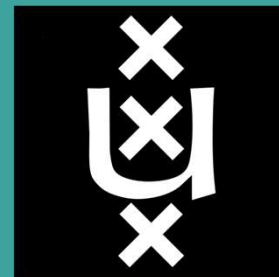


Learning Dutch Through Performing Arts

The Effect on Motivation and Engagement

Marieke Mul -12247766



Introduction

The performing arts have received a popularity unlike ever before, mainly due to TikTok (Mindchamps Académie of Stars, 2022). As a result, schools are starting to use them more to engage and motivate their students. In order to ensure that the students get enough education in the Dutch language, the Amsterdam International Community School (AICS) has started a collaboration with a performing arts organization. Group 7 students (as well as group 1 and 2) receive 2 hours of regular Dutch lessons and 1 hour of Dutch through Performing Arts (DPA). The school would like to know if the regular Dutch lessons and DPA lessons have different results when it comes to engagement and motivation.

Learning a Second Language & Performing Arts

Learning a second language can either happen simultaneously to learning the first language, or successively. With learning a language successively, new challenges appear. Usually, this process doesn't happen naturally, but in a more structured and planned setting (Mushi, 2002). Due to the unnatural contexts that learning a second language takes place in, it usually takes longer to learn it compared to learning a second language simultaneously (Ortega, 2014).

Performing arts provides a way for learners to use their body when learning a new language (Piazzoli, 2018). The embodiment, gestures and movements can help learners to understand the meaning of words and how to apply them in new situations. This way, the movements and gestures help the learner to understand and acquire new words in order to grow their vocabulary (Ludke, 2016).

Engagement & Motivation

To learn a language to the point where one can use it to express themselves, it is important to be engaged and motivated in the learning process. This can be a challenge to successive language learners, as it will take quite some time and a lot of effort to learn a language to the desired level.

Language learning is not the only aspect of this research that comes with a need for engagement and motivation. Performing arts also needs this in order to use the language in the performing arts well enough to learn from it.

To ensure learners are motivated and engaged, it's important to acknowledge and work on anxiety to perform, and making sure it's accessible to all students (Asmus, 1994).

There are two types of motivation that will be looked at in this research:

- Integrative motivation

The motivation to learn a language out of interest to identify with the culture it's spoken in (Kumar, 2021).

- Instrumental motivation

The motivation to learn a language because of practical reasons (Gardner, & Lambert, 1972).

Research Questions

Do the DPA lessons deliver higher levels of student engagement and motivation compared to the regular Dutch lessons?

- Do the DPA lessons deliver higher levels of student engagement?
- Do the DPA lessons deliver higher levels of student motivation?

Hypotheses

The expectation is that the DPA lessons deliver higher levels of both student engagement and student motivation compared to the regular Dutch lessons. Performing Arts provides a safe environment for students to learn in, as respect and comfort is a big part of it (Ibrahim, 2018). It also provides students with a possibility to express themselves even though they might not be very comfortable in speaking the language yet (Piazzoli, 2018).

Method

All grade 5 students (group 7) of the AICS will be asked to fill out a questionnaire twice. They will do this once after a DPA lesson and once after a regular Dutch lesson. The questionnaire used is an altered version of Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test battery (2004). A t-test will be used to compare the means of both lessons.

In addition to this, some observations during both DPA and regular Dutch lessons will be done to back up any possible results, and to provide extra information to support the results.



Figure 1. Children in a performing arts lesson.

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