



# Dramatic Play

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Playful Pedagogies

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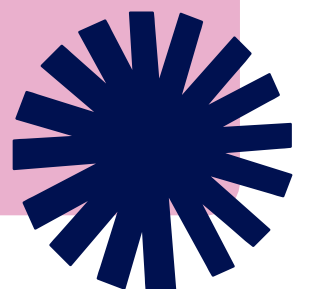
# Oral Language



Oral language encompasses:

- Listening comprehension
- Receptive vocabulary
- Expressive vocabulary
- Grammatical knowledge
- Narration skills

Children's oral language at the earliest stages of education can predict their literacy skills later on.



# Can Drama Help?

Drama can be a particularly useful resource for developing oral language skills in young (language) learners, as the activities can...



**Involve minimal or simple language**



**Enable collaboration and socialisation**



**Tackle specific linguistic domains/areas**



**Build confidence to present in front of others**

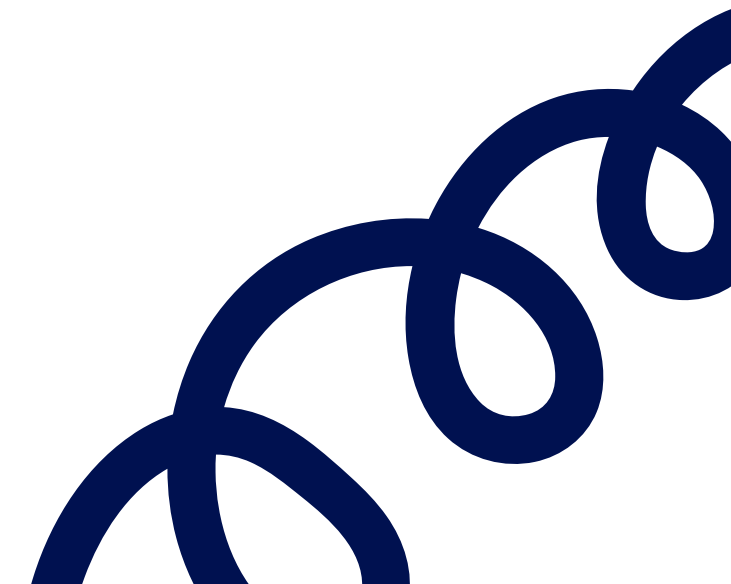
# What Does the Research Say?



There is an abundance of teaching resources on using drama activities in the (L2) classroom.

But there is not a lot of empirical work evaluating whether the approach helps.

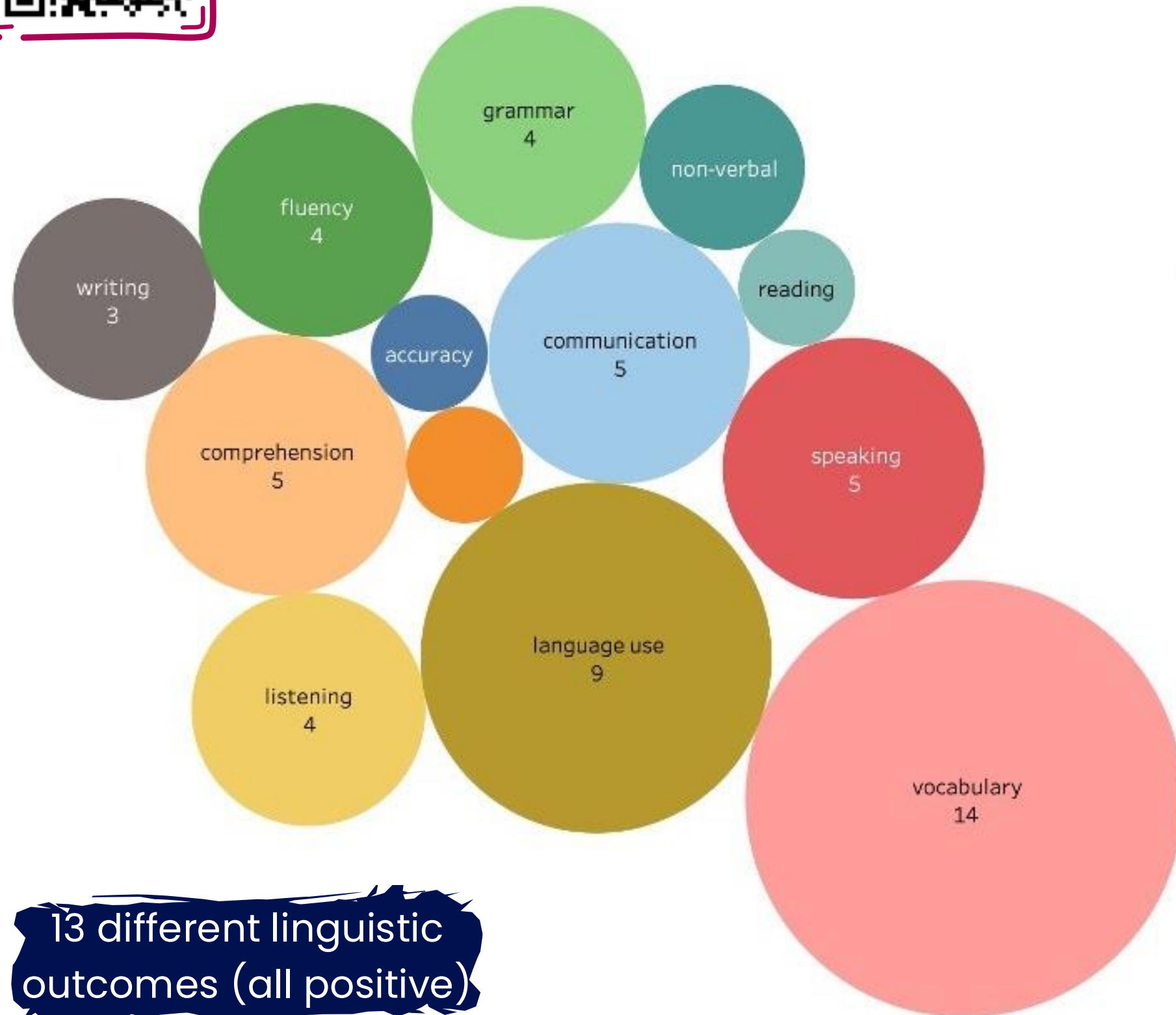
To discover the extent of the research on the topic, we conducted a systematic review of the literature.



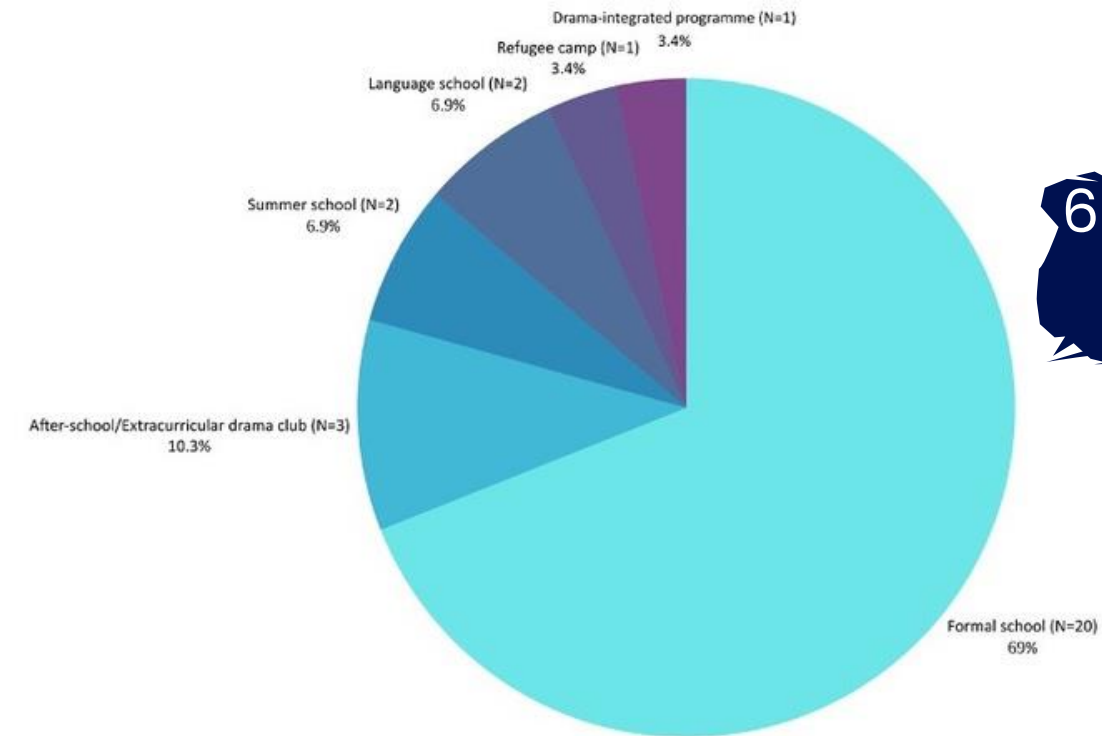
SCAN ME!



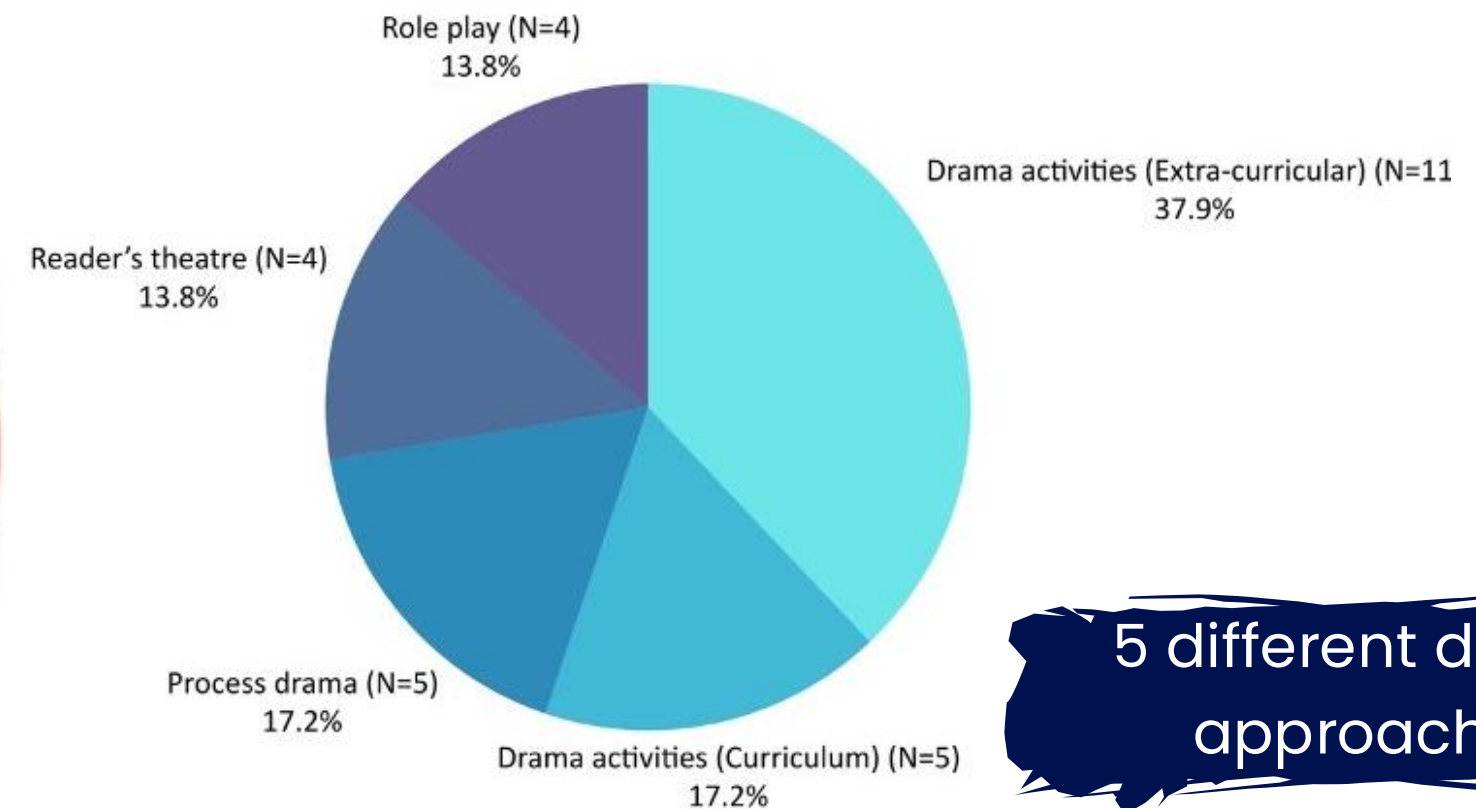
# Some of the Findings



13 different linguistic outcomes (all positive)

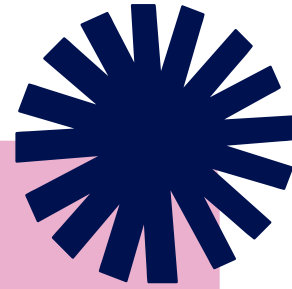


6 different educational settings (all varied)



5 different drama approaches

# What Does This Mean?



**Researchers need to conduct more and more robust research.**



**Practitioners can continue (or start!) using drama activities as they are not harmful.**

Drama seems promising for supporting young L2 learners' linguistic development and socio-emotional engagement.

But the current evidence base cannot support strong causal claims.

The large diversity in participants, contexts, and drama approaches may mean effects are context-dependent: what works well in one setting may not transfer directly to another.

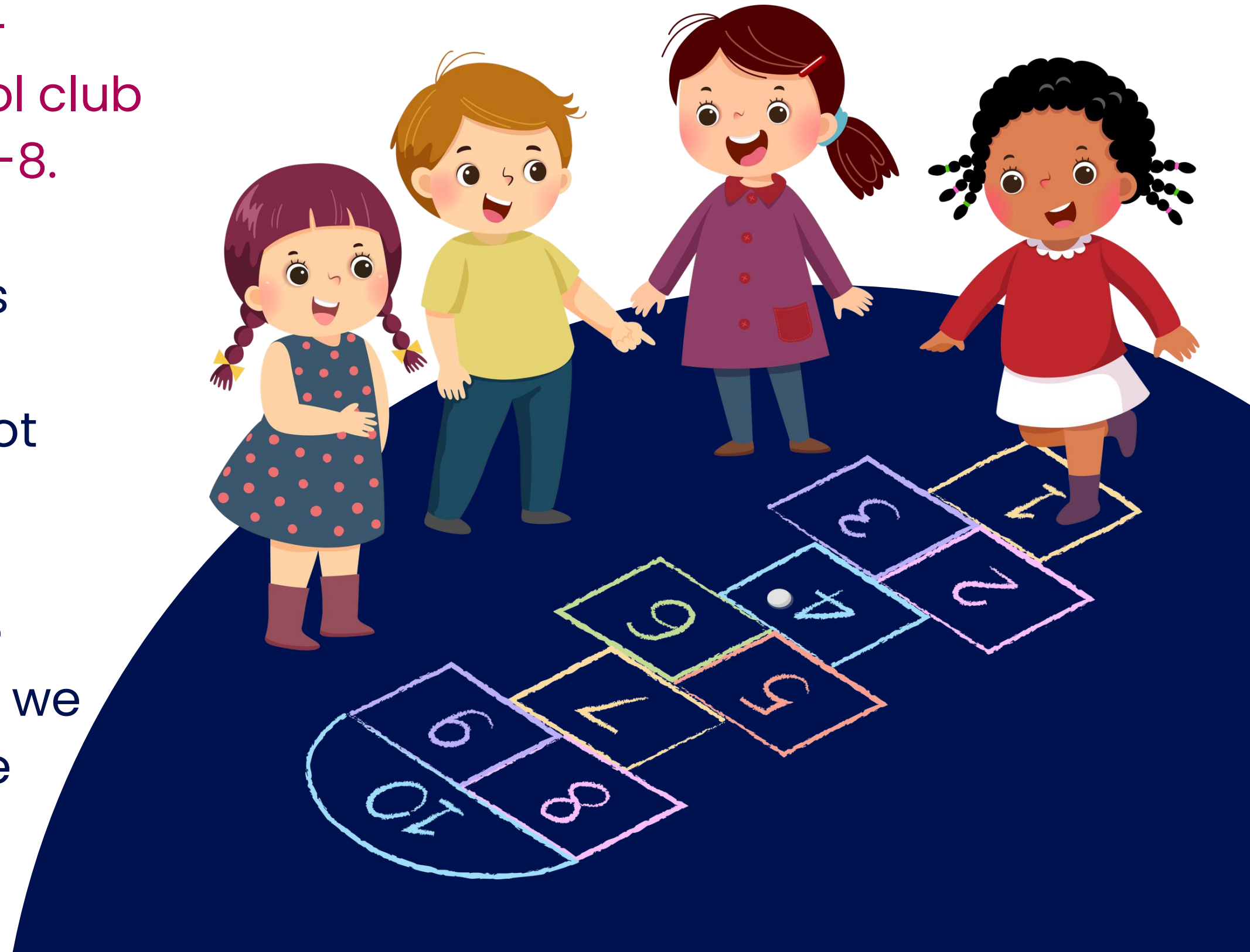
# A New Drama Intervention!



We delivered an eight-week drama-based intervention as an after school club to 21 children between the ages of 6-8.

We compared their scores in various vocabulary measures to a group of children of the same age, who did not take part in the drama club.

We observed the children during the workshops. At the end of the project, we asked them their thoughts about the intervention.





# What Does This Mean?



Based on our quantitative findings, we cannot say that drama has or does not have the potential to improve children's oral language skills.

Investigating the topic remains worthwhile.

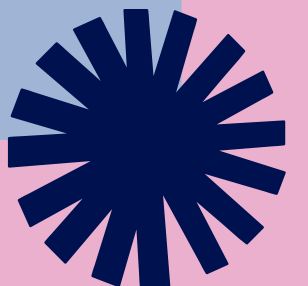
Our qualitative findings show that drama is enjoyable and could lead to (perceived) improvements in psychological and social dimensions.



**Researchers should explore the moderating effect of these social and psychological dimensions further.**



**Practitioners should think about using drama activities as they are enjoyable and self-perceived as effective.**



# Teacher Perceptions



We conducted focus groups with 11 primary school teachers to find out what they think are the benefits and challenges of using drama.



All teachers recognised benefits for:

- teaching language
- developing social skills
- including all learners

However, they also reported:

- classroom-level challenges (e.g., classroom management)
- school-level challenges (e.g., lack of space and no support)
- wider challenges (e.g., lack of training and a rigid curriculum)

# Should We Try Some Drama?!

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