did a good job explaining and boosting morale (PT5 – for the second week).

> Very good like always (PT10 – for the fifth week).

> You were great. I like your creativity, suggestions and how you are open to our reflections/criticism (PT4 – for the sixth week).

> I liked the comments extended learning ideas. They were very helpful (PT6 – ninth week).

> I like how Tugce asked us about what we liked and did not like. Also, how she asked about our feelings towards her jumping into our scene (PT6 – tenth week).

> Very thoughtful and specific. Your questions our interactions throughout our improvisation, which allows us to be specific our roles (PT5 – eleventh week).
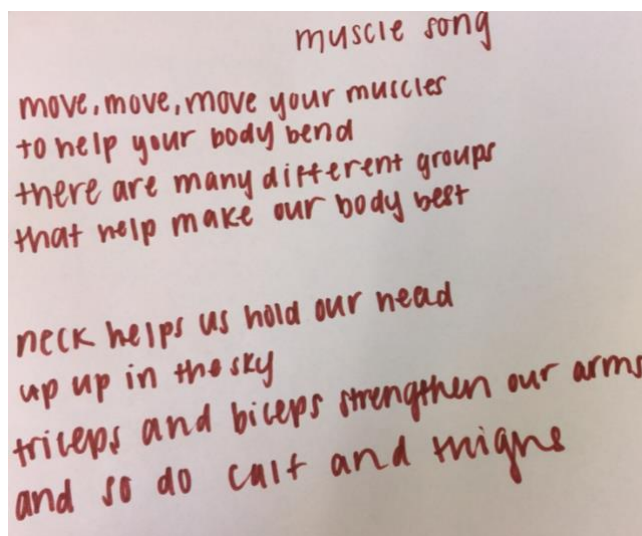
Figure **4-6**: A Group song for the Week 9.

Correspondingly, PTs also revealed thoughts and reflections about the weekly reflections

in the post-interview. Twelve PTs reported they found the weekly reflections were useful in terms

of thinking more broadly about the activities and remembering them quickly.

> I really like the weekly reflections because like there was thing out one of the questions what would you change. When I was going to make my lessons, I thought about things like other lessons that I would change things that I want to implement in my lessons. I like looking at over all kinds make me see what worked and what did not work for myself and the class in general (PT1).

> I thought they would be helpful in the moment, because they got lot of experiences remembering step by step back. But after the class, I do not really think we can make it different we did them weekly. I was able to recall experience and drawn it was really kind they are beneficial after class I would not think so. In the moment (Clarifying) after each activity was good, because you got the recall and remember the step by step and identify what was important to you (PT2).

> I thought they were good, sometimes they were repetitive but it helps for your research and everything (PT11).
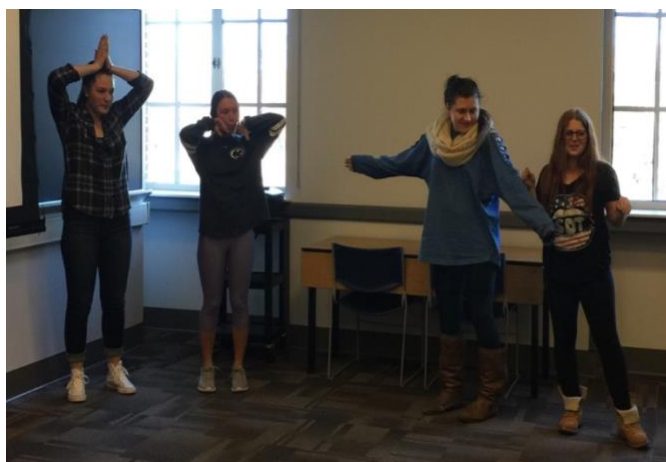
Figure **4-7**: PTs improvisation activity for Week 4

Four of PTs offered to fill out the weekly information in different times. Since they filled

out the forms at the end of the day, they believed that some classmates did not have time to

complete and they did not write their own perspectives.

> I think that once you did the reflection at the end of the class, I think that it should be a
> different time if possible. Because maybe doing something let's reflect on what we did
> last week and kind of drag your memories to do it before you do creative drama. The
> only reason I said this, because at the end of the class, people are rushing, and write
> whatever they want, they just wanted to get out, they just wanted to leave, they wanted
> to do their own things. Writing reflections at the following week by giving us a certain
> amount of time is better. 5-20 minutes, you do it and we can go over next activity (PT6).

> I do not think they helped that much, at the end I know a lot of people wrote few things
> and left. I try to think about it. Talking at the end, in the circle was good (PT9).

> They were very repetitive, same thing in every week. Sometimes, I was in rush, and I
> just said one word not giving really thoughtful response. I think it may be shorter, be
> more like less questions, then it would be thought my answers (PT12).

4.4 Peer Teaching

PTs designed peer teaching lesson plans (for a sample plan see Appendix H) in terms of

creative drama activities between weeks 12-14. The lesson plan framework was given, and PTs

followed the structure of the lesson plan for their peer teaching activities. PTs were assigned to six groups. During the peer teaching, all PTs in the classroom discussed and cooperatively designed the lesson plans in their groups before their implementations. These plans consisted of warm-up games, an improvisation activity, and the discussion part. Each lesson plan also included the topic, materials, content areas, standards, and grade parts. The content areas of PTs' plans were three physical education, two literacy and language arts, and one math topic for preschool to the second graders. Directly after each peer teaching, I led a 15-20 min discussion with all PTs.

PTs started their plans with active and physical games for the warm-up. For example, one group played music, and when the music stopped, the peer leader called a number, and then this number of PTs formed together. The other group used a name game that was saying the name and followed by a dance movement. PTs' improvisation activities consisted of stories and scenes giving by the peer leaders or made-up during the improvisation activities. Four groups ended their lessons by discussing what they felt about their participation and the conducted activities in the circle; however, one group let others draw on paper their final thoughts and feelings (See Attachment G Peer Teaching Lesson Plan Example).

After each group's peer teaching, other PTs were asked to answer the reflection questions, which were the same as the weekly reflections. All PTs explored and understood the main themes of each peer teaching activity. They were two spring themes, one math education, one physical education, and one literacy education. When PTs replied to what they explored in the activity, they wrote the theme, such as spring, math, or yoga. (See Figure 4-8).

Figure **4-8**: Peer Teaching from Week 13.

All PTs liked their peers' activities. They mostly stated that warm-up games were fun, and they made PTs relax. 'My favorite part was the yoga because we got to stretch and relax (PT6 – for Group 1's activity).' Similar comments made by other PTs also focused on the benefits of these activities on creativity and collaboration.

Definitely yoga and being able to use my creativity (PT10 – for the Group 1's activity).

I really like the storyline with each group explaining a different part (PT12– for the Group 1's activity).

I like steal the bacon (PT12– for the Group 2's activity).

The splat game was fun because it was used your brain and body (PT9– for the Group 3's activity).

I like writing out a script, it was creative (PT4– for the Group 3's activity).

The splat game because it was a good warm-up to people involved (PT7– for the Group 3's activity).

My favorite part was the Easter egg hunt because it was fun (PT5– for the Group 4's activity).

My favorite part was the first activity because we really needed to collaborate (PT6– for the Group 5's activity).

I loved the improv at the beginning and making a story make sense without any words (PT12– for the Group 6's activity).
Most PTs found the most challenging part of the activities was creating a new story or

acting out a new story.

The most challenging part was the group story because we needed real collaboration (PT6 – for the Group 1's activity).

The most challenging part was making up the story because we needed to be really creative (PT6 – for the Group 2's activity).

Yoga, because I am wearing jeans (PT12– for the Group 1's activity).

Making sure each group had enough objects (PT12– for the Group 2's activity).

The name game and administering it. The class did not seem very into it (PT5– for the Group 4's activity).

Remembering everyone's names and movements in warm up game (PT3– for the Group 4's activity).

Thinking of something to add to freeze image because I was lost (PT3– for the Group 6's activity).

Nine PTs would like to change or make an addition to their peers' activities. They stated

they extended games, and added more stories and drawing parts and they changed the order of

games, as well.

Incorporate more story than allow students to collaborate ending (PT2– for the Group 1's activity).

Add music for soothing effect for yoga (PT4– for the Group 1's activity).

I would change the beginning story so each group had a different beginning and ending (PT12– for the Group 3's activity).

Somehow make the splat game more educational using different words (PT9– for the Group 3's activity).

Maybe a different beginning activity (PT5– for the Group 4's activity).

Use objects other than eggs because not everyone celebrates Easter – do scavenger hunt instead (PT3– for the Group 4's activity).

I would allow them to have more characters instead of just the ones at the warm up (PT12– for the Group 5's activity).

Do the drawing activity before acting out (PT9– for the Group 6's activity).

Moreover, they indicated that peers' leadership skills and participation were well by giving comments such as 'good' or 'great.' Only two PTs criticized their peers' leadership, and the excerpts are below:

Clear, except for acting part (PT3– for the Group 4's activity).

If the leaders seemed more interested in the topic, they do not seem prepared (PT12– for the Group 6's activity).

Last but not least, each group member also evaluated their activities. Most of PTs (n=10) believed that they were prepared, and that they participated. Two of them criticized themselves and provided comments with the following excerpts.

Administrating this activity was interesting it made me think of ways I could use this in younger grades (PT12– for the own group activity).

I wish I could have talked to the class more (but I lost my voice so they could not hear me) (PT9– for own group activity).

Moreover, PTs commented on the benefits they gained from peer teaching, which enabled them to improve their professional learning while evaluating their teaching skills, understanding different teaching perspectives, and analyzing their teaching practices. Providing opportunities for PTs to teach their lessons in a peer-reviewed and peer-participated helped them to improve their teaching skills in terms of the subject area being taught by themselves and other group members. Peer Teaching activities gave them a chance to reframe the activities from different teaching perspectives. The followings are exemplifying PTs' reflections:

I think I like, since we are all future educators, it is important to get other future educators' perspective, because the way you think of activity that does not same necessarily. They are

(going to) interpret the same activity incorporating different suggestions. PT1 and I agreed few suggestions that I did not even think of when we were creating the lesson plan. So, I thought it was important because it allowed you to experience and step back and you're getting different perspectives. You are also self-teaching after the listening and you can take back and learn for examples (PT2).

I like it. Because you got everyone's inputs and see all things differently, so everyone (has) many different good games like we all found different ones and we just like favorite out of them (PT3).

I like that because we can work together (on) different things and then at the end, with all the other peers can discuss what we liked about it, things can be improved and what would change or stay the same. That's good because those are your colleagues technically they're giving you feedback (PT4).

I love peer teaching. I think it is less over whelming. You have more people to keep control and manage a classroom and I really like bouncing ideas (PT5).

Since they had the opportunity to prepare and practice teaching particular topics through creative drama activities, PTs expressed learned from each other, and they had ideas about how they would implement in their future classrooms.

I like to, because it gives us an idea how to implement in our class, it was a good practice how we can do it (PT7).

I think that was awesome. Because I felt I was doing actually lesson plan, I felt powerful, I was a teacher, I thought I learned a lot of others, too. Some of them are great (PT10).

I really like that. Because I think it is really important that like we did all and now we can prove and we can also write a lesson for it figure out how to do it in the classroom (PT11).
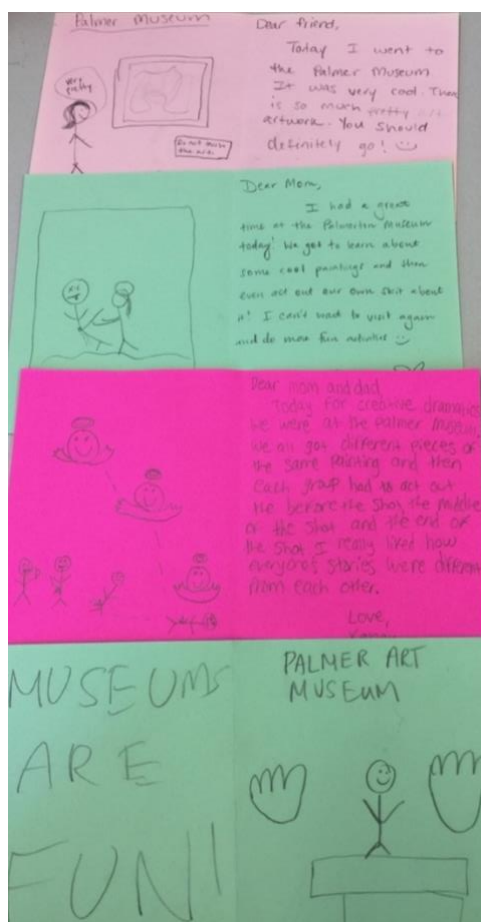
Figure **4-9**: Some PTs' card examples from Week11.

4.5 The Researcher Journal

The multiple data sets used in this study indicated the value of experiences on PTs' personal and professional growth as prospective teachers. The last data collection method was the researcher's journal which aimed to evaluate the weekly module activities. Another purpose of the journal was to collect suggestions for the improvements of the module for future implementations. The researcher journal supported the previous data collection methods which provide PTs' reflections and reviews regarding the Creative Drama Module. The photos and

weekly documents such as pictures, cards, poems and stories written by PTs supported the journal notes (See Figure 4-9 and Figure 4-11). Every week, I wrote my reflections and evaluations, which include: (1) researcher's self-evaluation, (2) activity evaluation, and (3) evaluation of PTs. In self-evaluation, I commented on the sufficiency and effectiveness of materials, presentation of activities, and using mimics, gestures, and body language. The activity evaluation included the dimension of using time, appropriateness of content and for PTs, and modification of activities during the practice. The last part of the researcher's journal involved observation of PTs' activeness, feelings, and thoughts/ideas regarding the activity.

4.5.1 Researcher's Self-Evaluation

During the module, I provided each week's materials, such as papers, balls, and crayons. I always brought extra materials (e.g. markers, papers, worksheets, and construction paper), in case they were needed. Most of the time my directions were clear and understandable. If PTs misunderstood the directions, I immediately explained, and PTs could follow the directions. PTs were always encouraged and supported during their improvisations. The basic rules -such as for freeze-image: do not move or talk or make a sound- were given before they prepared their improvisation (See Figure 4-1). Moreover, I helped them improve their postures, scenes, dialogues, and confidence by using her mimics, gestures, and body language effectively.

4.5.2 The Activity Evaluation

According to my notes, the lessons in the module lasted approximately one hour each week. The goals of the activities were met, and all of the activities were for PreK to 4th grade. Most of the goals were the same as creative drama main aims. Some of the goals were to build

self-confidence, expand self-awareness, build social awareness, develop imagination, help PTs

think independently, improve cooperatively working skills, enhance language practice, and

awareness of communication, express a healthy release of emotions, develop problem-solving

skills and boost their creativity.

> I expressed my opinions based on class discussions with PTs and my observations of their participant. PTs sometimes did not like the activities because of personal reasons as well as the unsatisfied other PTs' performance. Since PTs were not as informed as to I expected in the content areas, I changed some of my activities during the process. Furthermore, I provided suggestions for future implementations. The excerpts below are from my notes:
> For Dance Game, I changed the last part that those who squat latest go out of the game. I asked the latest groups different questions and let them answer, for example; jump three times; what is your favorite color, (by showing an object) which shape is this. Next time, I can ask what they eat yesterday or I can ask them to move in different types (for Week 2).
>
> I did not play the third game, because I think that space is not big enough to play. For Name and superhero play, I told them to keep those characteristics in their pocket and we would use them later. For vampire game, they opened their eyes, and blinked someone. Then this person counted to five inside and screamed and killed. I wish I used to original way to play; because PTs did not like 'killing' for young children. I plan to change the order of warm-up games for transition between activities for next time.
> For the Vampire game, after the first turn, I added a story for the game. 'We live in a village and vampires came and killed Jim. For protecting our village, we need to find vampire(s) before she kills 7 people.' After two vampires killed 7 people, I told them we need to have superheroes and we went to the improvisation part smoothly. For the improvisation part, I did not let them this commercial in different time frames, because they did shorter improvisations. For the second improvisation game, they just showed one weakness in freeze-image and the rest tried to guess (For week 4).
>
> For Shapes game, because of the Daily Collegian's square shape, PTs made a small rectangular and triangle with folding and without tearing of newspapers.
> For improvisation part, in the Activity 2, PTs were divided into 4 groups and each group sang 'Row row' songs with different emotions (happy-sad-angry and surprised). For activity 4, PTs made 3 freeze-image what the fisherman saw under the see. I did not do Activity 5, but I added another game after the activity 6. The group was into 2 groups. Each group had a bag holder. When music started, bag holder hold the bag and others tried to pick them. When the music stopped, they stopped and said 'not me'. At the end, we discussed which ball was bigger, and we thoughts that we had two winners. For the discussion part, PTs did not make a story with a ball; they talked about their thoughts and opinions about today (Week 5).

4.5.3 The Evaluation of PTs

As reported, PTs' levels of comfort rapidly increased, and PTs were able to focus better on the activities each week. Their relationships with classmates were also improved due to the nature of the activities. When the activities included literacy, art, and movement, the PTs' participation, communication and confidence level increased. Most weeks (n=12), I was satisfied their participation. The PTs joined the activities with full of concentration and asked questions about the activities. However, I would modify or omit some activities for future implementation. Some journal results follow:

> This week, most of them seemed very confident comparing to last week (Not PT3, PT8 and PT11). For the name game, they easily found objects starting their names' first letters. PT6 counted 15 names. For story with an alphabet game, we would use letters without alphabet order. It was really hard for them to think the story and alphabetical order. Sometimes, we waited longer. They really liked making story with the different ending. They expressed that they really liked but sometimes it was hard; because everyone had different ideas and they needed to negotiate. They also thought that those activities were really helpful for their future PTs who would have hard time to accept other's opinions (PT12 and PT5). For me, I really like their participations and overall my activity. More activities are related to each other; more they engage and participate and learn (for Week 3). (See Figure 4-12).

> Since many PTs were absent, the groups seemed not willing to participate activities and they did not contribute their ideas more. They liked the theme and activities; but they were not interested in doing activities. The reason why they seemed so unengaged might be the discussion before the module about their responsibilities for future weeks. Another reason might be the perfect weather for February. For me, I am not satisfied their participation for this week because of their uninterested behaviors and unengaged responses to questions. For next module activities, I need to think on more about encouraging their motivation and willingness. I only saw PT5 and P12's willingness to continue to this week's module. They also showed their drama knowledge that they gained by giving attention to improvisation activity expectations. They gave and received offers, and listened to each other (For Week 7). (See Figure 4-10).

Figure **4-10**: The Improvisation Activity at Week 7.

I also shared comments regarding the PTs' peer teaching. Six groups developed their

plans and conducted these plans in the classroom. Their plans were detailed and well-designed.

However, three groups' implementations and their leadership skills did not match the

expectations. The PTs in these groups did not participate well enough, and they did not give

directions as they were told and shown. The last group also missed the content areas and the main

idea of the plan. Moreover, other PTs felt they were bored since the group also did not facilitate

the discussion part properly. The other three groups implemented their activities in creative and

innovative ways. They also inspired from my plans and improved some of the activities.

> First of all, I was really impressed by their work. I thought that they did not prepare well because of their unwillingness for the activities past couple weeks (PT1 and PT2). However, I felt so surprised because they prepared activities and handed in with materials.
> For group 1, one of the members did not show up for past three weeks and she did not help them to prepare the activities. Group 1 used yoga postures for entering the sea theme. They could add some music and choose easier postures for the class. Since no one was expert in yoga / postures, sometimes it was harder to follow the movements. Student suggested to add music and games with postures. Before improvisation, all group made a story with telling a word. They thought that this activity would be okay for K and up; however, this activity could be harder for younger kids. During improvisation part, I noticed that I did not work more on how they create an improvisation part. I was the participant in the group, I did not join them creating an idea about the improvisation, but I redirected them to make improvisation part. Group 1 also told we needed to add

dialogues. This was really good that they remembered my words! After each group's improvisation, Group 1 let us to tell our comments and opinions about their improvisations. For the discussion part, PTs recommended to add a final stage for the story and drawing activity. They had really good comments and compliments for the group 1. Both of student in group 1 seemed that they were confident and the activity was well-prepare. They felt that they could do creative drama in their future classes (For group 1, week 12).

For group 3, I really like the game 'splat!'. This is so energetic and needs to have an attention. They let us play two times and they changed also the middle person which are really good. For the game, I recommended to change 'being out of game'. When 2 people remained, they used categories for selecting the winner. They used these categories for the transition; however, I think that was not really related to the improvisation activity. During the improvisation, they did not notice that one of group did not work with collaboration. I also suggested them to change story papers among groups; therefore, each group could add ideas and the last groups can act it out. It would be more fun and creative. All groups used dramatization with story teller. Lastly, two of the Group 3 members (PT3 and PT7) were not as active as the other 2 (For Group 3, week 13).

Figure **4-11**: The Posters from Week 4.

Based on my journal, PTs became familiar with creative drama, and they were ready to write their plans for their future classrooms. The module and the peer teaching practices also helped PTs to return, review, and reflect on the sequence and consequences of their teaching actions. Both the module and the peer teaching practices challenged them to review their existing theories and assumptions about teaching. They also provided feedback to each other. Therefore, they reviewed their lessons through a different lens.

Figure **4-12**: Warm-up activity from Week.

Also, I planned to offer this module as a part of the play course and/or a different course for PTs' professional development and added more outdoor time such as museums, libraries and parks. (See Figure 4-13). I also asked them about their opinions about the implementation way of the Creative Drama Module. All of them suggested that the Creative Drama Module was part of the play course. Since they enjoyed their experience and increased their knowledge about play actively and playfully, all PTs agreed on continuing creative drama activities for the future play courses.

> I think yes. I think definitely it should be a part of the course, because I know that before you come in, it (the class) is very sleepy, it is very disruptive. Being able to get that

energy level definitely, it gets back you up and going gets your brain working I think that it should be part of it, especially because it is course on play. How can you learn about play, if you are not even involving yourself in a play? I think it was fun, and it was a great way to implement especially in this class, since it is about play and that's we really need to (have) as a future teacher. Especially, PreK to 4th grade area. It was fun (PT6).

I definitely learned a lot, especially some of the games we did I totally do that in my classroom (PT10).

The theory is great. I actually found more information handed to me in your section in the class in comparison with the other portion, that's like a personal preference. If something like requirement to graduate, it would be beneficial. Because I do this individual growing into this profession me to see how children react or even how they play because this is important (PT12).

After the class, I always call my mom and said 'guess what I did today', because my mom is preschool director. So, she likes (to) work with kids, and she (tells) 'Oh my gosh, I will do with my student, mom. I did this, my mom, she thought it was very fun (PT1).

Figure **4-13**: The Improvisation Activity at the museum.

4.6 Summary

Before the study started, PTs recognized creative drama and its components such as 'thinking outside of the box,' 'pretending,' 'expression,' 'enjoyment,' 'imagination,' 'being confident,' 'creativity,' and 'showing emotions' in the pre-interviews. These components could

be seen in their frequent references to 'creativity,' 'imagination,' 'play,' 'energy,' and 'empathy.' These PTs also opined that creative drama was essential in the early years. They also seemed to see creative drama as a form of play for children to develop their imagination and creativity. Besides, most PTs also seemed to believe that creative drama was a bridge that facilitates and promotes children's curricular subjects learning. Although they expressed these general beliefs and thoughts about creative drama, they failed to show in-depth understandings about creative drama. That none of them had ever taken a creative drama training or course may be one of the reasons for this limited awareness and comprehension.

Table **4-6**: Individual Findings of PTs.

Main Findings	Preservice Teachers											
	PT1	PT2	PT3	PT4	PT5	PT6	PT7	PT8	PT9	PT10	PT11	PT12
Creative Drama Beliefs and Understandings	*	*		*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
	#	#	#	#		#	#	#	#	#		#
	0	0			0	0				0		0
Confidence to act and to teach creative drama	*	*				*		*	*	*	*	*
	#		#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
					+	+	+					+
Communication Skills	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	0	0		0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Professional Preparation	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
	#	#		#		#	#	#	#		#	#
	0	0		0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		

Method	Key
Preservice Teacher Interviews (if there is a positive difference between pre- and post-tests)	*
Weekly Drama Module Reflection	#
Researcher's Journal (with the help of Artworks, Class Documents, and Photos)	0
Peer Teaching	+

PTs pointed out their concerns about being in front of people regarding involving creative drama activities that required pretending or acting (See Table 4.6). They also noted that implementing creative drama activities would be harder when children were older, since PTs would need to focus on more academic curricula. This kind of academic-centered orientation may come from previous student-teacher experiences. Finally, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, according to PTs' statements, they were willing to continue to learn how to implement creative drama in their future classrooms.

After PTs were exposed to the Creative Drama Module, they provided a broader definition of creative drama. While PTs recognized creative drama and components with 'creativity,' 'imagination,' 'play,' 'energy' and 'empathy in the pre-interviews, their definitions were accompanied by also 'expression' and 'different interpretations.' Moreover, half of them referred to creative drama as a form of play, such as educational play, make-believe/fantasy play, and teacher-guided play.

During the post-interviews, all PTs stated they liked to act and felt more comfortable. Recall that many of them had concerns about being in front of people doing creative drama activities before experiencing the intervention. Throughout the module, they learned more about classmates, and they trusted each other. Therefore, their ways of communication and performance changed. PTs also expressed that my energy and leadership helped their confidence and acting skills. Besides my energy and leadership, their personal reasons, space, their peers' reactions, and the topic also affected participation in the Creative Drama Module (See Table 4.6).

All PTs endorsed that creative drama was essential for children in preschool to 4th grade. Before the Module, they believed that creative drama and play were only crucial in early ages (preschool years). Following this study's intervention, PTs understood that a broad age range of children at school need exposure to creative drama because children have different learning styles

and they discover things in different ways. They need to improve their social skills, and they also really need to play. Creative drama would help serve these needs.

After PT received the creative drama training and experiences creative drama activities, all PTs discussed their deepened understandings of the pedagogical ideas by participating in weekly creative drama activities and peer teaching where they were provided opportunities to apply their developing understanding in a practical context. All PTs would like to implement creative drama activities in their future classrooms. Since they reported benefiting from participating in the Creative Drama Module, they also found the Module useful for children's physical, language, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. Moreover, the post-interviews also revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the module. Although the majority of the comments were positive about the module, PTs also stated the challenges they faced while practicing some of the activities.

PTs explored the main themes of each week's activities according to their weekly reflections' responses. As they recognized creative drama and components with 'creativity,' 'imagination,' 'play,' 'energy,' 'expression' and 'different interpretations' in both pre- and post-interviews, they made connections between weekly themes and creative drama components at the weekly reflections.

During stating their favorite parts of activities, PTs stressed that these activities improved their creativity, extended their comfort level, helped them know classmates better in a fun way, and increased connections among them. Although they mentioned that they enjoyed working with their classmates, they also reported that being with them sometimes was challenging for them. According to their reflections, they struggled to agree on an idea with group members during the activities. They also mentioned that some activities, such as creating a scene and writing a scenario, were hard to cope with.

Despite these challenges, PTs wanted to implement the same lessons in their future classrooms. They not only planned to use activities but also provided suggestions for future works. Moreover, they expressed that they enjoyed the activities, and they always participated in the activities and followed the rules that I gave. Some PTs claimed that other PTs affected their participation, and these PTs did not feel they participated. They also mentioned in the post-interviews that their personal reasons, space, their peers' reactions, and the topic also affected their participation. Similar to as revealed in the post-interviews, my leadership encouraged them to play and increased their creativity. They were also articulated in the weekly reflections. Activities in the module were useful in terms of thinking more broadly about the activities and remembering them quickly. Moreover, some PTs provided suggestions about weekly reflections timing. When they were writing and they saw that some classmates were in a rush and they did not write their perspectives. For this reason, they suggested to change the timing of weekly reflections.

PTs reported that creative drama offered them the opportunity to learn from topics in different ways for themselves and their future students. During their peer teaching, PTs created their creative drama plans, set up the environments, and provided comments and suggestions for their peers. According to their reflections, they improved their professional learning, teaching, and analyzing skills. Furthermore, they received their peers' thoughts and comments which were helpful for them in order to improve their teaching skills. In the weekly reflections, PTs explored and understood the peers' activities. The favorite parts focused on the benefits of the activities on their creativity and collaboration. Like in the weekly reflections, PTs had a hard time to create a new story or act the story out. However, they did not give any clue of other's leadership skills, since they commented with the words of 'good' or 'perfect.' Only two PTs criticized others' leadership skills.

The Creative Drama Module developed the PTs' social-emotional development, leadership skills, and creativity. The module also encouraged and motivated PTs to play more in their future classrooms. Based on the researcher's journal, the PTs provided a better definition of creative drama and play. Moreover, they created their creative drama plans, and they began to think about future classroom implications. Both the module and peer teaching developed their teaching actions and curriculum ideas and reflections and evaluation skills. Besides, both of the module and the peer teaching practices challenged them to think and analyze their existing theories and assumptions about teaching. PTs had an opportunity to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses during peer teaching about the variety of subjects when doing play and creative drama. After watching other PTs' lessons, most of PTs pointed out the kind of teacher they wish to be, such as more playful and creative.

During the implementation of the module and the peer teaching, PTs focused on framing and implementation of their lessons along with the results in terms of content, organization, delivery style, competency, and future modifications. The majority of my written reflections indicated that the Creative Drama Module needs to be modified in terms of adding more content areas and more activities. All PTs agreed that the Creative Drama Module should be the part of the play course, I plan to offer this module for the future play courses. Moreover, I was willing to design a separate creative drama course for PTs' professional development, all PTs agreed on continuing creative drama activities for the future. Last but not least, the overall the Creative Drama Module enabled PTs to practice, reflect, and reframe their understanding of creative drama. The module increased the feeling of ability, ownership, and motivation of PTs to integrate play with their teaching that they were able to speak about the importance of integrating play and creative drama into other areas.

In this chapter, the benefits from participating in a 15-week module were presented through five themes emerging from data generated from the pre- and post-interviews, weekly reflections, peer teaching, and the researcher's journal.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

The primary purpose of this dissertation study is to examine how do the preservice teachers change their understanding with respect to children's play and educative process. Other aims of this study are to describe how preservice teachers participated and potentially benefit from creative drama activities to find out how these activities impact their participation in play and to discuss how these activities contribute to their skills of creating, implementing, and evaluating playful curriculum. The study also aims to find the strengths and weaknesses of implementing a specially designed the Creative Drama Module in supporting these teachers as they constructed an understanding of creative drama education. The research questions are: (1) What are the preservice teachers' understandings and perceptions of creative drama, and its usefulness and challenges in their future classrooms? (2) Does creative drama support preservice teachers' skills in creating, implementing, and evaluating a playful curriculum?

The study findings indicate that participating in Creative Drama Module activities promoted a deeper understanding of creative drama and play education and resulted in PTs appreciating the module as a worthwhile experience. The four major themes that emerged from the data are: creative drama beliefs and understandings, confidence to act and to teach creative drama, communication skills, and professional preparation. The present chapter aims to explicitly address each of the themes with further discussion of the relevant findings and implications. This chapter concludes with an acknowledgment of study limitations and suggestions for future research directions.

5.1 PT's Understandings of Creative Drama

Creative drama is the act of becoming someone or something other than yourself (Moore, 2004) and the expansion of experience and learning (Heathcote, 1984). Creative drama activities provided PTs a learning environment where they could work on their creativity, imagination, and body along with the relationships they formed with each other and the objects around them. Before the Creative Drama Module, they failed to show understandings of creative drama. However, these PTs recognized creative drama as creativity, expression, and imagination. Half of them (n=6) expressed that they did not recall personal preschool or kindergarten memories about creative drama or play other than structured puppet shows. The majority (n=9) remembered their elementary school memories; however, they were not related to creative drama, and they mentioned that they acted by being given a script. When PTs were asked to recall their middle school and high school memories of creative drama, the majority of them (n=9) said they did not participate in any creative drama or theatre activities and art classes were considered an elective. Moreover, they reported that they did not take any courses related to creative drama in college.

Some researchers have discussed how teachers' memories and experiences about play could affect their current perceptions and practice. Sandberg (2001) asked 487 university students about their play memories from periods starting of childhood and continuing into adulthood in Sweden. The students filled out questionnaires, attended in group discussions, and drew pictures. A fundamental assumption of this study was that ages 7-12 year had a special importance in play memories. It was emphasized by the participants in the study, that persons, places, physical play, complexity, fantasy and interaction were important parts of their play memory. These students gave the lowest number of per percent regarding interpretation of play to age group 3-6 year. Sandberg thought the reason of this result was the lack of remembering their childhood. In the other study, seven preservice teachers indicated that their lack of play experience in kindergarten

may have led to their difficulty in putting play into actual practice and their didactic learning experiences could affect their competence in creating playful lesson plans (Sandberg & Pramling-Samuelsson, 2003). Wu (2016) also found teachers who had lack of play experience in early childhood years had a hard time to put play into their practices. The findings of this research demonstrated that my study's PTs' lack of creative drama or play experiences throughout their educational life could be one of the reasons for their limited comprehension and understanding of creative drama at the beginning of the study.

Similarly, Russell-Bowie (2013) examined the 936 preservice teachers' perceptions of their background and confidence in drama education (in Australia, South Africa, Namibia, USA, and Ireland). After she collected and analyzed the survey data, she found that preservice teachers had little background in teaching drama. Moreover, this lack of experience may have led to their difficulty in putting learned creative drama information into actual practice and in understanding its importance for children, since they had no concrete idea based on actual teaching experience of how to use in practice the idea of creative drama.

After PTs were exposed to the Creative Drama Module, they referred to creative drama as a form of play, such as educational play, make-believe/fantasy play, and teacher-guided play. As clearly noticed from their responses, all of PTs considered that creative drama was significant in preschool to 4th grade since children have different learning styles, and children discover things in different ways, need to improve their social skills, and really need to play. In Ormanci and Sasmaz-Oren's (2010) study, preservice teachers understood how it is essential when using it in the early years after they took a creative drama course. They emphasized that using creative drama in ECE would contribute to younger children's empathy, creativity, critical thinking, self-confidence, and communicating skills. This finding is consistent with recent work examining the value of drama-in-education in a higher education classroom (Athiemoolam, 2018). In that study, the students were initially skeptical about the implementation of drama-in-education as pedagogy

before the exposure of creative drama. However, after they had experienced in the classroom,

they were aware of its importance in promoting more engaged teaching and learning. They also

articulated both the significance and challenges of creative drama in a constructive way. Creative

drama helps students construct their knowledge and motivates them to build their reflections,

predictions, and learning in a playful way. Loizou, Michaelides, and Georgiou (2017) supported

these findings and stated creative drama supported and enhanced teachers' play skills in their

recent study.

Play is important in the college level classes. Early childhood teacher education programs

need to create spaces and experiences for preservice teachers to explore and experience play in

higher education settings. PT6 said:

> During the sleepy time of the day, it can be quite hard to pay attention, but once
> you start doing creative drama, your energy rises and you get more excited and
> you get more (in) general pumping, and it something that it helps you focus (on)
> more. It is useful because as you grow older, you learn that. I mean you lose (a)
> sense of fun and get more into work. I think that is so sad. I think you should be
> able to still have that energy and excitement as when you were (a) kid to when
> you are an adult. I think it is important for adults to be fun and creative;
> otherwise, you just have a dull life.

Play and creative drama activities help preservice teachers to develop their skills,

understanding, and awareness about play and learning and also children's needs and

interest.

5.2 PT's Confidence and Communication

Creative drama is an activity involving life situations and interactions with nature or

other objects. Creative drama is group work, and it encourages participants to communicate

verbally and nonverbally. Creative drama is different from theater education. While theater

education focuses on actors' formal performance in front of an audience, creative drama

education considers participants' exploration and meaning making processes (Wee, 2009).

Participants do not need to be scared of failure or performance-based evaluations. Instead,

creative drama helps students to construct group creativity and creative interactions; thus,

students learn to work cooperatively. Moreover, through drama, students improve their

understanding that contributes to their overall intellectual growth and personal development.

Creative drama can make a powerful contribution toward the development of self-esteem and

communicative competence (Peter, 2003).

As indicated in the result section, PTs' confidence levels increased after they were

exposed to effective professional learning opportunities. At the end of a 15-week of participation

in a variety of creative drama activities, all PTs stated they liked to act and felt more comfortable,

although many of them had concerns being in front of people regarding involving creative drama

activities before the implementation of the module. Throughout the module, they learned more

about classmates, and they trusted each other. Therefore, their ways of communication were

changed. PTs also expressed that the researcher's energy and leadership helped their confidence

and acting skills. Besides the researcher's energy and leadership, their personal reasons, space,

their peers' reactions, and the topic also affected their participation in the Creative Drama

Module. The Module promoted collaboration among PTs, and this collaboration enhanced

meaning making, improved their learning, and motivated them for improvisation. One of PTs

expressed her thoughts:

> I think it was a change of pace what I am used to like every day college classes. I think being have fun, and be with my friends or classmates is refreshing, changing paces from usual. (What do other things help you?) I think I created a bond in our class and creative drama becomes people to be friends probably I wouldn't have been friends with. I definitely learn how to communicate better, when having to come up with different scenes. You have to be a leader; sometimes other people take charge. (Do you think it is important to know each classmate in the classroom?) Yeah. I think so. Actually, in this program, I feel there (are) not that many people, so it is good to know as many people as you can. It helps with other classes. It is good like a way to format community (It affects your learning?) Yeah, definitely, I think it is in a positive way. We all like working

together to achieve the same thing, we can bounce ideas off like others. It is helpful (PT11).

According to Flynn, teachers gain the confidence to try new things 'information, terminology, vocabulary, and other disciplines in dramas' (Flynn 2010, p. 65). During the module, preservice teachers experienced different activities including many theater techniques (such as dramatization, teacher in role, freeze scene). These activities helped them articulate and express themselves better, thereby adding to their perceived confidence. In Yasar's (2006) ethnographic study, preservice teachers began to challenge their previously held assumptions and felt more confident when engaging in classroom activities. Athiemoolam (2013) and Culham (2003) also indicated similar results. Athiemoolam (2013) examined the drama enriched program in language courses amongst preservice teachers. After in-depth observations of the implementation and interviews, this researcher found that the implementation contributed to the preservice teachers critical and communication skills and their confidence. The participants indicated that 'they became more confident and seemed to blossom after their active participation in the dramatic performance.'

In terms of communication skills, PTs in this current study also developed better communication skills. The eleven of them stated that the Creative Drama Module extended their comfort level and helped them to know classmates better in a fun way and increased connections among them. In Culham's (2003) study, in-service teachers expressed that they could express themselves in many ways, found community-building opportunities, and became more confident. Similarly, in Dere's (2019) study, preservice teachers were exposed 12 weeks of creative drama education aimed at supporting necessary communication skills, verbal and non-verbal expression skills, and effective listening skills. The results showed that these teachers' communication skills were increased by comparing their pre- and post-test scores on the Communication scale.

"As if" play /creative drama activities created spaces for possibilities and innovation (Blom, & D'Amico, 2020). In these spaces failure, risk, exploration, experimentation, participation, ideation and intrinsic motivation becomes possible. These spaces support problem solving, change, and learning, and these spaces leads the way of conversation among students. These skills are important for teachers to understand students' different skills, cultures, and needs.

5.3 PTs' Professional Skills

The research says that the majority of the early childhood teachers believe in play and the advantages it offers (Lynch, 2015; McLane, 2003; Nicolopoulou, 2011; Sisson &Kroeger, 2017). Feeling confident and competent in their abilities and having better communication skills should help teachers integrate play and creative drama into their daily curriculum productively and enjoyably. To reach this point, PTs need to have a variety of playful and creative experiences during their education. Lee, Cawthon, and Steingut (2015) reported in their meta-analysis of drama-based pedagogy research that participating in 12 weeks to a year or more in drama programs had the strongest effect on preservice teachers' professional skills. Consistent with these findings, PTs in this study noted that active participation and peer teaching enabled them to reflect on and to reframe their understanding and implementing skills about creative drama. This accords with the literature. The performance artists of John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in Washington, DC, led professional development workshops/courses for teachers. This professional development included the orientation which focused on philosophy, practices, and responsibilities, the drama workshops, and the post-workshop discussion. Duma and Silverstein (2008) expressed that those teachers could learn how to teach an aspect of an art form that make a natural and significant connection to another subject area they teach by participating in the professional development in the center.

Similarly, in Andrew's (2010) study, 18 teachers received professional development from the artists, which aimed to enhance the teachers' arts learning and develop their instructional expertise. The focus group interviews, questionnaires and surveys showed that the teachers acquired the confidence to express themselves freely, they were willing to teach the arts in their own classrooms, they realized the potential and value of the arts within the school curriculum, and they developed arts-specific teaching expertise. In these two studies, teachers realized how drama offers meaningful connections to the curriculum. Integrated hands-on instructional strategies help teacher put creative drama into their pedagogy because drama creates 'the necessary space to draw on their own voices' (Cawthon & Dawson, 2009, p. 157).

After PTs were exposed to the Creative Drama Module, they created and taught their own creative drama lesson plans. During weekly reflections, PTs expressed their feelings and thoughts about the topic and their performances, and also shared their views about possible integration of creative drama activities to their future teaching. Since creative drama helped them step out of their comfort zone and facilitate new lessons (Dawson, Cawthon, & Baker, 2011), peer teaching challenged them to think and analyze their existing theories and assumptions about teaching. PTs in this study would like to integrate creative drama activities into their curriculum and the two of them also mentioned state standards and the school building principal sometimes discourage them to use these play activities.

> … It is an introducing another way to teach kids, another fun way to get them in engaged. You need all those experience. It is from our experiences, common core, (and) standards. We have 15 minutes to recess for actual play. I definitely would love to (implement) but it depends how the school district sets up with our curriculum. If it is acceptable, then it will be fantastic I would love to implement it. (PT5).

The teachers in Lynch (2015) and Nicolopoulou (2011)'s studies discussed constrains of time and resources, and pressure of the testing system could be other reasons for them to use play activities and integration into their curriculum. Similarly, plenty of research findings have

indicated that teachers adapted drama activities to their teaching styles in order to make meaningful connections and enriched their teaching repertoires (Andrews, 2010; Duma & Silverstein, 2008; Oreck, 2006). In Papavassiliou-Alexiou & Zourna's (2016) study, the secondary school teachers in the study were trained, and they integrated drama into their instructional practice. These teachers expressed in the interviews drama practices enhanced their learning goals and reinforced their belief in the necessity of lifelong learning. They hesitated to integrate drama into their curriculum at first; however, after they were exposed to in-depth training and knowledge, they were willing to implement these activities.

Creative drama also increased teachers' responsibility and interests of learning society, multicultural and global awareness, and educational reforms (Cawthon & Dawson, 2011; Hundert, 1996; Kana & Aitken, 2007; Sawyer, 2004; Upitis, Smithrim, Patteson, & Meban, 2001). Additionally, elementary and secondary grade teachers indicated that creative drama practices created a necessary space for them to draw on their own voices to integrate new, challenging strategies into their pedagogy in Cawthon & Dawson's (2009) study. These benefits of creative drama draw a playful pathway for teachers to integrate their acquiring and mastering knowledge into practice immediately.

On this playful pathway, teachers and children are learning together. Teachers assist children in mastering and internalizing new learnings by engaging in the joint activity. This activity, which sometimes is referred to as using play facilitation strategies (Johnson, Christie, & Wardle, 2005) or mediation, is called 'scaffolding' by Vygotsky when there is intent to help the learner make progress toward independent master and heightened competence. Teachers improve children's learning through more advanced participation. In creative drama, both teachers and children bring their ideas and lives to the activity. Then they improvise and role-play together. Therefore, it proposes a concept of learning and development as a creative improvisational activity. Children progressively internalize the concepts in creative drama activities and become

more able to perform the task at hand independently. In this study, I intentionally planned topics

and activities to encourage them to navigate their imaginary and communicative situations and

explore their strengths in their teaching. During the study, they performed beyond themselves,

took risks, and supported each other to do what they do not know how to do (Holzman, 2000).

Moreover, my role as a creative drama leader is to create spaces and opportunities for adult

learners to experience play and embrace the notion that learning can be fun. This role is crucial

because it may influence preservice teachers' understandings, skills and competencies, as well as

their views of education and their teaching.

5.4 Strengths & Limitations of the Study

The strength of this study is its data-collection procedure. Having twelve PT reflect on

their creative drama training and their group lessons implementation allowed me to develop a

more comprehensive understanding of their perceptions and practices of creative drama. All

through the data collection process with interviews, weekly drama module reflections, teaching

practices, and the journal provided me to change and edit some my module activities, pose new

questions for their practices and contemplate alternative ways of seeing the module.

Limitations involved in the execution of this study must be acknowledged. This study

was a study of my own practice as a teacher educator. I tried to discover and define new ways of

teaching PTs how to reflect on their practice. I showed them a new practice and analyzed the

changes in their understandings and reflections. All PTs were aware that I was doing my

dissertation, which may have influenced their answers, practices, and perspectives related to

creative drama.

The second limitation is about the post-test interviews. PTs answered the questions and

gave examples. Their answers were not as descriptive as I expected. I asked follow-up questions,

but I concluded that I need to ask more questions to have more information and data to analyze. Also, end of the term fatigue could affect student's post interview responses because they felt emotional and physical exhaustion at the end of the spring semester.

5.5 Concluding Thoughts and Future Directions

The case study methodology of this study does not allow for generalization of results to larger populations. However, this study makes empirical contributions to the creative drama and teacher education fields. This study gives data for discussing issues and challenges in teacher education and presents creative drama activities for teacher education programs. Teacher education programs can play a critical role in empowering preservice teachers' professional identities and supporting their skills, understandings, and beliefs in meaningful ways. As Hyson, Tomlinson, and Morris (2009, p.1) write:

> The quality of the higher education program—that is, how well it prepares new teachers by, for example, grounding them in knowledge of child development and academic subject areas and providing opportunities to practice new teaching skills—may be a more critical factor in a teacher's ability to influence children's development and learning in a positive way than having a degree per se.

The findings of this study suggest that participating in a 15-week Creative Drama Module can improve PTs' confidence and competence in integrated creative drama activities into the curriculum.

The Creative Drama Module used in this study needs to be modified in terms of adding more activities, such as group bonding, communication, building trust activities and more content areas, such as social sciences, sciences, math, and so on. Doing this, creative drama show how PTs can use those activities at the beginning of the school semester. I also plan to ask in-service teachers which topics and content areas are harder for them and add those topics and areas.

Preservice teachers can practice these topics and areas during the module and their peer teaching activities in order to have more senses for the future classroom.

Moreover, video recordings from each creative drama activity and peer teaching episodes can be beneficial for the instructor and preservice teachers to see themselves in action. They also can discuss their teaching style and participation in the module. After they can watch their teaching practices, they can reflect, improve, and develop their practices.

I plan to implement further research with the following adjustments to the study procedures: (a) a larger sample of the case within a play course and other courses, (b) an extension of the study into the participants' teaching context(s), (c) modification for Creative Drama Module, and (d) visual recordings from each creative drama activity and peer teaching episodes.

The results suggested by this study show that this module has the potential to be inserted into play and other courses in teacher education, benefitting more PTs. This module gives PTs ideas about how they can use play in their future classroom with practicing creative drama. The Creative Drama Module also enables PTs to practice, reflect, and reframe their understanding of play and creative drama. The results of this study suggest that the Creative Drama Module increases the feeling of ability, ownership, and motivation of PTs. They are better prepared to integrate play with their teaching and they are better able to speak about the importance of integrating play and creative drama into other content areas and across age/grade levels. Moreover, research publications in literature indicated that when preservice teachers receive intentional and purposeful teaching of play at the college level, they are eager to use play in their future classrooms (Cevher-Kalburan, 2015; Charko, Fraser, Jones, & Umangay, 2016; Jung & Jin, 2015; Zhulamanova, 2020).

Furthermore, this creative drama module can be adapted for different teacher education courses through including improvisations, role plays, and warm-up games that are considered to

be integrated learning. I recognize that there is a need for further research and understanding about creative drama and how teacher educators can insert creative drama activities into their courses. While this study provided an example of how creative drama activities fit in the play course, more creative drama examples in similar courses are needed to improve preservice teachers' understanding and practice of creative drama. In creative drama inserted teacher education classes, readings about creative drama, Vygotsky, constructivism, and post-constructivism are essential for preservice teachers to understand theories behind the creative drama activities. The students-teacher collaborative creation in creative drama is social constructivism. In creative drama, participants interact, negotiate, collaborate, and reflect their past and present their knowledge and experiences. Creative drama fosters independence and learner autonomy, and creates opportunities that participants make choices and take roles. For this reason, quizzes or tests are not suitable as assignments for the nature of creative drama. First, preservice teachers need to experience activities, and then they create their own plans that would include some specific curricular content, and implement. These activities can be considered as assignments in creative drama inserted teacher education courses.

Reading about creative drama and participating in a course that includes creative drama activities are the beginning step for the preservice teachers. However, these preservice teachers need to practice their creative drama lessons in the field. During this study, PTs prepared creative drama lessons and conducted them with their peers. They received their peers' thoughts and comments which were helpful for them in order to improve their teaching skills. Moreover, there is more research needed to examine teachers' implementation of creative drama activities in the schools. This implementation process could enhance their understanding, and influence their beliefs, attitudes, and concerns about the activities and their effects on their teachings. During PTs' implementations, they need ongoing professional development that includes mentoring, observations, guides, and assessments about their creative drama teaching. While they practice

these activities, an expert who has creative drama teaching background and skills observe and mentor their experiences in order to improve their efficacy and pedagogical growth.

For high-quality and effective professional development, Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) offered a new design for professional development with seven characteristics. I combined these characteristics with a creative drama professional development:

1. Being content-focused: Teachers focus on the content based on children's needs, interest, and levels. Therefore, professional development can provide these teachers the opportunity to work their students' work, try new curriculums, and study on students' learning areas. The creative drama focused professional development helps teachers work with children on a specific topic with playful and creative way.

2. Incorporating with adult learning theory: This design of professional development experiences addresses how and what teachers learn. Teachers use their experiences as resources for new learning and based on classroom ability or developmental level, needs and interests. Creative drama professional development helps teachers play and create scenarios and stories with children. These stories and scenarios reflect both teachers' past and present knowledge and experiences, and visions of their future. Creative drama fosters independence and learner autonomy working and playing in groups, and create opportunities that participants make choices and take roles. Therefore, learning is being and becoming more memorable. Moreover, during creative drama activities, participants mediate and enrich each other's learning experiences and meaning making.

3. Supported collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts: This model encourages teacher collaboration schoolwide and beyond the school. Creative drama professional development encourages teachers to know about teachers within play activities. They share their experiences, play repertories, and classroom activities each other.

4. Modeling of effective practice: Professional development that utilizes models of effective practice promotes teacher learning and supports student achievement. Curricular and instructional models and modeling of instruction help teachers to have a vision of practice on which to anchor their own learning and growth. In creative drama professional development, teachers learn many strategies to develop inquiry skills, to improve creativity, to encourage collaborations, and to understand scenes. These strategies also provide opportunities to increase character development and storytelling, which are components of performance skills. These strategies are Conscience Alley, Cross-Cutting, Flashbacks and Flash Forwards, Forum Theater, Hot Seating, Image Theater, Mantle of the Expert, Marking the Moment, Narration, Open and Close, Role on the Wall, Role Play, Soundscape, Spotlight, Still Images & Freeze Frames, Story-telling, Tableaux, Teacher in Role, Thought Tracking.

5. Providing coaching and expert support: The experts and coaches play this critical role by employing the types of professional learning strategies, such as modeling strong instructional practices or supporting group discussion and collaborative analysis of student work. During their creative drama implementations, teachers need have observations, guides, and assessments about their creative drama teaching. The expert can help teachers improve their efficacy and pedagogical growth.

6. Offering opportunities for feedback and reflection: Feedback and reflection are two powerful tools found in professional development. Professional development models are associated with gains in student learning frequently provide built-in time for teachers to think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice by providing intentional time for feedback and/or reflection. As I mentioned above, experts can provide informational as well as evaluative feedback and reflection for teachers' creative drama practices and thus, teachers could use these effective and playful feedback and reflection ideas in their classrooms.

7. Sustaining duration: Effective professional development provides teachers with adequate time to learn, practice, implement, and reflect upon new strategies that facilitate changes in their practice. Creative drama practices consist of three stages. These stages are (1) Preparation-warming up, (2) Improvisation, and (3) Evaluation. In the preparation-warm-up stage, the body and senses are used intensively, and self-oriented activities are done. For creating group dynamics, various activities such as games and movement are implemented. Teachers lead students to be a part of the games and encourage them to play by playing. The improvisation part is to create a purpose, an idea, with the use of improvisation and roleplaying (taking a role) techniques by a group or based on the experiences of group members. During the improvisation, teachers' roles are to work and play with students, to help them take responsibility and enjoy for their roles, to encourage them to share their experiences and let them create. At the evaluation-discussion stage, teachers and students evaluate and discuss the outcomes, significance, and qualities of the activities as well as students' feelings and opinions. During these three stages, teachers learn, practice, implement and reflect upon new strategies in adequate time.

Creative drama supports preservice teachers' skills in creating, implementing, and evaluating a playful curriculum. After 12-week training, PTs designed teaching lesson plans, set up the environment, and implemented these lessons. After each peer teaching, other PTs provided questions and discussed the lesson plans together. The groups, who applied the lessons together, evaluated themselves, as well. According to their reflections, they improved their professional learning, teaching, and analyzing skills. Furthermore, they received their peers' thoughts and comments which were helpful for them in order to improve their teaching skills. As one of student said:

> … Especially at the end, everybody came up with their own creative drama activities and created own. Seeing other people's styles definitely helped me be aware of ways to teach certain subjects. It was a nice resource to everybody else's how they're incorporating to different subjects into it. It will make the learning more memorable for (also) the kids, just more enjoyable which is obviously important want them have fun. It

helps the mindset. Honestly, the mindset the modules really help with. I would love to implement the module. I know that it is effective for kids. Instead of children sitting at the desk and struggling write one to two sentence, they cohesively wrote 3, 4,5 sentences on small that space exploration in creative drama (PT12).

To conclude, this study's findings suggest that play and creative drama are important for teacher education and the findings show that creative drama can be conveyed to PTs over the course of semester. This study contributes the literature by a development of a model of dramatic play that teachers and educators could adopt. These findings could be further developed and improved teacher education programs that embrace playful activities in the classroom. These teacher education programs also acknowledge and encourage play with the help of visionary leadership, conducive spaces, and materials. Meaningful play and drama experiences can help educators and teachers develop understanding and passion for advocating for children's right to play. Therefore, teachers put play and creative drama into their curriculum with the help of their play and creative drama knowledge, conceptions, and experiences.

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A Sample Creative Drama Lesson

Week 4: Creative Drama – Superheroes

Materials: Crayons and big white papers

Techniques: Improvisation, teacher in role

Content areas: physical education, social and emotional learning,

Goals: to talk about superhero play, to think about how they use superhero plays in their future

classroom, to enhance problem solving skills and social relationships

Grades: Warm-up games (Pre-K, K, 1st, 2nd), Improvisation (K), Discussion (Pre-K)

PA Standards:

AL.1 PK.A / K.A / 1.A / 2.A	2.1 PK.A.1 / K.A.1
AL.1 PK.C /K.C/ 1.C / 2.C	2.1 PK.MP
AL.1, AL.3 PK.A / K.A.	9.1.M PK.A / K.A / 1.B / 2.B
AL.3 1.A / 2.A	9.1.M PK.B / K.B
AL.3 PK.B /K.B / 1.A / 2.A	9.1.M PK.E / K.E /1.B / 2.B
AL.4 PK.A / K.A /.4 1.A / 2. A	9.1.D PK.B / K.B/ 1. B / 2.B
AL.3 K.C	9.1.D PK.E / K.B / 1.B
1.1 1.B	9.1.D 2.E
1.2 PK.A/ K.A /1.A	9.1.V PK.B / K.B
1.2 PK.C / K.C / 1.C / 2.C	9.3 PK.F / K.F
1.4 PK.A / K.A / 1.A	10.1 PK.B / K.B / 1.B /1 2.B
1.4 2.A	16.1 PK.A / K.A
1.5 PK.A / K. A / 1.B / 2.B	16.2 PK.A / K.A / 1.A / 2.A
1.5 PK.E / K.E / 1.E / 2.E	16.2 PK.C / K.C / 2 1.C / 2.C
	16.3 PK.C / K.C / 1.C / 2.C

Warm-Up:

1. Name and superhero in Me: Participants stand in a circle. Everyone tells his/her name and one

of his/her characteristic that can be related to be a hero by turns, like Tugce, I can jump higher-

high jumping.

2. Strasbourg Vampire: Everyone closes eyes. The leader touches someone's back and this person

is the vampire. Everyone keeps their eyes closed and walks around trying not to touch anyone

else. The vampire tries to find someone and touches his/her head. Then this person counts to five inside and screams. He/she is going to be the vampire, too. There are two vampires. Both of them try to find people to touch heads and try them to be vampires. When everyone is vampire, the game is ended.

3. Superhero Power: Everyone finds a space and make a posture and has to be still in the hallway. Two volunteers are needed. One of this is the chaser, and the other is the chasee as we call Superhero. Superheroes transfer their power to others and save. The chaser tries to touch the chasee. When the chasee escapes, she/he can find a person and stands in front of him/her and copies the posture. The chasee is going to be the posture. And now, that whose posture is copied is going to be the chasee. If the chaser touches the chasee, the role changes, the chasee is going to be the chaser; the chaser is going to be the chasee. In the second version of the game, the chasee also tells the name whose posture she/he copies for being still.

Mid-evaluation: The leader asks people how they feel and what they think about the games.

Improvisation:

1. 4/5 participants in the group take one sheet paper and markers. They draw their own superhero, build his/her story and find his/her one weakness that just special for him her. (10 minutes)

2. Every group makes a TV Commercial about their own superheroes except the weakness in 2 minutes. In this commercial, everyone has a role. The leader gives them improvisation's rules. They try to make this commercial in 1 minutes, 30 seconds, 5 seconds. (15-20 minutes)

3. Groups think on superheroes childhood. They make the tableaux (single scenes/ photographic images) about it. 1st scene is about the childhood, how she/he found his/her powers. 2nd is about realization of the weakness. 3rd one is how he/she handles it and 4th one is the last image of the superhero (15 minutes). (Teacher in Role)

Pre-Evaluation: The leader asks whether the other understand or not after every group. (2 min)

Discussion:

1. The leader has a stick and she has the power of talking. Then she gives the stick and he/she can talk. The participants tell two things about the practice: 1-2 sentences about the practice and one word about the superhero play.

Appendix B

Creative Drama Strategies

Conscience Alley	A useful technique for exploring any kind of dilemma faced by a character, providing an opportunity to analyze a decisive moment in greater detail. The class forms two lines facing each other. One person (the teacher or a participant) walks between the lines as each member of the group speaks their advice. It can be organized so that those on one side give opposing advice to those on the other. When the character reaches the end of the alley, she makes her decision. Sometimes known as Decision Alley or Thought Tunnel
Cross-Cutting	Cross-cutting (also called split-screen) is a drama technique borrowed from the world of film editing, where two scenes are intercut to establish continuity. In drama and theater, the term is used to describe two or more scenes which are performed on stage at the same time. This makes it possible to juxtapose scenes or snippets of scenes that happen at different times or in different places, using separate areas of the performance space. The technique is used to highlight or contrast a particular theme or aspect of the story. Using different groupings, both scenes could happen at the same time, or one could be frozen while the other comes alive. This can have a similar effect to spotlighting particular areas of the stage or using a split-screen in a film
Flashbacks and Flash Forwards	Performers in a scene are asked to improvise scenes which take place seconds, minutes, days or years before or after a dramatic moment. This enables the exploration of characters' backgrounds, motivations and the consequences of their actions.
Forum Theater	A technique pioneered by Brazilian radical Augusto Boal. A play or scene, usually indicating some kind of oppression, is shown twice. During the replay, any member of the audience ('spect-actor') is allowed to shout 'Stop!', step forward and take the place of one of the oppressed characters, showing how they could change the situation to enable a different outcome. Several alternatives may be explored by different spect-actors. The other actors remain in character, improvising their responses. A facilitator (Joker) is necessary to enable communication between the players and the audience.
Hot Seating	A character is questioned by the group about his or her background, behavior and motivation. The method may be used for developing a role in the drama lesson or rehearsals, or analyzing a play post-performance. Even done without preparation, it is an excellent way of fleshing out a character. Characters may be hot-seated individually, in pairs or small groups. The technique is additionally useful for developing questioning skills with the rest of the group.
Image Theater	Still images are used to explore abstract concepts such as relationships and emotions, as well as realistic situations. This technique was developed by Augusto Boal. Participants rapidly sculpt their own or each other's bodies to express attitudes and emotions. These images are then placed together

	and 'dynamited' or brought to life. The method is often used to explore internal or external oppression, unconscious thoughts and feelings
Mantle of the Expert	Mantle of the Expert (MoE) involves the creation of a fictional world where students assume the roles of experts in a designated field. Mantle of the Expert is based on the premise that treating children as responsible experts increases their engagement and confidence. They can perceive a real purpose for learning and discovering together in an interactive and proactive way – providing them with skills and knowledge they can apply to their everyday lives. MoE encourages creativity, improves teamwork, communication skills, critical thought and decision-making.
Marking the Moment	Marking the Moment is a dramatic technique used to highlight a key moment in a scene or improvisation. This can be done in a number of different ways: for example, through slow-motion, a freeze-frame, narration, thought-tracking or music. It has a similar effect to using a spotlight to focus attention on one area of the stage at a particular moment during a performance.
Narration	Narration is a technique whereby one or more performers speak directly to the audience to tell a story, give information or comment on the action of the scene or the motivations of characters. Characters may narrate, or a performer who is not involved in the action can carry out the role of 'narrator'.
Role on the Wall	The outline of a body is drawn on a large sheet of paper, which is stuck onto the wall. This can be as simple as a drawing of a gingerbread man or the teacher can carefully draw around one of the participants lying on a roll of paper.
Role Play	Role play is the basis of all dramatic activity. The ability to suspend disbelief by stepping into another character's shoes comes quite naturally to most children. Through the structure of the drama lesson this can be used to great effect, challenging children to develop a more sensitive understanding of a variety of viewpoints whilst sharpening their language and movement skills. By adopting a role, children can step into the past or future and travel to any location, dealing with issues on moral and intellectual levels. Thus, role play can be easily utilized to illuminate themes across the curriculum.
Soundscape	The leader or one member of the group acts as conductor, whilst the rest of the group are the 'orchestra'. Using their voices (and body percussion if appropriate!), the group paints a soundscape of a particular theme or mood, for example the seaside, a city, a jungle. The leader can control the shape of the piece by raising her hand to increase the volume or bringing it to touch the floor for silence. You may also use simple percussion instruments for this exercise.
Spotlight	Spotlighting is a useful teaching technique for sharing improvised drama when you have divided the class into smaller groups. When it is time to show their work, ask all the groups to sit on the floor. Explain that you will walk around the room and as you get closer to each group, that group will stand up and show their performance. As you move off towards the next group, they will stop the drama and quietly sit down again so that they can watch other groups.

Still Images & Freeze Frames	Freeze frames are a quick and effective way to start a drama session. They can easily be used with any age from children to adults. Participants create an image using their bodies – with no movement. Freeze frames can be made by individuals, small groups or even the whole group
Story-telling	Storytelling is one of the simplest and perhaps most compelling forms of dramatic and imaginative activity. A good place to start is by telling stories to your pupils and encouraging them to share stories with one another.
Tableaux	In a tableau, participants make still images with their bodies to represent a scene. A tableau can be used to quickly establish a scene that involves a large number of characters. Because there is no movement, a tableau is easier to manage than a whole-group improvisation – yet can easily lead into extended drama activities. It can be used to explore a particular moment in a story or drama, or to replicate a photograph or artwork for deeper analysis.
Teacher in Role	Teacher in role (TiR) is an invaluable technique for shaping the dramatic process and developing students' learning. Simply put, the teacher or facilitator assumes a role in relation to the pupils. This may be as a leader, an equal, or a low-status role – whatever is useful in the development of the lesson. The teacher may ask questions of the students, perhaps putting them into role as members of a specific group and encouraging them to hot-seat her in return.
Thought Tracking	Thought tracking (also called *thought tapping*) is a quick-fire strategy enabling children to verbally express their understanding of characters and situations without the need for rehearsal. Students gain confidence to speak in front of others, preparing the ground for them to move into extended improvisation.

(https://dramaresource.com/drama-strategies/, Neelands, & Goode, 2015).

Appendix C

ECE 479 Course Outline

Date	Tentative Schedule	Assignments Due
Week 1	*Introduction* Syllabus review Assignment of presentations/readings group activities	In-Class: Play memory activity/discussion
Week 2	*Beliefs about Play* Read: Bohart, pp. 37-45, Frost chapter, ½ of Paley	In-Class: favorite game as a child and Paley discussion
Week 3	*Play and Theory* Read: Bohart, pp. 65-74, Johnson chap 2, ½ of Paley	In-class: favorite toy as a child and Paley discussion
Week 4	*Play in School and Society* Read: Bohart, pp. 56-64, Play-Based Learning chap 3, Tyrrell	In-class: favorite Museum (websites) as a child
Week 5	*Indoor Play Spaces* Read: Bohart, pp. 87-97	In-class: Tyrrell/Paley discussion *Student Presentations* **Child Development Visit**
Week 6	*Play and Creativity* Read: Bohart, pp. 75-86, Pretend Play in Childhood chap	In-class: Art *Student Presentations* ***Informal Learning setting –*** ***Information***
Week 7	*Play and Assessment* Read: Bohart, pp. 26-36, VanHoorn chap 6	In-class: music/movement/dance *Student Presentations* ***Installment #1 CUPE***
Week 8	*Play and Gender* Read: Bohart, pp. 46-55, Children at Play chap 4	In-class: math *Student Presentations* ***Discuss Interview of Education*** ***Director at Informal Learning Site***
Week 9	*SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS*	
Week 10	*Play and Curriculum* Read: Bohart, pp. 5-16, Wood chap 3	In-class: favorite book as a child *Student Presentations*
Week 11	*Play and Curriculum 2* Read: Bohart, pp. 17-25, Wood chap 5	In-class: STEAM *Student Presentations* ***Installment #2 CUPE***
Week 12	*Play and Socialization* Read: Learning to Communicate chap 5	In-class: puppet/stuffed animal Student *Presentations*
Week 13	*Play for All Children* Read: Bohart, pp. 98-106, Frost chap 10	In-class: Creative Drama *Student Presentation* ***Installment #3 CUPE***
Week 14	*Play Spaces* Read: Bohart, pp. 107-117, Great Outdoors chap 1	In-class: Outdoor play spaces **Outdoor Play Visit**

Week 15	*Play and Technology* Read: VanHoorn chap 13	In-class: media – apps/programs/games ***Informal Learning Project***
Week 16	*Play Date* *Final Thoughts*	*Play Date* ***"Concepts and Uses of Play in Education" Assignment***

Appendix D

IRB Approval

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION	
Date: January 5, 2017	
From: Joyel Moeller, IRB Analyst	
To: Tugce Arda Tuncdemir	
Type of Submission:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	Pretend, Move and ShowSupporting Early Childhood Practitioners' Professional Development Incorporation with Creative Drama Activities
PrincipalInvestigator:	Tugce Arda Tuncdemir
Study ID:	STUDY00006249
Submission ID:	STUDY00006249
Funding:	Not Applicable
Documents Approved:	• Focus Group Interviews-Tuncdemir.docx (0.01), Category: Data Collection Instrument • HPR-591-Revised-1-3-2017 (0.04), Category: IRB Protocol • Student Interview Question (Pre & Post) (2), Category: Data Collection Instrument • Weekly Module Reflection Questions-tuncdemir.docx (0.01), Category: Data Collection Instrument

The Office for Research Protections determined that the proposed activity, as described in the above-referenced submission, does not require formal IRB review because the research met the criteria for exempt research according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations.

Continuing Progress Reports are **not** required for exempt research. Record of this research determined to be exempt will be maintained for five years from the date of this notification. If your research will continue beyond five years, please contact the Office for Research Protections closer to the determination end date.

Changes to exempt research only need to be submitted to the Office for Research Protections in limited circumstances described in the below-referenced Investigator Manual. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please contact the Office for Research Protections.

Penn State researchers are required to follow the requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the IRB Library within CATS IRB (http://irb.psu.edu).

This correspondence should be maintained with your records

Appendix E

Summary Explanation of Research and Consent Form

The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Project: Pretend, Move and Show (STUDY00006249)

Principal Investigator: Tugce B. Arda Tuncdemir (PhD Student and Graduate Assistant, Curriculum &Instruction Department, College of Education, Penn State University)

Telephone Number and Email Address: 814-777-1076; tba113@psu.edu

This summary provides information about this research project that will implement and research creative dramatic activities in ECE 479 course in Spring 2017. This study's methods and procedures and all related materials passed Institutional Review Board (IRB) evaluation at Penn State University.

This research is being done (1) to examine in depth what preservice teachers understand about children's play, (2) to describe how preservice teachers participate and potentially understand and benefit from creative drama activities to find out how these actives may impact their participation in planned play, and (3) to discuss how these activities may contribute their skills of creating, implementing and evaluating playful curriculum. For the purposes of the study, creative drama modules that include games, improvisation activities and discussion segments will be implemented for ten weeks. Each lesson in the module lasts for approximately 1 to 1.5 hour. Each week preservice teachers are asked to fill out weekly reflections.

After the modules are done, preservice teachers create and implement their own lessons for 3 weeks.

This research will also involve conducting pre- and post-interviews with the preservice teachers. Interviews will take approximately 15-30 minutes and questions will relate to their background information, knowledge and perception about play and creative drama. At the end of the modules, focus group interview will be done with preservice teachers. All interviews will be audio-recorded and photos and videos will be taken during some activities in the modules.

All study participants are free to skip any interview questions they would prefer not to answer. Participation is voluntary and one is free to cease participating at any time. All interview question answers will remain confidential and will be accessed only by the research team.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Tugce B. Arda Tuncdemir at 814-777-1076. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject or concerns regarding your privacy, you may contact the Office for Research Protections at 814-865-1775. You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Name and signature of Preservice Teacher granting permission to be included in the study

_____   _____

Printed Name   Signature   Date

Appendix F

Student Interview Form

Part I

Name: _____

Current Semester standing: _____

Email: _____

Gender: M ___ F ____

Age Range: 18- 20, 21-23, 24- 30 (Please, circle it)

Degree Sought: _____

Ethnic Background: _____

1.Can you define the creative dramatics? Can you give an illustration?

2.Please describe your creative drama activity experiences?

- Preschool, Kindergarten, Primary Grades, Middle School, High School, College

3.Please list any courses/ joining theatre club or workshops on creative drama that you have taken previously and briefly describe content of the course/s.

Part II (with follow - up questions)

1.Do you like act? Explain

2.Do you think you are good at acting? Explain

3.What do you think are the significant components of creative drama?

4.How would you make a connection between creative drama and play?

5.How important do you feel creative drama is to a preschool student?

6.How important do you feel creative drama is to a kindergarten student?

7.How important do you feel creative drama is to a primary grade student?

8.What are the advantages of playing creative drama activities for young children?

9.What are the disadvantages of playing creative drama activities for young children?

10.What do you think about the role of creative drama in teaching curricular subjects?

11.How comfortable do you feel when you are doing creative drama? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that?

12.How comfortable do you feel when you implement creative drama with preschool children? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that?

13.How comfortable do you feel when you implement/teach with creative drama with kindergarten children? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that?

14. How comfortable do you feel when you implement/teach with creative drama with primary grades children? (Rate: 1-10) Why? Can you tell me more about that?

15.As a teacher, would you be competent to implement creative drama activities in your classroom? Why or why not? Why? Can you tell me more about that?

16.Do you have any additional information you would like to share with me?

Additional Questions for the post-test

1.Can you define creative dramatics? What does it new to you?

2.What creative drama activities did you like the most? The least?

3.Was there anything you learned better because of creative drama?

4.Do you want to play in your future classroom more after studying with creative drama?

Appendix G

A Sample Weekly Reflection

Weekly Drama Module Reflections

Name: [ ]   Date: 2/22

(1) what did you explore in this activity?

We explored the cause and effects of global warming and what we can do to help.

(2) what was your favorite part of this activity and why?

I liked having to act out the effects without using words.

(3) what was most challenging part of this activity and why?

I think coming up with unique solutions to global warming was difficult.

(4) if you were the teacher, how would you use this activity into your curriculum?

I would use the students ideas to generate a big list we could keep hung up in the classroom.

(5) what changes/additions would you make to this activity?

maybe you could add a writing component to this lesson.

(6) how would you describe your participation to this activity?

I participated and contributed to group discussion.

(7) how was the leader comments and participation?

She reiterated the main points of the lesson which was helpful.

Appendix H

Peer Teaching Sample Plan

Weekly Drama Module Reflections

Name: [ ]   Date: 2/22

(1) what did you explore in this activity?

We explored the cause and effects of global warming and what we can do to help.

(2) what was your favorite part of this activity and why?

I liked having to act out the effects without using words.

our

(3) what was most challenging part of this activity and why?

I think coming up with unique solutions to global warming was difficult.

(4) if you were the teacher, how would you use this activity into your curriculum?

I would use the students ideas to generate a big list we could keep hung up in the classroom.

(5) what changes/additions would you make to this activity?

maybe you could add a writing component to this lesson.

(6) how would you describe your participation to this activity?

I participated and contributed to group discussion.

(7) how was the leader comments and participation?

She reiterated the main points of the lesson which was helpful.

VITA

Tugce Burcu Arda Tuncdemir

EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania State University, Ph.D. Curriculum and Instruction; Early Childhood Education Program 2020
Ege University, M.S.   Early Childhood Education   2011
Hacettepe University, B.A.   Early Childhood Education & Preschool Teacher Program   2008

HONORS, AWARDS AND GRANTS

PPPIF Walter F. Drew Emerging Play Scholar Award 2018 at NAEYC
The Association for the Study of Play (TASP) Student Travel Grant (2020)
Graduate Student Travel Grant. The Pennsylvania State University (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)
Visiting Scholar in The Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 2010-2011
Travel and Thesis Support Scholarship, The Council of Higher Education of Turkey, 2010-2011
National Scholarship Program for MSc, The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, 2008-2010

PUBLICATIONS

Johnson, J.E., Sevimli-Celik, S., Al-Mansour, M., **Arda Tuncdemir, T. B.**, & Dong, P. (2020). *Play in Early Childhood Education*. In O. N. Saracho & B. Spodek (Eds.), Handbook of research on the education of young children, 4th ed. New York: Routledge

Burroughs, M. D., Valbusa, F., **Arda Tuncdemir, T.B.** & Mortari, L. (2018). Melarete And PEECh: Two Educational Approaches to Developing Ethical and Emotional Competencies. *RicercAzione, 10*(2), 117-134

Greenberg, M., Domitrovich, C., Ocak Karabay, S., **Arda Tuncdemir, T.B**. & Gest, S. (2018). Focusing on Teacher-Children Relationship Perception and Children's Social Emotional Behaviors - the PATHS Preschool Program, *International Journal of Educational Research Review, 3*(1), 8-20.

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Burroughs, M. & **Arda Tuncdemir, T. B** (2017). Philosophical Ethics in Early Childhood: A Pilot Study, *Journal of Philosophy in Schools 4*(1), 74-101.

Bilir Seyhan, G., Ocak Karabay, S., **Arda Tuncdemir, T. B.,** Greenberg, M. T. and Domitrovich, C. (2017). The Effects of Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies Preschool Program on Teacher–Children Relationships and Children's Social Competence in Turkey*, International Journal of Psychology. doi:10.1002/ijop.12426*

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Arda, T. B. (2012). *Visual Art Practices with Creative Drama Method in Early Childhood*. Unpublished professional development thesis. Turkey: Ankara

Arda, T. B. & Ocak, S. (2012). Social Competence and Alternative Thinking Strategies Preschool Curriculum, *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, *12*(4), 13-20.

Ocak, S., and **Arda, T. B.** (2011). Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies Program in Preventive Intervention Science, *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education (INT-JECSE), 3*(2), 129-148.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Arda – Tuncdemir, T. B. Interactive Play Media. International Conference of The Association for the Study of Play (TASP) and American Association for the Child's Right to Play (IPA/USA), March 11-14, 2020, San Antonio, TX

Arda – Tuncdemir, T. B. Play and Improvisation in Preservice Teacher Education. International Conference of The Association for the Study of Play (TASP) and (IPA/USA), March 11-14, 2020, San Antonio, TX

Arda – Tuncdemir, T. B. Play in Higher Education (Round Table) International Conference of The Association for the Study of Play (TASP) and American Association for the Child's Right to Play (IPA/USA), March 13-16, 2019, VA