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A Case Study of Developing a Blended Reading Program Using Process Drama for Korean EFL Secondary Students

Hye-Young Lim and Hae-Ok Park *

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This paper presents a case study of developing a blended reading program for Korean EFL middle school students using a process drama methodology to generate intrinsic motivation to read, improve reading comprehension and language fluency, and foster twenty-first-century skills such as creativity, communication, and cooperation. For the development of the reading program, a needs analysis was conducted using student questionnaires and diagnostic tests. From results of the needs analysis, sample lessons were designed based on the process drama methodology following its planning principles and strategies. Based on feedback from teachers and students after piloting the sample lessons, the blended reading program was finalized. The proposed blended reading program is expected to help Korean EFL middle school students build a positive attitude toward reading English books and develop reading comprehension, language fluency, and 21st-century core competencies. It will also encourage English teachers to use innovative teaching methods in English education.

Key words: blended reading program, process drama, reading comprehension, language fluency, 21st-century skills

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*First Author: Hye-Young Lim, Graduate Student, Department of English Education, International Graduate School of English

Corresponding Author: Hae-Ok Park, Professor, Department of English Education, International Graduate School of English; 89, Yangjae-daero 81-gil, Gangdong-gu, Seoul, Korea, 054071, Korea; Email: parkgeo@igse.ac.kr

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1. INTRODUCTION

Twenty-first-century skills are essential core competencies to be cultivated for a fast-changing future society. They are multidimensional abilities that students need to acquire to thrive in the 21st century: the 4Cs (creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking), digital literacy, and life and career skills (Partnership for 21st century skills, 2009). Responding to this demand, the Korean national curriculum for primary and secondary education has been reformed to develop future core competencies, implementing an examination-free semester in middle school and credit systems in high school and expanding digital education (Han et al., 2017; Ministry of Education, 2022).

Nevertheless, Korean secondary English education has been examination-oriented and knowledge-driven under the strong influence of the Korean College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) (Kang & Cha, 2021; Park, 2006; Yoon & Lee, 2016), which only tests listening and reading ability in the English section. As a result of the negative washback of CSAT, Korean secondary students generally draw their attention to "grammatical forms, discourse markers, and surface structure in detail to understand the literal meaning, implication, and rhetorical relationship" (Brown, 2007, p. 358), failing to promote balanced development of four language skills (i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing) whose integrations are significant to facilitate students' language development (Harmer, 2009). Consequently, situated in an English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, most Korean secondary students spend much time identifying individual word meanings or grammatical structures of the text and mastering test-taking skills (Kang & Cha, 2021; Yoon & Lee, 2016), leading to a lack of chance to develop the communicative ability as well as pleasure of reading, generating a dislike of English. Especially in the Korean EFL middle school classroom, where English textbooks authorized by the Korean Ministry of Education are primary instructional sources for language input, reading instruction mainly driven by a bottom-up approach to decode the meaning of the text does not necessarily ensure good reading comprehension because it requires to involve both bottom-up and top-down cognitive processing (Brown, 2007). Through the practice of a top-down approach, learners can activate their schematic knowledge to understand the general meanings of the text (Brown, 2007).

In such circumstances, there needs a necessity to develop an English reading program that incorporates integrated skills using innovative teaching methods tailored to the Korean EFL middle school context, in which students can improve language fluency and reading comprehension in a balanced way and enhance pleasure of reading and 21st-century skills. In addition, in the era of digitalization, blended learning combining online and offline learning has been proven to be a practical educational approach to improving digital literacy (Faraniza, 2021). Therefore, this study reports a case study of developing a blended English reading program using a process drama methodology for Korean middle school students to

develop language fluency, reading comprehension, 21st-century skills, and intrinsic motivation to read.

To achieve the aim, the following research questions were set out to be answered through the study.

1) What are the essential procedures for developing a blended reading program that meets the needs of the target learners?
2) How is a process drama methodology incorporated for the development of ELT materials?
3) How is the proposed blended reading curriculum incorporating process drama implemented?

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Process Drama and Four Language Skills

Process drama (PD) is a teaching and learning method that involves students in episodic dramatic scenes with imagination, no script, and spontaneous responses and interactions over a longer period and it stems from drama-in-education, which employs theatrical methods and practices as a learning medium (O'Neill, 1995). PD is "a whole-group drama process" (Bowell & Heap, 2013, p. 6) with a spontaneous nature without a pre-written script, where the teacher and learners cooperate to make imaginary dramatic scenes responding to a variety of situations and materials from multiple points of view to create meanings for themselves. PD is a process-oriented drama method in which learners as an internal audience participate in a sequence of drama strategies without an external audience where the process itself becomes learning (Bowell & Heap, 2013; O'Neill, 1995; Park, 2012).

As in most drama activities, PD provides opportunities for naturally integrating four language skills. For example, spontaneous verbal expressions involving listening are essential to dramatic scenes, and reading and writing are incorporated as part of language input and output (Maley & Duff, 2005). PD offers engaging contexts for language and promotes motivation to communicate by encouraging learners to use spoken language appropriate to their roles and fictional settings, where learners experiment with vocabulary and grammar (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003). Additionally, PD has a close connection to literature, such as plays, narrative poems, and stories because they include a narrative structure, settings, characters, plots, and conflicts that need to be dealt with (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003). Such similarities encourage learners to engage in PD within which they read and respond to a written text verbally, visually, auditorily, and kinesthetically to express their

individual and shared understanding of it, through which they can make emotional engagement with the text and improve their capacity to look beyond the literal meaning, uncover underlying meaning and make their own meaning (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003). Moreover, PD can be a powerful tool for motivating learners to write both in and out of character, individually or within groups within the text (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003). Consequently, by encompassing all aspects of English, PD provides learners with chances to improve language fluency in a balanced way.

Similarly, preliminary studies of incorporating process drama into English learning have shown positive effects on students' speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary acquisition (Arzu, 2008; Galante & Thomson, 2016; Kim, 2012; Lee, 2013; Lee & Lee, 2012; Park & Kim, 2016), English literacy (Park, 2022a), and creativity (Jung, 2014; Park, 2022b) as well as affective domains including confidence, interest, engagement (Park & Kim, 2016) and anxiety (Atas, 2015) and have demonstrated the feasibility of infusing drama-based instruction into classroom instruction.

2.2. Process Drama and Reading Comprehension Strategies

Reading comprehension means understanding details and main points in a written text and understanding the implied meanings of the words in the text (Grellet & Francoise, 1981; Kelner & Flynn, 2006; Richards, 2015). A reading comprehension strategy is a means for readers to interact with the text to understand it better, and it is a process that happens simultaneously during and after reading (Kelner & Flynn, 2006; Richards, 2015). By fully guiding students to understand what they read through the reading comprehension strategies, they become more thoughtful and competent readers (Kelner & Flynn, 2006).

Drama and reading comprehension share several authentic connections (Kelner & Flynn, 2006). Researchers have shown that drama requires similar cognitive skills to those for reading (McMaster, 1998; Schneider & Jackson, 2000). Like in the reading, before starting drama, students read the text to find important information and draw inferences based on the writer's words and their personal experiences and background knowledge and during the drama, they create meaning based on the synthesis of information (Kelner & Flynn, 2006). In addition, drama and reading comprehension invite the process of visualization (Kelner & Flynn, 2006). Visualizing is a comprehension strategy that helps readers retain information for recall (McMaster, 1998). It is mental imaging activated in the brain, especially when readers are busy reading a narrative text (Tomlinson, 1998). Consequently, readers become less reliant on the memory of the text and more on visual images of it as they engage in visualization (Kelner & Flynn, 2006). Likewise, in the process of drama, students read the text and envision dramatic scenes, including all its elements, such as contexts, characters, and structure (Kelner & Flynn, 2006).

Similarly, a variety of drama strategies have a close connection to building up reading comprehension strategies, as shown in Table 1:

Developing sensory images (the use of some or all of the five senses to image what the text describes in words), building and activating schema (the development and application of background knowledge to increase understanding of the text), questioning (the use of questions to clarify and speculate about elements of the text), determining importance (the ability to distinguish significant text information from minor details), inferring (the ability to interpret or draw conclusions about what is not directly stated in the text), and synthesis (the ability to create something new based on information in the text) (Kelner & Flynn, 2006, p. 14).

TABLE 1

Reading Comprehension Strategies and Drama Strategies

Reading Comprehension Strategies	Drama Strategies
Developing sensory images Visualize the setting, character, and action of the text Imagine the sights, sounds, tastes, and textures described in the text	Story Dramatization Character Interviews Tableau Human Slide Shows
Building and activating schema Make connections among various parts of the text Make connections between the text and other texts they have read Make connections between the text and their personal experience and prior knowledge	Story Dramatization Character Interviews Tableau Human Slide Shows
Questioning Clarify evidence in the text, Probe for deeper meaning Seek to discover new information, Promote wondering Speculate on possibilities, Search for answers to problems	Story Dramatization Character Interviews Tableau Human Slide Shows
Determining importance Demonstrate comprehension of the important elements of the text (identify setting, characters, conflict, obstacles, and resolution, list the sequence of key events: retelling the plot) Demonstrate an understanding of the author's intent (determine the text's primary message)	Story Dramatization Character Interviews Tableau Human Slide Shows
Making inferences Make predictions Discover the implied information within the text Combine clues found in the text with prior knowledge to make logical guesses	Story Dramatization Character Interviews Tableau Human Slide Shows
Synthesizing information Summarize and paraphrase the main points of the text Connect the text's main ideas with larger concepts and issues Generalize and/or make judgments about the text Extend and apply the information in the text to different contexts Respond personally to the text (form new ideas, opinions, or beliefs and gain new perspectives)	Story Dramatization Character Interviews Tableau Human Slide Shows

Note. Adapted from <A Dramatic Approach to Reading Comprehension Strategies and Activities for Classroom Teaching> by Kelner and Flynn (2006, pp.15-16)

Story dramatization, tableau, character interviews, and human slide shows are connected to reading comprehension strategies such as developing sensory images, building and activating schema, questioning, determining importance, inferring, and synthesizing information; For instance, s*tory dramatization (improvisation)* is an improvisational role play, in which students create dialogues that show their understanding of the essential components of the story, such as setting, characters, conflicts, the sequence of key events, and the main message of the scene. In their planning, students visualize their characters based on various parts of the text. Then they improvise actions and dialogues by drawing logical inferences using textual clues and their prior knowledge and taking on their characters' perspectives, from which they can gain different points of view; *Tableau (still image)* is a single silent frozen image that captures an important moment in a story, whereas *human slide shows* are a series of silent frozen images that display a sequence of events in a story. Students select the poses of *tableau* or *human slide shows* by using their prior knowledge, asking questions to themselves and others about the text, and linking the text and their prior knowledge. Moreover, their frozen images visualize the setting, characters, and actions in the text and demonstrate their understanding of the implied meaning in the text and the application of textual information in different contexts; *Character interviews (hor-seating)* are a kind of role drama using a TV talk show style. During *character interviews*, students create questions to ask the characters or answer them in the role of characters to clarify evidence, find deeper meaning and solutions for the problems concerning the characters, etc. Their responses to the interview questions indicate that they can portray the characters, recognize significant moments from the text, draw logical inferences, and synthesize knowledge from various parts of texts and their prior knowledge (Kelner & Flynn, 2006).

2.3. Process Drama and Twenty-First-Century Skills

Process drama (PD) provides powerful contexts for students to practice and develop the 4Cs and digital literacy: creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking; information, media, and technology literacy, which are necessarily essential to succeed in career and life and become digital citizens in the twenty-first century (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022; Park, 2022b).

First, creativity is defined as "the ability to solve problems in original and valuable ways and having original and imaginative thoughts and ideas about something" (Richards, 2013, p. 21), and it can be developed through tasks involving learner-centered, communication-based, and open-ended components through which learners can use language at their disposal to convey their message (Richards, 2013). In this sense, drama is "a creative learning and teaching medium" (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022, p. 30) because improvised conversation, imaginary characters, scenes, and images in drama inspire learners to generate

and express ideas and knowledge creatively and freely (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022; Park, 2022b). According to creative pedagogy, enhancing creative capacity is related to three aspects: "creative learning" (embracing students' intrinsic curiosity), "creative teaching" (innovative and imaginative approach to teaching), and "teaching for creativity" (supporting a creative environment) (Lin, 2011, pp. 151-152). In this respect, PD facilitates learners' creative thinking because its innovative and creative approach creates a flexible, enjoyable, motivating class environment where learners can evoke imagination and intrinsic curiosity by exploring drama scenes.

Second, communication and collaboration are important components of a PD class (Park, 2022b). During the drama, students are involved in verbal and nonverbal communication (silence, sound, gesture, movement, and stillness), take on the roles in pairs, small groups, or a whole group, depending on dramatic contexts, where they can enhance interpersonal skills and collaboration to achieve shared goals (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022).

Third, PD presents numerous situations for learners to employ critical thinking: both lower and higher-order thinking skills (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022; Park, 2022b): remembering and recalling knowledge to identify and describe things: applying, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing knowledge (Bloom's Taxonomy,1956, as cited in Baldwin & Galazka, 2022). During the PD activities, learners use both lower-and higher-order thinking skills to think critically about characters, situations, conflicts, and events, analyzing and evaluating their responses from different points of view (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022).

Lastly, in the era of the digital world, information, media, and technology literacy are crucial for students to access and critically evaluate digital texts online and media messages in a variety of media and use various digital devices (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022). In this sense, PD can build meaningful learning contexts to assist students in raising awareness of digital literacy (Park, 2022b). For instance, in a PD activity known as *mantle of the expert*, students take on roles of experts in a designated field and search for and select authentic information online to complete their tasks and projects (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003). Furthermore, within the drama, students can play the role of media creators and manipulators by producing media texts and pictures (Baldwin & Galazka, 2022). In both cases, drama involves students using information and communication technologies (ICT) tools such as computers, smartphones, or tablet PCs to perform their roles in the dramatic context where they become adept at technology tools to become digital natives.

3. CURRICULUM DESIGN

The present research conducted a needs analysis with target learners using student questionnaires and diagnostic tests. Based on results of the needs analysis and information

on six planning principles of process drama, ten sample lessons were developed, reviewed, and piloted. Figure 1 shows the process of how materials were designed for the proposed project.

FIGURE 1

Process of Curriculum Development

3.1. Needs Analysis

Needs analysis (NA) is an essential procedure of any educational program to establish the profile of learners' needs (Richards, 2001). It is generally administered to answer questions regarding a) learners' future necessities of language (needs), b) their present knowledge of the language (lacks), and c) their expectations about language learning (wants) (Nation & Macalister, 2010). To answer these questions, student questionnaires and two diagnostic tests were conducted. NA plays a crucial role in designing the proposed reading program because genres of English books, reading activities, and learners' reading levels suggested from results of NA will generate students' intrinsic reading motivation and facilitate their reading.

3.1.1. Participants

Target learners were Korean EFL students in the third year of middle school, who had received English education for seven years at schools since the third grade at elementary school. The student respondents for the questionnaire were 48 third graders: 31 (18 males and 13 females) from a Korean middle school in Daejeon Metropolitan City and 17 (5 males and 12 females) from another middle school in Incheon Metropolitan City in South Korea, as indicated in Table 2. Their levels of English proficiency varied from novice-mid to intermediate-low (ACTFL), depending on their previous educational backgrounds.

TABLE 2

Demographics of Students Survey Respondents

Location	Male	Female
Daejeon	18	13
Incheon	5	12
Total	23	25

3.1.2. Students' questionnaire

A preliminary questionnaire was designed in a pencil-and-paper format and comprised five parts: a) needs, b) lacks, c) wants, d) online learning, and e) bio information, with 18 questions (see Appendix A). It was reviewed by an academic expert in the field of curriculum development and two middle school English teachers, and a few items were fine-tuned to clarify their meaning. Then an online questionnaire was created through Google Forms and pre-tested by three third graders in middle school to assess the whole questionnaire under the survey condition (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The final version was created through Google Forms to collect the necessary data for the proposed research. Finally, an online survey was administered to 48 students through their smartphones from May 20th to 27th, 2022. The results were automatically processed through Google Forms for descriptive statistical analysis.

3.1.3. Survey findings

What stands out in Table 3 is that the students felt more difficulty in productive skills such as speaking (3.44) and writing (3.29) than receptive skills such as listening (3.10) and reading (3.04). The result is in line with the previous study that found that Korean middle school students showed relatively low confidence in productive skills than receptive skills (Jean, 2017). It appears that the results reflect the knowledge-centered and examination-oriented English learning environment in Korean secondary schools where intensive listening and reading skills outweigh speaking and writing skills, failing to achieve productive competence. Therefore, the proposed reading course needs to design activities that balance all four skills of English to promote the students' productive skills.

TABLE 3
The Degree of Difficulty in English Areas

Answer Options	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Rating Average	Response Count
Listening	2	9	23	10	4	3.10	48
Reading	2	15	15	11	5	3.04	48
Speaking	1	8	18	11	10	3.44	48
Writing	2	7	19	15	5	3.29	48
Vocabulary	1	4	15	18	10	3.67	48
Grammar	1	10	18	15	4	3.23	48
Pronunciation	3	14	21	6	4	2.88	48

Table 4 shows the factors that make the students have difficulty in speaking English: knowledge of sentence structure (27.00%) and lack of vocabulary (19.00%). In addition, they also felt high speaking anxiety due to a high affective filter in speaking: low confidence

(20.00%), embarrassment (13.00%), and nervousness (10.00%). Therefore, it seems necessary to create a fun and comfortable classroom atmosphere to help students lessen their speaking anxiety and engage in speaking activities more actively.

TABLE 4
Factors that Make Speaking Difficult

Answer Options	Frequency (N)	Response Percentage (%)
I feel difficulty making sentences.	27	27.00
I have a poor vocabulary.	19	19.00
I have low confidence in speaking English.	20	20.00
I feel embarrassed when I make a mistake.	13	13.00
I feel nervous when I speak English.	10	10.00
I do not have many chances to speak English.	11	11.00
Total	100	100

Table 5 indicates several factors that demotivate the students to read English books. It is possible that students' lack of linguistic and grammatical knowledge (26.88%), reading ability for longer texts (23.65%), chance to read longer texts (17.20%), and reading comprehension strategies (13.97%) probably caused weakness and difficulty in reading English books.

TABLE 5
Demotivating Factors in Reading English Books

Answer Options	Frequency (N)	Response Percentage (%)
I do not have much knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.	25	26.88
I feel difficulty understanding longer texts.	22	23.65
I do not have many chances to read English books.	16	17.20
I don't know how to read longer texts.	13	13.97
I feel difficulty concentrating when reading English books.	13	13.97
I do not have enough background knowledge.	4	4.30
Total	93	100

As shown in Table 6, the students were interested in a variety of genres of English books. The most popular genres of English books among the students were science fiction and fantasy (25.45%), followed by romance (20.00%), mystery and horror (15.45%), realistic fiction (15.45%), and nature and adventure (12.72%), culture and history and myth (10.00%).

TABLE 6
Students' Favorite Genres of English Books

Answer Options	Frequency (N)	Response Percentage (%)
Science Fiction & Fantasy	28	25.45
Romance	22	20.00
Mystery & Horror	17	15.45
Real-life story	17	15.45

Nature & Adventure	14	12.72
Culture & History & Myth	11	10.00
Others: fairy tales	1	0.90
Total	110	100

As can be seen in Table 7, the students preferred the auditory and visual styles of learning in an English reading program: watching movies (21.83%), listening to music (19.71%), drawing pictures (8.45%), singing songs (8.45%). In addition, they also liked participating in a variety of creative and interactive classroom activities: questions and answers and interviews (7.74%), situational role-play (7.04%), small group work (5.63 %), English musical (4.22%), English play (3.52%), and project works (3.52%). This result corresponds with the earlier finding that Korean middle school students preferred more creative and interactive activities with peers during the exam-free semester (Kim & Lee, 2019; Lee & Choi, 2019).

TABLE 7
Students' Favorite Classroom Activities for an English Reading Program

Answer Options	Frequency (N)	Response Percentage (%)
Watching movies	31	21.83
Listening to music	28	19.71
Drawing pictures	12	8.45
Singing songs	12	8.45
Questions and answers & Interviews	11	7.74
Situational role-play	10	7.04
Small group work	8	5.63
English musical	6	4.22
English play	5	3.52
Project works	5	3.52
English writing	3	2.11
Book reports	3	2.11
Book presentation	4	2.81
Teacher-centered lectures	4	2.81
Total	142	100

3.1.4. Diagnostic testing

A diagnostic assessment is used to identify students' strengths, weaknesses, and knowledge before a course starts and the findings will be a valuable guide to organizing the course curriculum and aims (Nation & Macalister, 2010). In this study, two diagnostic tests were administered to identify students' reading levels and speaking proficiency respectively. Speaking is not only one of the language areas Korean middle school students desire to improve but also an essential component of process drama activities. Assessing students' speaking levels, therefore, is one of the necessary procedures to design a process drama reading program. First, the Penguin Readers placement test (Level 3) was conducted from

May 30th, 2022 to June 2nd, 2022, to determine the levels of graded readers for a reading program. Participants were 39 middle school students in the third grade who previously participated in the student survey for this study. Their English levels were from novice-mid to intermediate-mid (ACTFL) according to their survey responses based on the school exam scores. The test was composed of 30 structural and lexical items in multiple-choice format. It was administered in class through smartphones. Over 18 points out of 30 points (60%) are valid for the passing score of the placement test, and each question is assigned 1 point (Fowler, 2005). Second, the sample of the Cambridge English speaking test (A2 Key for Schools) was administered on June 24th, 2022, to check students' speaking proficiency for the proposed reading program. Participants were four middle school students whose reading level was intermediate-mid (ACTFL) from result of the previous Penguin Readers placement test. The speaking test was administered in class using a synchronous video tool such as Zoom, where speaking tasks were shared on the computer screen, and the speaking performances of the target students were video-recorded. The English teacher (the first author) was an interlocutor and led a conversation with each student. The students were tested in pairs, but each was assessed on their speaking performance. An analytical scoring rubric was used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of it (see Appendix B). The analysis was reviewed and reflected in designing process drama activities for the proposed reading program.

3.1.5. Results of diagnostic tests

The jamovi statistical program (version 2.2.5) was used to analyze the data obtained from the Penguin Readers placement test (Level 3) to check the students' reading levels. The participants were divided into three groups: novice-mid (12 students), novice-high (12 students), and intermediate-low/mid (15 students), as shown in Table 8. The Kruskal-Wallis test equivalent to a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to compare the means for the three groups because the normality assumption was violated.

TABLE 8
Diagnostic Test

Group	N	Mean	SD	SE
Novice-mid	12	13.3	2.84	0.820
Novice-high	12	14.1	3.37	0.973
Intermediate	15	20.1	3.73	0.963

The Kruskal-Wallis test shows that there was a significant difference in the means between the three groups ($\chi^2 = 18.3$, $p < .001$, $\varepsilon^2 = .483$). As indicated in Table 9, the *post hoc* tests demonstrate the intermediate group produced a significantly higher score than those of

both novice-mid ($p < .001$) and novice-high groups ($p = .002$). There was no statistically significant difference between novice-mid and novice-high groups ($p > .05$). Consequently, it is generally assumed that only the intermediate group had basic vocabulary and grammar at level 3 of graded readers (intermediate-mid: ACTFL) because they received an average score of about 20 points out of 30 points, as shown in Table 8, which is over the passing score (over 18 points out of 30 points) of the Penguin Readers placement test (Level 3).

TABLE 9
Pairwise Comparisons of the Penguin Readers Placement Test

Comparison		W	*p*
Group	Group		
Novice-mid	Novice-high	0.663	0.886
Novice-mid	Intermediate	5.302	< .001
Novice-high	Intermediate	4.888	0.002

In the case of the Cambridge English speaking test (A2 Key for Schools), Table 10 indicates that the four students whose reading level was intermediate-mid (ACTFL) from result of the Penguin Readers placement test had speaking proficiency between novice-high and intermediate-low (ACTFL).

TABLE 10
The Results of the Cambridge English Speaking Test

Criteria / Candidates	Analytic Scoring Rubric			Level (CEFR)	Level (ACTFL)
	Grammar & Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication		
S1	2	2	1	A1	Novice-high
S2	3	2	2	A2	Intermediate-low
S3	2	2	2	A1	Novice-high
S4	2	2	2	A1	Novice-high

Based on a careful examination of the two diagnostic test results, the following strengths and weaknesses of target learners were identified: the target learners whose reading level is intermediate-mid (ACTFL) and whose speaking levels are between novice-high and intermediate-low (ACTFL) can a) identify basic vocabulary in everyday situations (e.g., hobbies, food, interests), yet sometimes use isolated words and phrases, not a full sentence; b) recognize and use simple grammatical forms (e.g., subject + verb + object, question forms), but often make mistakes on articles, plurals, prepositions (e.g., on, in, at), and tenses (e.g., present perfect or past, comparatives); c) pronounce words with some intelligibility and rarely use connected speech and incorrectly pronounce difficult words with wrong word stress; d) show simple exchanges, yet lack communication skills (e.g., turn-taking and natural responding) and seem uncomfortable in speaking English.

3.1.6. Implication from the need analysis

Based on the information from the needs analysis, the following teaching and learning priorities have been suggested for the proposed reading course. First, to increase Korean learners' productive skills, the proposed reading program needs to design activities that integrate all four skills of English in a balanced way. Second, it needs to provide creative and interactive activities incorporating both auditory and visual learning styles. Additionally, it appears crucial to create a lively, enjoyable classroom environment in order to reduce learners' speaking anxiety and encourage them to speak freely. Third, the reading course needs to enhance reading comprehension strategies as well as 21st-century skills. Fourth, it needs to offer English books at appropriate reading levels in a range of genres so that students can read with interest without feeling linguistic and grammatical difficulties.

Responding to such demands, an innovative teaching method such as a process drama (PD) methodology is suitable for designing reading activities. First, reading activities using a PD methodology integrate four skills of English naturally because a variety of PD strategies, such as improvisation, hot-seating, and write-in-role involve listening, speaking, reading, and writing to build the context that drives characters to act in the drama. Second, "Drama as a multi-sensory medium" (Baldwin & Fleming, 2003, p. 5) stimulates students to explore the text in a visual, auditory, and kinesthetic way. Furthermore, PD class generally creates a lively, comfortable, and fun classroom environment where students can reduce their speaking anxiety, increase their social interaction with the teacher and peers and develop interactional speaking skills. Third, process drama strategies incorporated into reading activities are closely linked to increasing reading comprehension and digital literacy. Students' active participation in the drama, therefore, will increase their understanding of longer texts and improve their technology skills. In addition to incorporating PD strategies, the proposed reading course encourages students to read narrative fictional stories with different genres of graded readers. Therefore, students can be exposed to a range of vocabulary and grammar appropriate to their reading levels in a natural and meaningful context as well as increase reading fluency using top-down reading strategies.

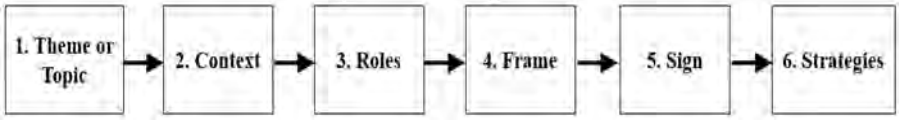
Digitalization in the twenty-first century has revolutionized many facets of life, including education, in which blended learning can be an effective solution that combines the benefits of both online and face-to-face learning systems (Faraniza, 2021). It allows students and teachers to access a wealth of knowledge and enhance interactive learning by utilizing multimedia resources and technological advancements while benefiting from face-to-face instruction (Faraniza, 2021). Therefore, for the enhancement of digital literacy along with PD activities, the proposed reading curriculum is designed to be used online and offline interchangeably. Padlet, a free online tool, is used to post a course schedule, audio materials, and online reading comprehension check-ups and upload students' assignments. In-class

reading activities can also proceed online or offline, depending on the classroom situation.

3.2. Materials Development Using Process Drama

According to Bowell and Heap (2013), there are six principles for designing process drama lessons: theme or topic (i.e., learning area), context, roles, frame, sign, and strategies, as shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2
Six Principles of Planning Process Drama



Note. Adapted from <Planning Process Drama> by P. Bowell and B. Heap, 2013, p.12. New York: Routledge.

First, the theme or topic in process drama (PD) is related to a learning area. In planning PD, just as with other curriculum areas, the teacher needs to identify the theme or learning area in terms of human experience for learners to achieve from his lessons; Second, context is the particular fictional settings (e.g., place, time, and situation) where learners explore the theme in a meaningful way; Third, once dramatic settings have been selected, the teacher determines which role students will play to put themselves in someone else's shoes and see situations from different perspectives; Fourth, frame is characters' points of view on the events in the drama that create dramatic tension to drive the participants to act in the drama. Dramatic tension is caused by the friction that arises at the point where characters with different values, beliefs, and aspirations meet. As the drama progresses, it turns into the motivating force for characters' responses and reactions; Fifth, sign is things such as sounds, images, gestures, and objects which create symbolic meanings to drama events, promoting stimulating and engaging learning experience for learners; Sixth, strategies are dramatic techniques which make the fictional drama come alive. It is critical for the teacher to know which strategies to use when, how to combine them, and for what purpose for the successful practice of drama (Bowell & Heap, 2013).

Table 11 shows an example of how an L2 process drama is designed following the six principles. The pre-text for process drama is based on the famous story of *Les Misérables.* O'Neill (1995) stated that the pre-text determines the scene's setting, mood, roles, and circumstances, initiating the first action in process drama.

TABLE 11
Applying Six Principles of Planning Process Drama Using the Story of *Les Misérables*

Principle	Example
Theme & Learning area	To understand the importance of love and compassion To experience the life of common people in France in the early nineteenth century
Context	Unjust French society in the early nineteenth century where common people suffered from poverty, hunger, and inequality
Roles	Teacher's roles- Jean Valjean (a prisoner, a mayor), the head of rebels, etc. Students' roles- poor and miserable common people in France: Jean Valjean, a bishop, policemen, Marius, Cosette, etc.
Frame (Tension)	The criminal justice system in France was unfair to the common people in which a simple bread thief, Jean Valjean was transformed into a career criminal.
Sign	Hat, pictures, music
Strategies	Improvisation, still image, role-on-the-wall, write-in-role, thought-tracking, reading the images, teacher-in-role, narration, rumors, etc.

Table 12 illustrates how an L2 process drama progresses through a series of drama strategies in line with priming and target tasks based on the story of *Les Misérables.* In an L2 process drama, a variety of drama strategies or conventions are employed to develop episodic structures, most of which need a preparatory stage similar to priming tasks for target tasks implemented in task-based instruction (Park, 2018). In EFL contexts where students have limited language proficiency (Park, 2018), priming tasks, therefore, will play an important role as scaffolding to prepare language, roles, and dramatic scenes in the stories before each drama activity, through which students will be more confident in creating their roles and expressing their ideas in dramatic scenes, engage in drama activities actively with enjoyment, and have intrinsic interests and personal development in language learning.

TABLE 12
Priming and Target Tasks of Process Drama with the Story of *Les Misérables*

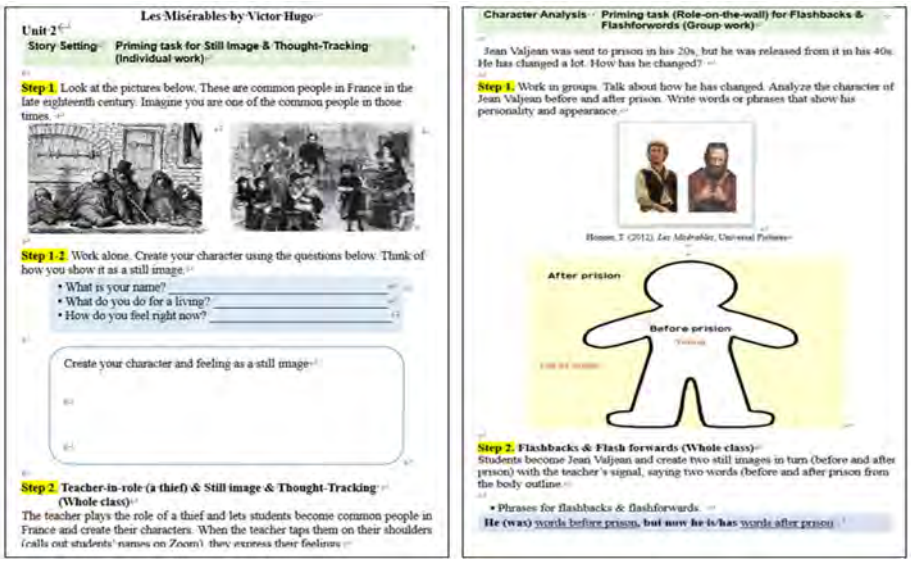
Task Type	Drama Strategy	Procedure	Teacher's Role	Students' Role
Priming task 1	Reading the images	Describing the life of common people in the late eighteenth century in France	Narrator	
Target task 1	Still image Thought-tracking Teacher-in-role	Showing the desperate moment in the life of common people in France in 1796	A thief	Common people in France
Priming task 2	Role-on-the-wall	Analyzing the character of Jean Valjean before prison (in his 20s) and after prison (in his 40s)	Facilitator	
Target task 2	Flashbacks and flashforwards	Showing two images of Jean Valjean before and after prison	Facilitator	Jean Valjean before and after prison

3.3. Developing the First Draft of Sample Lessons

Based on results and implications of the needs analysis and applying six principles and strategies of process drama, ten sample lessons were developed. Figure 3 shows some sample materials of process drama reading activities from sample lessons for the proposed reading program.

FIGURE 3

Sample Materials



3.4. Reviewing and Piloting

3.4.1. Procedures for reviewing

The sample lessons were observed and reviewed in a process drama course by a professor who teaches a process drama course and nine female teachers who take the course on June 22nd, 2022. The female teachers have long teaching experience in Korean EFL elementary or secondary education at public schools or private academies (80% of the teachers have been teaching English between 4 and 15 years). The ten reviewers participated in demo lessons as students using the sample materials (*Les Misérables and Frankenstein)* in online and offline classes and provided verbal and written feedback using a checklist. The checklist consisted of 32 questions using a five-point Likert scale (very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent) with 11 sub-sections such as methodology, suitability of learners, physical attributes, supplementary materials, integration of four skills of English, and development

of reading comprehension strategies, the 4Cs, digital literacy, and reading motivation (see Appendix C). It was adapted from Mukundan, Hajimohammadi, and Nimehchisalem (2011) and Cunningsworth (1995) and administered to the ten reviewers.

3.4.2. Procedures for piloting

The sample lessons (*Les Misérables and Frankenstein*) were piloted with four Korean EFL third graders who participated in the student survey, whose reading level was intermediate-mid (ACTFL) and whose speaking proficiency was between novice-high and intermediate-low (ACTFL) from results of the previous diagnostic tests. An English teacher (the first author) taught ten process-drama reading classes for two weeks on Zoom from August 15th to 26th, 2022. One class took 45 minutes. Before starting drama, a course description and process drama strategies were introduced. During the pilot lessons, the students were asked to read assigned reading texts of graded readers, *Les Misérables and Frankenstein,* with audio materials (YouTube video link on Padlet) before coming to class following a reading schedule on Padlet. After finishing the pilot lessons of each story, the participants took a reading comprehension test to check their understanding of the stories they explored. At the end of the whole pilot lessons, they were asked to answer survey questionnaires in Korean through Google Forms. The questionnaires consisted of 23 questions using a five-point Likert scale (very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent) with eight sub-sections such as suitability of graded readers, drama activities, and audio materials, integration of four skills of English, and development of reading comprehension strategies, the 4Cs, digital literacy, and reading motivation (see Appendix D). They were also invited to semi-structured interviews.

3.4.3. Results of reviewing

As presented in Table 13, most of the reviewers provided positive feedback on each category and some written comments were received for improvement. Reviewer 3 pointed out that more keywords and phrases need to be provided as scaffolding for each drama activity to reduce students' speaking anxiety and increase their confidence in speaking fluency. Reviewer 6 said that discussion questions might be difficult for students, so it needs more guiding questions related to students' lives to develop more ideas. Reviewer 7 commented that it would be better to reduce the number of drama activities for each lesson because of the class time limit. Reviewer 9 said that it would be better to add some follow-up activities, such as re-creating stories using digital tools to improve creativity and digital literacy. From their constructive feedback, task instructions in the sample materials were clarified more concisely and clearly, and more key expressions and follow-up activities were

added to the materials for student pilot lessons.

TABLE 13

Results of Sample Materials Review

Category of (N items)	Average Scores of Items of Each Category										Total Mean
	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	R 5	R 6	R 7	R 8	R 9	R 10	
A. Materials in relation to syllabus and curriculum (2)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
B. Methodology (2)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
C. Suitability to learners (4)	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.5	4.25	4.4
D. Physical attributes (1)	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	4.6
E. Supplementary materials (1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
F. General learning-teaching content (4)	4.5	4.75	4.75	4.25	4.25	4.75	4.5	4.75	4.5	4.75	4.58
G. Integration of four language skills (1)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
H. Development of reading comprehension strategies (8)	4.38	4.25	4.13	4.25	4.13	4.38	4.38	4.13	4.25	4.25	4.25
I. Development of 4Cs (5)	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.6	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.6	4.42
J. Development of digital literacy (3)	4	4.67	4.33	4	4.67	4.33	4.33	4.33	4.67	4	4.33
K. Improvement of motivation to read (1)	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4.8

Note. 1-very poor, 2-poor, 3-average, 4-good, 5-excellent, R-reviewer

3.4.4. Results of piloting

The results of the student survey after pilot lessons are shown in Table 14. Students overall offered positive responses to the pilot lessons. However, in terms of digital literacy, this area scored lower than other ones. This result may be because students need more chances to use digital tools for an extended period to improve technology literacy.

TABLE 14

Results of Student Survey for Pilot Lessons

Category of (N items)	Average Scores of Items of Each Category				Total Mean
	S1	S2	S3	S4	
A. Suitability of graded readers (1)	5	5	4	4	4.5
B. Suitability of drama activities (3)	4.67	4.33	4.67	4	4.42
C. Suitability of Supplement materials (1)	5	5	5	5	5
D. Development of reading comprehension strategies (8)	4.38	4.25	4.13	4.13	4.22
E. Integration of four language skills (1)	4	5	4	4	4.25
F. Development of 4Cs (5)	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.2	4.35

G. Development of digital literacy (3)	4	4.33	4	4.33	4.17
H. Improvement of motivation to read (1)	4	5	5	4	4.5

Note. 1-very poor, 2-poor, 3-average, 4-good, 5-excellent, S-student

Through semi-structured interviews, the students could comment on their favorite drama activities and some difficulties they had during the drama and offer some suggestions for improvement. Generally, the students were satisfied with drama activities on Zoom, indicated a preference for rumors and hot-seating (interview) in process drama activities, and showed a strong willingness to participate in a process drama reading course. All students agreed that drama activities based on the stories were very interesting and improved their understanding of them and motivation to read. They also answered that an enjoyable class environment and engaging contexts in the drama promoted their communication and cooperation with peers, which increased more chances for speaking practice. However, some students felt difficulties making longer sentences in English, so their answers would be limited without the teacher's scaffolding.

Additionally, student 1 commented that images related to stories helped visualize the setting and historical background in the stories. Student 2 thought that the stories were interesting and engaging, but he felt a bit uncomfortable making scenes with still images, and he would feel better if he could practice them more often. Student 3 responded that reading graded readers with audio materials before class offered them the chance to read longer texts and build background information of the stories, but her linguistic difficulty in expressing ideas limited her participation, so more linguistic help would be necessary to prepare for drama activities. Student 4 said that using an annotation tool and MS Word on Zoom was not common for them, but if they could use them more often, they could use them more properly. Based on their helpful feedback, the reading materials included additional vocabulary and useful expressions to offer more linguistic assistance to students for drama activities

4. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

4.1. Overview of a Reading Program

Reading stories with drama (RSD) is a blended reading program for Korean EFL middle school students whose reading level is intermediate-mid (ACTFL) and whose speaking proficiency ranges from novice-high to intermediate-low (ACTFL). In RSD, students read three narrative texts of different genres of graded readers with levels ranging from intermediate-low and intermediate-mid (ACTFL): *Les Misérables, Frankenstein, and Wonder.* Students spend one class (45 minutes) a week, five weeks on each book, and 16

weeks on the whole program. Every week, before coming to class, students are asked to individually read assigned reading texts listening to audio materials through the YouTube video link on the teacher's Padlet. They need to write a short reading log and upload it on the teacher's Padlet before class. During drama class, they explore a variety of process drama activities based on the assigned reading texts. Each activity incorporates integrated skills in English. As students explore characters and dramatic scenes, they think critically about the situations, use verbal and nonverbal communication, build creativity, cooperation, and empathy, and improve reading comprehension. Table 15 shows a brief description of the blended reading course.

TABLE 15
Course Summary

Category	Content				
Course Name	Reading Stories with Drama				
Learners	Korean EFL middle school students in the third grade				
Skills/Systems	Reading comprehension strategies				
Frequency	Once a week (16 weeks)				
Duration	16 classes (45 minutes per class)				
Reading Level	Intermediate-mid (ACTFL)				
Entry/Exit Speaking Levels	Novice-high (ACTFL) or weak intermediate-low (ACTFL)			Strong intermediate-low (ACTFL)	
Graded Readers Reading Schedule	Module (Week)	Book Title	Autor	Level (ACTFL)	Graded Readers
	(1)	Non-applicable			
	Module1 (2-6)	Les Misérables	Victor Hugo	Intermediate-low	Oxford Bookworms Library
	Module2 (7-11)	Frankenstein	Mary Shelley	Intermediate-mid	Oxford Bookworms Library
	Module3 (12-16)	Wonder	R.J. Palacio	Intermediate-mid	Penguin Readers
Blended Teaching & Learning Model	Steps	Online Tools	Teaching & Learning Activities		
	Before class (Online)	Padlet	Individual reading of graded readers and writing a short reading log every week		
	In-class	Zoom or offline	Process drama activities based on the stories of assigned reading texts.		
	After class (Online)	Padlet	Writing reflections on process drama activities and uploading them on Padlet.		
		Teacher Made	Reading comprehension test at the end of each module		

4.2. Curriculum Aims and Objectives

In curriculum design, aims are "general statements regarding desirable and attainable program purpose," whereas objectives refer to "specific statements that describe particular knowledge, behaviors, and skills," and they are purposes within the narrow context of a lesson or an activity within a lesson (Brown, 2007, p. 155). Figure 4 shows how six aims and fifteen objectives of reading comprehension strategies were established in the sample lesson plan (Kelner & Flynn, 2006, pp. 15-16).

FIGURE 4
Aims and Objectives in the Sample Lesson

Les Misérables by Victor Hugo					
Course aims	Reading Stories with Drama has been designed to help students develop reading comprehension strategies. A1. developing sensory images to imagine what the text describes in words A2. building and activating schema to increase understanding of the text A3. engaging in questioning to clarify and speculate about elements of the text A4. determining importance to distinguish significant text information from minor details A5. making inferences to interpret what is not directly stated in the text A6. synthesizing information to create something new				
Week 2-6	5 classes (45minutes per class)				
Lesson objectives	Upon successful completion of this class, participants will be (better) able to O1. visualize the setting or characters. O2. visualize the action of the text. O3. make connections among various parts of the text. O4. making connections between the text and their personal experiences and prior knowledge O5. clarify the evidence in the text. O6. search for answers to problems. O7. identify the main character or conflicts. O8. list the sequence of key events. O9. determine the text's primary message. O10. make predictions. O11. discover the implied information within the text. O12. combine clues found in the text with prior knowledge to make logical guesses. O13. connect the text's main ideas with larger concepts and issues O14. extend and apply the information in the text to different contexts O15. respond personally to the text.				
Legend	**HW** (homework), **IC** (in class), **A** (aim), **O** (objective)				
Unit 2	**Les Misérables:** The life story of Jean Valjean (45 minutes)	**HW**	**IC**	**A**	**O**
Before Class (Padlet)	**1. GET READY** • Check if Ss have read the assigned reading texts of *Les Misérables* and uploaded a reading log and remind them of the drama class rules.	√			
In Class (Zoom /offline) **45 minutes**	**2. STORY SETTING** Pictures & Narration (see **Sample Chapters**: Unit 2: Task 1) • Present pictures of common people in the late eighteenth century in France and ask some questions about their lives. • Narrate the situation in France in 1796 and ask Ss to imagine they are one of the common people in France and think of their characters (name, job, feelings). Teacher-in-role (a thief) & Still Image & Thought-tracking: Whole class • The teacher takes on the role of a thief and lets Ss become common people in France and create their characters as still images. When the teacher taps them on their shoulders (the teacher calls out students' names on Zoom), they express the feelings of their characters.		√	A1	O1
	3. CHARACTER ANALYSIS Pictures & Role-on-the-wall (see **Sample Chapters**: Unit 2: Task 2) • Present the pictures of Jean Valjean before prison and after prison and ask some questions. • Get Ss into groups of four, analyze the character of Jean Valjean before and after prison, and write his character before prison on the inside of the body outline and after prison on the outside of the body outline (Zoom breakout room). Flashbacks & Flashforwards (Whole class) • Let Ss imagine they are Jean Valjean, choose two words (before and after prison) from the character analysis, and create two still images (before and after prison) in turn with the teacher's signal.		√	A1 A4	O1 O7
	4. EXPLORING THE STORY Pictures & Priming task (see **Sample Chapters**: Unit 2: Task 3) • Present the pictures of Jean Valjean walking across the town. • Get Ss into groups of four and let them create the rumors about Jean Valjean as townspeople (Zoom breakout room). Teacher-in-role (Jean Valjean) & Rumors (Whole class) • The teacher takes on the role of Jean Valjean and lets Ss imagine they are townspeople. As Jean Valjean (the teacher) appears in front of them, they start spreading rumors about him.		√	A1 A2 A5	O2 O4 O10
After Class	**5. REFLECTION**	√			

4.3. Syllabus Design

Reading stories with drama (RSD) follows a theme-based syllabus−it is organized around underlying themes of the selected graded readers connected to the life of the target learners. In each module, students experience narrative texts and structures (e.g., story setting, character analysis, exploring stories, identifying or resolving conflicts, and closing) using process drama (PD) activities. Course contents were selected and sequenced based on the following five principles (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 38).

1. Frequency: Vocabulary in graded readers is high-frequency words that are recycled throughout the texts. Learners, therefore, encounter the same words repeatedly by reading through different genres of graded readers at similar levels.
2. Learning burden: Assigned readings and book logs enable learners to build and activate background knowledge and reduce the burden of in-class PD activities.
3. Chronology: In each module, PD activities are sequenced according to a structure of a narrative text (e.g., story setting, character analysis, exploring stories, identifying or resolving conflicts, and closing).
4. Strategies and autonomy: PD activities strengthen learners' reading comprehension strategies and help them better understand narrative texts and become independent readers.
5. Spaced retrieval: As students engage in PD activities, they are offered some phrases and sentences from narrative texts and use them in the activities repeatedly.

Table 16 shows the scope and sequence of reading materials covered in the proposed reading program.

TABLE 16
Scope and Sequence of Reading Materials

Module	Content
Module 1 Unit 2-6	Les Misérables (Intermediate-low: ACTFL) Story setting→Character analysis→Exploring the story→Historical event→Identifying the conflict→Closing
Module 2 Unit 7-11	Frankenstein (Intermediate-mid: ACTFL) Story setting→Exploring the story→Character analysis→Exploring the story→ Identifying the conflict→Resloving the conflict→ Closing
Module 3	Wonder (Intermediate-mid: ACTFL)

Unit 12-16	Story setting→Character analysis→Exploring the story→Character analysis→Exploring the story→Identifying the conflict→Resloving the conflict→ Exploring the story→Resloving the conflict→Exploring the story→Closing
Drama strategies	Reading the image(s), Narration, Tableau (still image), Thought-tracking, Teacher-in-role, Role-on-the wall, Flashback and flashforwards, Rumors, Story dramatization (improvisation), Writing-in-role, Character interviews (hot-seating), Storytelling, Circular drama, Choral Singing, Conscience ally, Mantle of the expert, Improvised discussion, Circle of life, etc.

The proposed blended reading curriculum with a PD methodology has several distinctive features. Each module considers the following four principles of materials design: "motivation, comprehensible input, output, and fluency" (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 39). First, the course is developed to increase learners' reading motivation. The genres of narrative texts are selected based on needs analysis, and the stories are interesting and relevant to learners' lives. Materials are visually presented, and PD activities are kinesthetic, interactive, and learner-centered, generating intrinsic motivation to read. Second, the course is designed to provide learners with comprehensible input. In each module, learners are required to read assigned reading texts of graded readers appropriate to their reading level for pleasure before coming to class. As a result, they are fully exposed to a large amount of high-frequency vocabulary through graded readers. Third, the course is designed to provide the chance to produce output. PD activities help learners become characters and produce the language in both speaking and writing in a variety of dramatic contexts. Fourth, the course is set up to improve language fluency in four skills of English. Throughout the course, learners have a lot of chances to practice four language skills in English. Reading graded readers with audio materials helps learners improve listening and reading fluency. PD activities also encourage them to produce language that they already know in the form of speaking and writing. In addition to four principles of material design, the course is developed to improve reading comprehension strategies, the 4Cs, and digital literacy. Each drama activity is connected to building several reading comprehension strategies. As learners become more engaged in PD activities, they are better able to think critically and creatively by developing dramatic situations based on the stories while collaborating and actively communicating with one another. Technology literacy is promoted throughout the course. For example, the teacher manages learners' reading assignments, logs, and class reflections using Padlet. PD activities on Zoom also require learners to use digital tools such as Zoom annotation and MS Word to prepare drama activities.

5. COURSE ASSESSMENT

Language assessment is used to measure learners' proficiency or the extent to which they have achieved the goals of a learning program (Brown, 2004). Formative assessment is conducted to provide feedback to learners on their progress toward the learning goals while the class is ongoing, and the information can be used to modify future instruction (Hughes, 2003). On the other hand, summative assessment is conducted at the end of a course or program to measure achievements, and formal tests are generally involved (Hughes, 2003). In Reading stories with drama (RSD), both formative and summative assessments are included, as shown in Table 17. As for formative assessment, learners are required to read the stories and write a reading log before class to build and activate the schema to perform drama activities. RSD provides learners with chances to read for pleasure to improve reading fluency. A reading log, therefore, is an important part of the reading program to help learners continue reading and record their progress. Moreover, in-class observation of learners can help teachers identify and scaffold their understanding to improve reading comprehension strategies. In addition, RSD takes several summative assessment methods. Active engagement and participation in drama activities are the most essential part of the course to develop reading comprehension strategies. Accordingly, evaluating learners' participation takes a large percentage of the total score. At the end of each module, learners also take a reading comprehension test after class to check their understanding of the narrative stories they have experienced during the course. At the end of the course, learners are assessed on both their reading and speaking levels. The tests are closely linked to the diagnostic tests (DT): to ensure an equal level of difficulty, the two tests are administered using the same items as the DT. As for reading level tests, however, the test items are not presented in the same order. As a result, such a procedure will increase practicality, reliability, and validity. Results from the two tests are compared with those of the DT respectively, which are used to identify learners' improvement in their reading and speaking fluency (exit-level).

TABLE 17
Formative and Summative Assessment Plans

Type	Purpose	Aim(s)	Due	Weight
Formative				
1. Reading Logs	To build background knowledge and check students' reading progress	A2	Before class	N/A
2. Teacher's Observation	To check and scaffold students' understanding of the narrative stories	A1-A6	In class	N/A
Summative				
1. Participation	To encourage punctuality, preparedness, and engagement	A1-A6	Ongoing	80%

2. Reading Comprehension Tests	To check students' reading comprehension	A2-A6	End of each module	9%
3. Penguin Readers Placement Test Level 3	To check students' exit level of reading	N/A	End of course	6%
4. Cambridge English Speaking Test (A2 Key for Schools)	To check students' speaking fluency (exit level)	N/A	End of course	5%
Total				100%

6. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Korean Secondary education is in the transition to educational reform to pursue 21st-century core competence. However, despite several attempts to foster creativity and communication skills, secondary English education in Korea has been knowledge-driven and examination-oriented, mostly employing intensive reading with a bottom-up approach due to the negative influence of CSAT. Especially in Korean EFL middle schools where English textbooks serve as a primary source for language input, reading instruction mainly focusing on a word-for-word translation and sentence structure analysis in the text causes students to have poor communication skills and reading comprehension, and low reading motivation, failing to integrate all four skills of English and foster students' future capacity. Therefore, by developing a blended reading program using a process drama methodology tailored to Korean EFL middle school students, students will improve language fluency and reading comprehension, 21st-century skills, and increase intrinsic motivation to read.

For the development of the proposed reading curriculum, the literature on process drama in relation to four language skills, reading comprehension strategies, and 21st-century skills was explored. In addition, a needs analysis was conducted to figure out students' needs, wants, and lacks, and six principles and strategies of process drama were applied to design the reading materials. Results of the needs analysis demonstrated that there is a strong need for Korean middle school students to improve their speaking ability. They preferred visual and auditory styles of learning and creative and interactive activities for a reading program. Based on results of the needs analysis and information on planning principles and strategies of process drama, sample chapters were developed, reviewed, and piloted. After careful examination of feedback from teachers and students, the proposed reading curriculum was finalized.

In the Korean EFL setting, the proposed blended reading program using PD activities has several benefits for language learning. With successful completion of the proposed course, the following goals will be achieved: learners will a) use four language skills interactively

and improve language fluency; b) develop a top-down strategy using schematic knowledge or background information by reading narrative texts weekly and writing a reading log before class; c) improve reading comprehension strategies by engaging in PD activities; d) have an intrinsic and integrative motivation to learn English. The enjoyment of the drama activities provides a positive washback effect on further reading. Cultural values of narrative texts encourage learners to have interests and integrative motivation to the target language culture; e) increase 21st-century skills such as creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital literacy. The innovative PD methodology supports a creative learning environment where learners improve their imagination, flexibility, and creative thinking.

However, the proposed course contains several limitations: a) Conducting the student questionnaires for a needs analysis with small samples of Korean EFL middle school students and pilot testing with a small number of third graders might limit the generalizability of findings of the survey and pilot testing to national levels; b) The syllabus is theme-based, and there are no skills lessons that provide language-focused and skills-based instructions for language proficiency. However, it offers scaffolding in the form of priming tasks, vocabulary, and phrases that students can employ during drama; c) RSD only covers three different narrative texts. It would be better to cover more books and different genres to offer learners a deeper appreciation of a range of genres; d) Process drama (PD) activities are probably favored by extrovert learners. Introverted learners might be uncomfortable during class.

Despite such limitations, it is expected that the proposed reading program will foster a positive attitude toward reading English books and increase students' awareness of reading comprehension strategies and language fluency. Students will also build creativity, communication, cooperation, critical thinking, and digital literacy while participating in drama activities online and offline interchangeably. It is suggested that the proposed reading program can be employed for a school club activity, an after-school program, a free-semester school program in public education, or reading courses in private academies for students whose reading level is intermediate-mid (ACTFL) and whose speaking proficiency is between novice-high and intermediate-low (ACTFL). Additionally, further research is needed with a sizable number of Korean EFL secondary students to demonstrate the effectiveness of a process drama methodology on reading comprehension by implementing the suggested reading program. In an effort to change the environment of Korean EFL secondary English classrooms, this study may serve as a springboard for further investigation into the use of innovative teaching and learning methods in English education.

Applicable level: Secondary

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APPENDIX A
A Questionnaire for Students

This survey will help your teacher make a reading program for you. The survey is not a test, so there is no *right or wrong* answer. Please read the questions below and choose the appropriate responses. This survey consists of four parts. I appreciate your help!

Part 1: Needs

1. How would you describe your motivation to learn English?
① Very motivated ② Motivated ③ Sometimes motivated ④ Low-motivated

1-1. If you answered ***Low motivated***, what is the reason? **(Choose all)**

① Activities in English class are boring.
② I don't know why I study English
③ I lack basic English skills, so learning English is too difficult.
④ What I learn in English class is **not** practical for my career.
⑤ Others:

2. What are the motivating factors in learning English?

① Activities in English class are engaging.
② Learning English is interesting and enjoyable.
③ I want to learn about cultures in English-speaking countries.
④ I want to travel to foreign countries and communicate with foreigners.
⑤ I learn English for my future career.
⑥ My parents want me to study English hard. ⑦ Others:

Part 2: Lacks

3. Which area of English do you want to improve **most**? **(Choose three answers)**

Listening [ ] Speaking [ ] Reading [ ] Writing [ ]
Grammar [ ] Vocabulary [ ] Pronunciation [ ]

4. How often do you feel difficulty with each of these skills?

English Areas	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Listening	①	②	③	④	⑤
Speaking	①	②	③	④	⑤
Reading	①	②	③	④	⑤
Writing	①	②	③	④	⑤
Grammar	①	②	③	④	⑤
Vocabulary	①	②	③	④	⑤
Pronunciation	①	②	③	④	⑤

5. If you feel difficulty in speaking, what's the reason? **(Choose all)**
① I have a poor vocabulary. ② I feel difficulty making sentences.
③ I feel nervous when I speak English. ④ I feel embarrassed when I make a mistake.
⑤ I have low confidence in speaking English.
⑥ I do not have much chance to speak English. ⑦ Others:

6. What makes it difficult for you to understand English books? **(Choose all)**
① I do not know how to read longer texts ② I feel difficulty understanding longer texts.
③ I do not have enough background knowledge.
④ I do not have many chances to read English books.
⑤ I feel difficulty concentrating when reading English books.
⑥ I do not have much knowledge of vocabulary and grammar ⑦ Others:

Part 3: Wants

7. Have you ever read English books other than English textbooks? (storybooks etc.)
① Yes ② No

8. How do you feel about reading English books?
① very interested ② interested ③ so-so ④ less interested ⑤ never interested

9. What do you like about reading English books? **(Choose all)**
① Stories are more interesting. ② It is helpful to learn English culture.
③ I can learn a variety of vocabulary and grammar.
④ It helps to improve thinking ability and creativity.
⑤ It increases reading ability and background knowledge. ⑥ Others:

10. What kind of books would you like to read for fun? **(Choose all)**

□ Adventure & Nature	□ Science fiction & Fantasy	□ Real-life story
□ Culture & History & Myth	□ Romance	□ Mystery & Horror
□ Others:		

11. Have you ever taken an English book reading program in school?
① Yes ② No

11-1. If you answered **yes**, do you think an English book reading program was helpful to improve your English?
① Very helpful ② Helpful ③ Sometimes helpful ④ Unhelpful

11-2. If you answered ***Very helpful, Helpful, Sometimes helpful***, what is the reason? **(Choose all)**

① The activities and tasks were enjoyable.
② The levels of English books were appropriate.
③ The contents of English books were interesting.
④ The teaching method(style) for the course was effective.
⑤ Others:

11-3. If you answered ***Unhelpful***, what is the reason? **(Choose all)**

① The activities and tasks were **not** enjoyable.
② The levels of English books were **not** appropriate.
③ The contents of English books were **not** interesting.
④ The teaching method(style) for the course was **not** effective.
⑤ Others:

12. What do you expect in an English book reading program? **(Choose all)**

① To learn more about English culture.
② To develop the reading ability to understand longer texts.
③ To Improve English language skills (e.g., Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing).
④ To Enhance 21st-century skills (e.g., creativity, problem-solving, cooperation, etc.).
⑤ To improve motivation in learning English through interesting activities and tasks.
⑥ Others:

13. What tasks and activities do you like to do in an English book reading program? **(Choose all)**

□ Teacher-centered lectures	□ Questions and answers & interview	□ Small group work
□ Situational role-play	□ English musical	□ English play
□ Singing songs	□ Watching movies	□ Drawing pictures
□ Listening to music	□ English writing	□ Book reports
□ Book presentations	□ Project works	□ Others:

Part 4: Online learning

14. Have you ever taken a class through Zoom (synchronously) or EBS online classroom (asynchronously)?
① Only Zoom ② Only EBS online classroom ③ Both

15. Do you like to take a class through Zoom (synchronously) or EBS online classroom (asynchronously)?
① Zoom ② EBS online classroom

15-1. If you answered **Zoom**, what is the reason? **(Choose all)**

① I can build good learning habits because it is synchronous learning.
② I can improve technology skills using a variety of learning tools (e.g., MS Word).
③ I can communicate with and get instant feedback from teachers and classmates.
④ I can do small group work and share opinions with classmates in zoom breakout rooms.
⑤ Others:

15-2. If you answered **EBS online classroom**, what is the reason? **(Choose all)**

① I prefer doing individual work and assignments.
② I can control the speed and pace of learning by myself.
③ I can review the class by watching videos several times.
④ I can concentrate more on studying by watching videos alone.
⑤ Others:

Part 5: Bio-information

16. What is your gender? ① Male ② Female

17. Which area do you live in? ① Incheon ② Daejeon

18. What is your English level? **(Answer from your test score of school exams)**

① Intermediate-mid (over 90 points) ② Intermediate-low (between 80 and 89 points)
③ Novice-high (between 61 and 79 points) ④ Novice-mid (between 41 and 60 points)
⑤ Novice-Low (less than 40 points)

APPENDIX B

Analytic Scoring Rubric for Speaking Performance (A2 Key for Schools)

A2	Grammar and Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about everyday situations.	Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels.	Maintains simple exchanges. Requires very little prompting and support.
4	*Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.*		
3	Shows sufficient control of simple grammatical forms. Uses appropriate vocabulary to talk about everyday situations.	Is mostly intelligible, despite limited control of phonological features.	Maintains simple exchanges, despite some difficulty. Requires prompting and support.
2	*Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.*		
1	Shows only limited control of a few grammatical forms. Uses a vocabulary of isolated words and phrases.	Has very limited control of phonological features and is often unintelligible.	Has considerable difficulty maintaining simple exchanges. Requires additional prompting and support.
0	*Performance below Band 1.*		

(Cambridge Assessment English, 2020, p.41)

APPENDIX C

A Criteria for Reviewing Sample Lessons

Rating (1-5): 1-very poor, 2-poor, 3-average, 4-good, 5-excellent					
Criteria	Scoring				
I. General attributes	Very Poor → Excellent				
A. Materials in relation to syllabus and curriculum					
1. Materials were developed following the narrative structure of the Stories (story setting, characters analysis, exploring stories, identifying or resolving conflicts, closing).	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. Materials were developed reflecting on important themes of the stories (e.g., Theme-based syllabus).	①	②	③	④	⑤
B. Methodology					
3. Drama activities were designed based on process drama principles and strategies.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. The priming tasks in the materials were designed appropriately to prepare and perform drama activities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
C. Suitability to learners					
5. Selected graded readers were appropriate to learners' levels.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. Genres of graded readers were interesting to learners.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. Language and drama activities were appropriate to learners' levels.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. Drama activities were designed based on learners' needs (e.g., drawing pictures, listening to music, interview, role-play, etc.)	①	②	③	④	⑤
D. Physical attributes					

9. The material layout was visual and attractive to students.	①	②	③	④	⑤
E. Supplement materials					
10. The selected graded readers were supported by audio materials.	①	②	③	④	⑤
II. Learning-teaching content					
F. General					
11. Language in the materials was natural.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Instructions for drama activities were clear.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. Learning objectives of drama activities were achievable.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. Drama activities encouraged learners' interaction through whole, pair, and group work.	①	②	③	④	⑤
G. Integration of four language skills					
15. Drama activities promoted skill integration (e.g., listening, reading, speaking, writing).	①	②	③	④	⑤
H. Development of reading comprehension strategies					
16. Drama activities offered students the chance to visualize the setting, characters, situations in the stories, etc.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. Drama activities offered students the chance to make connections among various parts of the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. Drama activities offered students the chance to clarify the information by asking questions.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. Drama activities offered students the chance to identify characters, settings, and problems in the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
20. Drama activities offered students the chance to discover implied information in the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
21. Drama activities offered students the chance to make logical guesses of the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
22. Drama activities offered students the chance to summarize the main points in the text.	①	②	③	④	⑤
23. Drama activities offered students the chance to think about stories from different perspectives.	①	②	③	④	⑤
I. Development of 4Cs					
24. Drama activities were helpful to think creatively.	①	②	③	④	⑤
25. Drama activities were helpful to communicate with classmates.	①	②	③	④	⑤
26. Drama activities were helpful to cooperate with classmates.	①	②	③	④	⑤
27. Drama activities were helpful to analyze the text and characters.	①	②	③	④	⑤
28. Drama activities were helpful to think about the stories from a different perspective.	①	②	③	④	⑤
J. Development of digital literacy					
29. Drama activities on Zoom were effective for interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
30. Learning tools on Zoom (e.g., Zoom annotation, MS Word, etc.) were useful for drama activities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
31. Students were more capable of using digital tools (Zoom annotation, MS Word, Padlet, Flipgrid, etc.).	①	②	③	④	⑤
K. Improvement of motivation to read					
32. Drama activities stimulated students' interest in reading graded readers.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Note. Adapted from Mukundan et al. (2011) and Cunningsworth (1995)

APPENDIX D

A Student Survey after Pilot Lessons

Rating (1-5): 1-very poor, 2-poor, 3-average, 4-good, 5-excellent					
Closed questions	Scoring				
Criteria	Very Poor → Excellent				
A. Suitability of graded readers					
1. The stories were interesting and appropriate to the students' levels.	①	②	③	④	⑤
B. Suitability of drama activities					
2. Drama activities were interesting and appropriate to the students' levels.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. Drama activities were helpful to understand the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. The preparatory tasks in the materials were helpful to perform the drama activities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
C. Suitability of supplement materials					
5. Audio materials were helpful to read graded readers.	①	②	③	④	⑤
D. Integration of four language skills					
6. Drama activities facilitated to use all of four skills of English.	①	②	③	④	⑤
E. Development of reading comprehension strategies					
7. Drama activities were helpful to visualize the setting, characters, situations in the stories, etc.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. Drama activities were helpful to connect several texts in the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. Drama activities were helpful to clarify the information by asking questions.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. Drama activities were helpful to identify characters, settings, and problems in the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. Drama activities were helpful to find implied meaning information in the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Drama activities were helpful to make logical guesses of the stories.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. Drama activities were helpful to summarize the main points in the text.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. Drama activities were helpful to think about stories from different perspectives.	①	②	③	④	⑤
F. Development of 4Cs					
15. Drama activities were helpful to think creatively.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. Drama activities were helpful to communicate with classmates.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. Drama activities were helpful to cooperate with classmates.	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. Drama activities were helpful to analyze the text and characters.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. Drama activities were helpful to understand the stories from a different perspective.	①	②	③	④	⑤
G. Development of digital literacy					
20. Drama activities on Zoom were effective for interaction.	①	②	③	④	⑤
21. Learning tools on Zoom (e.g., Zoom annotation, MS Word, etc.) were useful for drama activities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
22. Students were more capable of using digital tools (Zoom annotation, MS Word, Padlet, Flipgrid, etc.)	①	②	③	④	⑤
H. Improvement of motivation to read					
23. Drama activities were motivating to read graded readers.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Note. Adapted from Mukundan et al. (2011) and Cunningsworth (1995)