Efficacy of Role-Play in Teaching and Formative Assessment for Undergraduate English-Major Students in Saudi Arabia

Muhammed Salim Keezhatta
Department of English, College of Science and Humanities in Al-Kharj
Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia.

Abstract
This study aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of the role-play as the teaching and formative assessment strategy for the undergraduate English major students from the Riyadh region of Saudi Arabia. To find the effectiveness and the impact of role-play as a teaching strategy, a quasi-experimental method was employed by using a pretest-posttest design wherein the pre and posttest results of 70 EFL students from experimental and the control groups were compared. The experimental group was taught some new areas of grammar, functions and vocabulary using role-play; simultaneously, the control group was taught the same items using the traditional method of teaching. The pretest revealed no significant difference in the knowledge level of the students between the two groups. On the other hand, the posttest results showed that there was a significant difference in the knowledge level of the students in favour of the experimental group. Further, a structured questionnaire was used to understand the perspective of the teachers on the efficacy of role-play in the assessment of students in the English language classes. A sample size of 20 teachers was used where it was found that role-play had a significant impact on the formative assessment. The findings of the study suggested role-play as an effective technique for the undergraduate English-major students in Saudi Arabia to solve the classroom interpersonal troubles, and it would help the students to imbibe the human-relation along with increasing their proficiency in the English language.

Keywords: English major students, English language teaching, formative assessment, teaching method, role-play, Saudi Arabia

Introduction

Formative assessment is used for the purpose of monitoring learning style as well as the ability of pupils, providing continuous feedback, and allowing the teachers to enhance and modify their strategies and methods of teaching and helping the students in developing their knowledge. Formative assessment methods are less time-consuming than other methods and fit impeccably into the teaching procedure of institutions (Crow & Nelson, 2015). The information collected using formative methods is used to reflect on a student's extent of learning by using different techniques as they help in defining learning goals, increasing rigor and motivation of students and improving their academic achievement. It also helps recommend the students additional practice required in their knowledge regarding the English language. These formative methods of an assessment provide valuable insights into the learning possessed by people before taking a test. It is mostly used during the development of try-outs by monitoring the level of learning of students by providing feedback. A formative method assessment also assesses the quality of study material along with helping in the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of students (Baruch, 2016). The formative assessment methods help the teachers in modifying their design of lesson and speed, selecting appropriate strategies, distinguish, and provide feedback individually to the students which enables them to propel their own learning forward (Wiliam, 2011).

The learning atmosphere of English in Saudi Arabia is not inspiring for the students for many grounds including the traditional teaching strategies, incompetent instructors, tedious learning materials, and cultural issues (Keezhatta, & Omar, 2019). The education system in Saudi Arabia needs to adopt new techniques and methods of teaching English to students in higher education in order to improve their skills in the English language. However, it has been found that the universities and the schools still depend on conventional strategies of teaching such as memorization and rote learning, which causes disengagement of students from the subject, eventually resulting in a lacklustre performance in academics. The present study examines and proposes role-play as an effective contemporary English-teaching and assessment strategy for Saudi undergraduate English-major students.

The present study provides a substantial perception into an effective teaching and formative assessment strategy that can be adopted while teaching English to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in the classroom setting. The results of this study may help EFL teachers in identifying their own teaching style as well as the best learning style that matches the capabilities of the students, thus, leading to a balanced teaching approach. Furthermore, the findings of this study are beneficial for students in helping them improve their concentration, attentiveness and overall performance in the classroom.

Based on the broader objective of the study that is to explore the use of role-play in teaching and formative assessment at undergraduate English-major students in Saudi Arabia, certain research questions have been prepared as follows:

1. What is the effect of role-play on teaching English at undergraduate English-major students in Saudi Arabia?
2. What is the impact of role-play on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English-major students in Saudi Arabia?

3. What are the possible difficulties or the challenges an institution can face while adopting this strategy?

Based on the research questions, the following hypotheses were formed to test the effectiveness of the role-play as a teaching strategy at the undergraduate English students:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the achievement scores of the pretest of the students who are taught using role-plays and the students who are taught using the traditional method of teaching.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the achievement scores of the posttest of students who are taught using role-plays and the students who are taught using the traditional method of teaching.

Next, in order to understand the perspective of the teachers regarding the effectiveness of the role-play as the formative assessment tool, two more hypotheses were framed, which are as follows:

Hypothesis 3: The Role-play does not have a significant impact on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

Hypothesis 4: The Role-play does not possess significant challenges in the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

Literature Review
Advantages of role-play and its process of implementation
Role-play is an effective technique used widely for the purpose of solving classroom interpersonal troubles and imbibing human-relations skills in the students (Kilgour, Reynaud, Northcote, & Shields, 2015). It is also used to assist subject-matter learning by dramatizing the literary and historical works along with current or past events. Role-play helps the students with a vivid altercation and elucidation of their relationship with others, their expectations from the society, their own evaluation and the ways in which academic material is important for the completion of their daily errands (Ahmad, Shafie, & Latif, 2010). It is employed in universities providing higher education for stimulating learning and creating improved understanding amongst other students, members of faculty, and administration by presenting domestic and global problems in front of them and allowing them to experiment with new policies and strategies (Al-harbi, 2011).

Implementation of a new assessment strategy involves a lot of planning, as the idea of a new method of assessment needs to be communicated to the students well. This requires that role expectations and roles need to be explained to students along with determining the appropriate group size (Zaidi, Rani, & Rahman, 2017). For successful implementation, students need to be allowed to give their preferences regarding their group members (Hidayati & Pardjono, 2018). It needs to be communicated that the observers shall only provide feedback, and the lecturer would be providing feedback as well as allocating marks. It is important to incorporate marks in this assessment method as it leads students to take their work seriously to enable them to perform roles expected in future careers. An evaluation form needs to be filled by the students after completing the entire exercise (Adams & Mabusela, 2014). The application of different strategies in learning

the target language has become an indispensable activity relevant to motivational drivers to acquire a specific language (Alsudais, 2017).

Academic role-play can be regarded as one of the most efficient, interactive and recurrently used learning strategies in higher educational institutions in the process of preparation of future educators. Researchers have assessed the benefits of role-play as being the best strategy to improve the skills of initiative, self-awareness, problem-solving, communication, working collaboratively in groups (Kaovere & Mbaukua, 2018; MacDonald, 2012). This strategy may help the students in overcoming their inability to speak in English in real-life situations. In meeting the learning objective of the English language, the use of role-play may allow the students to practice the English language writing as well as speaking skills in a mentored and prepared to learn the background. It may improve confidence to speak in English in the real world. It encourages the learners to generate their own reality, develops the skill to interact with other people, increases motivation of students, encourages shy students to be engaged in activities, increases self-confidence, and makes them aware regarding the complexity (Adams & Mabusela, 2014; Rashid & Qaisar, 2017).

Challenges in the application of role-play

The play-acting, the lack of grammar work, chaos in the classes, and lack of chances to play a part are the major challenges in applying role-play in language classroom. One of the main challenges in the application of role-play in higher education includes the lack of availability of ample class time with students (Zaidi et al., 2017). Limited access to resources can also act as a challenge in the successful application of role-play as it requires access to resources including photocopies, access to computers and the internet. The role-play activity should be clearly tied to the learning objectives of the course in order to be aligned to the demand of the curriculum. Moreover, certain students may not be willing or possess the skills to participate, while more charismatic students are more skilled in role-play and not in the learning engagement. Students need to be allowed to exercise their free will with respect to the direction in which the roles will evolve (Yen, Hou & Chang, 2015).

Use of role-play in English language teaching

It is regarded as an effective strategy for animating the atmosphere of teaching and learning in the classrooms by spiking the interests of the learners and making the understanding of the English language easy. It is also used as the preferred method to study the pragmatic competence of the learners (Liu & Ding, 2009). Implementing role-play has a substantial influence to boost EFL learner's speaking skill (Rojas & Villafuerte, 2018. Roles are determined as a way of identifying as well as labelling a combination of appearances and behaviours. Students are encouraged to form expectations on the basis of a person's appearance, behaviour, and characteristics and they need to predict how this person shall behave or act in a given situation. Holt and Kysilka (2012) were of the opinion that role-play techniques could be entertaining and aid in developing learning as these techniques help in improving the communication level amongst the students. The students learning the English language in particular need to understand the significance of collaboration, and to have a curiosity in learning the nuances of the language. Role-play is regarded as a perfect method for the purpose of teaching the English language as it helps in preparing the students with respect to the erratic character of real-life communication, teaches them the correct usage of the

language and augments their self-confidence (Krebt, 2017). It has also been argued that role-play aids the learners in being prepared for practical communication, introducing their own emotions, ingenuity, as well as increasing the ability of the listeners to learn the language (Woodhouse, 2011). It also leads the students to understand the context in which the different words of English are used and provides the student with an opportunity to have informal routines and educational debates. As a final point, it can be seen that role-play provides the students with instantaneous confirmation of the correct usage of their language, fosters preservation, and stimulates participation in a comparatively free environment (Davies, 2009).

Empirical review

Alabsi (2016) examined the effects of role-play as a strategy for teaching vocabulary and improving lexical skill of EFL students. The result positively reinforced the useful effect of integrating role-play in EFL education. Rawlusyk (2015) addressed one of the major academic concerns related to assessment practices in higher education with respect to their support for student learning using web-based survey method with the employment of questionnaire as a data collection tool. Data was collected from 1195 academics from 12 postsecondary institutions across Alberta using a random sampling method. It was found that teachers had conflicting views related to student use of feedback and the use of dialogue. Role-play was identified as one of the most popular methods used for measuring students' performance and was regarded as an authentic activity. Zaidi et al. (2017) aimed to address the challenges faced by students during a task of role-play by using quantitative survey research. The survey collected information from 200 participants in Malaysia regarding students' insight on the possible challenges that they might face while performing a role-play. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling method on the basis of the requirements of different groups in the study. An analysis of the data provided useful information for language educators in developing curriculum, assessments, and methodology of teaching. Hidayati and Pardjono (2018) collected data from 54 students using a questionnaire, and giving the test and the collected data were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The result stated that role-play helps in improving the understanding of students with respect to learning models. Also, the collected responses from the students showed that the role-play was regarded as an exciting activity by providing the students with an opportunity to be creative, and easy to be applied.

Figure 1. displays a conceptual framework in which formative assessment and its advantages are connected.
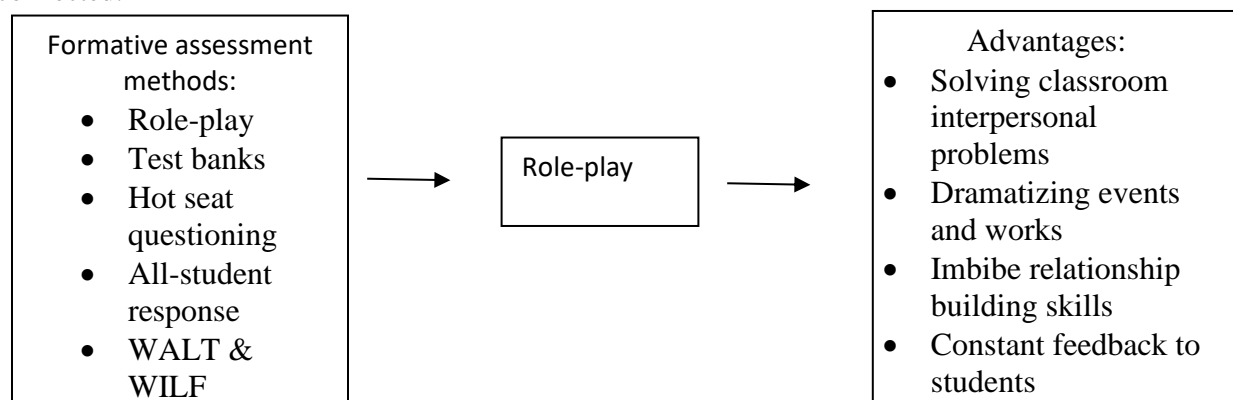

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Research methodology

To find the efficacy of role-play as the teaching strategy for the undergraduate English-major students in Saudi Arabia, a quasi-experimental method was employed by using a pre and posttest design. The study has used two groups, namely the experimental group and the control group for this purpose. The experimental group was taught some new areas of grammar, functions and vocabulary using role-play; simultaneously, the control group was taught the same items using the traditional method of teaching. Further, to make sure that the results were biasedness free, a t-test was conducted at the start of the program just to make sure that there was no difference in the prior knowledge of English among the students from the control group as well as the experimental group. In order to eliminate bias in data, both groups were taught by the same teacher.

To evaluate the effectiveness of role-play as the formative assessment strategy for the undergraduate English major students, the researcher used a structured questionnaire which was given to 20 teachers in order to understand their perspective towards the usage of role-play. Some questions related to the efficacy of role-play as a teaching strategy were also included.

Sampling

The sample of the study consisted of 70 EFL students and 20 teachers from the departments of English at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Students were randomly divided into two for each group, experimental and control. They belonged to the age group 17-20 years and were pursuing their second-year bachelor course in English language and literature. Although students belonged to different socio-economic backgrounds, their mother tongue was Arabic. The data was collected in the months of January and February 2020.

Teaching Materials

The material used for the experimental group involved eight role-play activities. Each of these activities comprises different types of grammatical, functional and vocabulary items. The following role play activities (Anderson, 2017) were used: 1. Checking into a hotel: Guest and hotel receptionist, 2. Fast Food restaurant: Customer and assistant, 3. Telephone phone-around: Groups of students make plans for an evening out, 4. Meeting old friends: Class meet up again 10 years into the future, 5. Phoning for a job interview: Job applicant and human resources manager, 6. Job interview: Applicant and interviewer, 7. TV chat show: Whole class role-play on the subject of rising crime, 8. Enrolling at an English school: New student and school receptionist. Altogether, some items from grammar, functions and vocabulary were taught using role-play method. On the other hand, the role-play was not used for the participants in the control group; instead, they were taught the same items using the traditional method of teaching.

Instruments used

A pretest question paper, a posttest question paper and a close-ended/structured questionnaire were used in the study. The pretest question paper comprised of some basic items of grammar, functions and vocabulary. The posttest question paper was divided into three sections and contained a total of 42 items which were designed in the way to check the grammar, functions and vocabulary improvement among the students. All the three-section contained 14 questions. The first, second and third sections are used to check the level of students in grammar, functions and vocabulary respectively. In order to do that, fill in the blanks, multiple choices and match the

column questions were used in all three sections. The structured questionnaires were distributed among 20 teachers. It comprised of 27 questions in which 16 questions were used to find the impact of role-play on formative assessment of students and 11 questions to know the challenges associated with role-play.

Validity and reliability/ Data analysis

In order to confirm that the test was appropriately designed and accurately measured what it was designed for, the test was evaluated by the panel of experts in the English language teaching. The Cronbach's alpha method was used to check the reliability. To calculate and analyze the scores, SPSS was used. The t-test was used to compare the results of the two groups.

Analysis

The following section of the study focuses on analyzing the data collected i.e. pre and the post scores of the students and the data collected from 20 teachers through the structured questionnaire. The first section represents the analyses of the pre and the posttest scores of the students and thus checks whether the role-play is an effective strategy of teaching English or not. In the two groups, the experimental group was taught using role-plays and the control group was taught using the traditional method. For this purpose, two hypotheses have been framed which are as follows:

Pretest performance of students

H_0: There is no significant difference in the achievement scores of the pretest of the students who are taught using role-plays and the students who are taught using the traditional method of teaching.

H_1: There is a significant difference in the achievement scores of the pretest of the students who are taught using role-plays and the students who are taught using the traditional method of teaching.

First to state that the knowledge level of the students in the experimental group and of the students in the control group was the same before the method of role-play was adopted. The knowledge of students of both the group was tested using basic grammar, functions and vocabulary items in English and after that, the mean scores of the students of both the groups were compared. To compare the score of the students, the researcher adopted the technique of T-test. The results of which are presented in the table one:

Table 1. *Pretest performance (T-Test)*

	GROUPS	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	E	35	28.0286	3.51037	.59336
	C	35	27.6857	3.26092	.55120

The above table represents the results of the descriptive statistics of the pretest. As shown in the above, table the mean score of the experimental group was 28.02 with standard deviation equal to 3.5. while the mean average score for the control group was equal to 27.68 with a standard deviation of 3.2. These results indicate that the two groups were alike in their knowledge levels

before conducting the treatment with the role-play strategy. However, in order to derive the significance of this testing further Levene's Test for Equality of Variances and t-test for equality of means was done. The result for the above test is stated below in table two:

Table 2. *Pretest performance (Levene's Test)*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.065	.799	.423	68	.673
	Equal variances not assumed			.423	67.634	.673

As shown in the above table, pretest scores had unequal variance since the significance value .799 was greater than the set criteria significance value of 0.05. Thus, the T-Test for equality of means will be conducted at the level of unequal variances. In this case, also the significance 2-tailed value (.673) was greater than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, the researcher was unable to reject the null hypothesis. Hence there is no significant difference in the average scores of the students who will be taught using a role-play method and the students who will be taught using the traditional method of teaching.

Posttest performance of students

H_0: There is no significant difference in the achievement scores of the posttest of students who are taught using role-plays and the students who are taught using the traditional method of teaching.

H_2: There is a significant difference in the achievement scores of the posttest of students who are taught using role-plays and the students who are taught using the traditional method of teaching.

Next, to check the effectiveness of the role-play, the researcher again conducted the test post the treatment. In order to compare the score of the students who belonged to the experimental group and the students who belonged to the control group, the researcher adopted the technique of the T-test. The results of which are presented in the table three.

Table-3: *Posttest performance (T-Test)*

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
POSTTEST	E	35	34.2571	3.68896	.62355
	C	35	27.4000	2.91245	.49229

The above table represents the results of the descriptive statistics of the posttest. As shown in the above table, the mean score of the experimental group was 34.25 with standard deviation equal to 3.6. while the mean average score for the control group was equal to 27.40 with a standard deviation of 2.9. These results indicate that the two groups were not alike in their knowledge levels post conducting the treatment with the role-play strategy. However, in order to derive the significance of this testing further, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances and t-test for equality of means was done. The results for the above test are stated below in table four.

Table 4. *Posttest performance (Levene's Test)*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	2.957	.090	8.631	68	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			8.631	64.526	.000

As shown in the above table, posttest scores had unequal variance since the significance value .090 was greater than the set criteria significance value of 0.05. Thus, the T-Test for equality of means will be conducted at the level of unequal variances. In this case, the significance of 2-tailed value (.000) was less than the significance level of 0.05. Thus, the researcher was able to reject the null hypothesis. Hence there is a significant difference in the average scores of the students who were taught using a role-play and the students who were taught using the traditional method of teaching. The results came in favour of the experimental group.

Demographic profile of teachers
To analyze the responses gathered from the 20 teachers through the help of a structured close-ended questionnaire, hypothesis testing was carried out. This was done so as to understand the perspective of the teachers on the effectiveness of the role-play on the formative assessment for the undergraduate English major students. But before that, the first part shows the demographic profile of the teachers through the help of figure two:
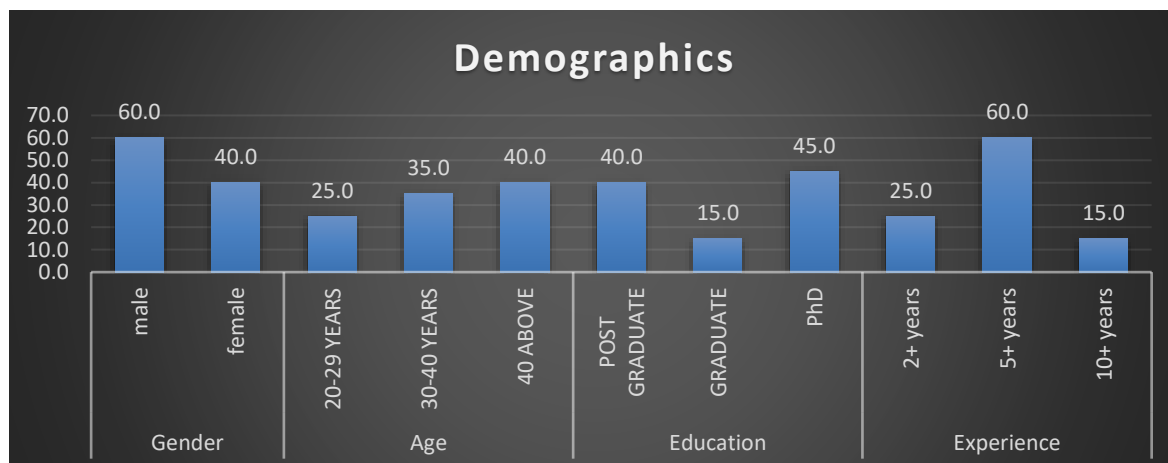
Figure 2. Demographic profile of teachers

The following section provides the inferential analysis of the responses gathered from 20 teachers. The following hypothesis was framed.

Impact of role-play on formative assessment of students

H_0: Role-play does not have a significant impact on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

H_3: Role-play does have a significant impact on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

The correlation coefficient is used to measure the association between the two variables; it ranges from one to one. A correlation that is close to 0 shows little relationship between the two variables, correlation close to one indicates the positive relationship, on the other hand correlation close to -1 indicates a negative relationship between the variables. The results for the following hypothesis are shown in table five:

Table 5. *Correlation results of hypothesis one*

	Do you think role-play has a significant impact on student formative assessment?		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Role-play is interesting.	.723**	.000	20
Other activities and role-play are different from each other.	.097	.683	20
It improves the speaking skill of the students.	.687**	.001	20
It helps us communicate with others easily.	.736**	.000	20
It helps to reduce stage fear and nervousness.	.704**	001	20
It enhances the fluency among the students.	.683**	.001	20

It is the best way to express emotions easily.	.763**	.000	20
The feedback immediately after role-play is very effective	.632**	.003	20
It gives a scope to show innovation.	.683**	.001	20
Group activities in role-play share the ideas effectively.	.020	.923	20
Raise students' motivation and interest	.038	.874	20
Give an opportunity for students for practice and test their language level	-.154	.518	20
Improving academic learning.	.250	.287	20
Studying contemporary issues and problems.	.630**	.003	20
Integrating action and reflection.	.818**	.000	20
Emulating empathy.	.066	.783	20

Pearson correlation was used to assess the relationship between the role-play method and its effectiveness on student assessment. The results were quite varying. Although there were variables whose significance value came out to be less than the set criteria value of 0.05, there were some variables whose significance value exceeded 0.05. These variables were: other activities and role-play are different from each other; group activities in role-play share the ideas effectively; raise students' motivation and interest; give an opportunity for students for practice and test their language level; improving academic learning and emulating empathy. Since these variables had significance value greater than 0.05, these variables will not be considered further for regression testing. The remaining variables will now be used for further test. Out of the remaining variables that showed the highest correlation includes Integrating action and reflection (818). It gives an opportunity to express emotions freely (.763). It is an easy method to communicate with others (.736). Role-play is interesting (.723).

Next, regression analysis was performed with the variables that had a significance value greater than 0.05. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table six.

Table 6: *ANOVA of hypothesis 1*

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	34.339	10	3.434	35.893	.000b
Residual	.861	9	.096		
Total	35.200	19			

The table six above presents the model summary for the regression analysis for the framed hypothesis. The researcher first used the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) in order to

determine whether there is any statistically significant difference between the means of the dependent and independent variables. Firstly, the null hypothesis that is Role-play does not have a significant impact on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students is rejected, since the p-value is coming to be .000 which is less than the significance value of 0.05. In addition to this, the F value is quite high (35.893), so the probability of accepting the alternate hypothesis is quite high and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Moreover, the variance as shown by the regression sum of square (34.339) is quite high in comparison to the residuals or the error variance.

Table7:. *Model summary of hypothesis 1*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.988	.976	.948	.30930

Following this, the regression analysis was conducted for the following hypothesis; the results are shown in Table 7. The results of which are as follows the value of R was .988. This value is used for examining the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. The value of R Squared is .976 which tells how well the data fit to the regression line. Finally, the value of adjusted R squared came out to be .948 which tells how much the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable; here, 94.8% variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable which is quite high.

Next in order to understand the extent of influence role-play has on the English majors' student's assessment the coefficient of regression was calculated. The result of which is presented in table eight below.

Table-8. Regression of hypothesis one

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Standardized beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.564	.277		-2.036	.072
Role-play is interesting.	.316	.188	.337	1.681	.127
It improves the speaking skill of the students.	.035	.135	.035	.263	.798
It helps us communicate with others easily.	.427	.231	.336	1.850	.097
It helps to reduce stage fear and nervousness.	.250	.090	.271	2.780	.021
It enhances the fluency among the students.	-.365	.180	-.252	-2.034	.072

It is the best way to express emotions easily.	-.220	.281	-.179	-.783	.454
The feedback immediately after role-play is very effective.	-.087	.094	-.083	-.925	.379
It gives a scope to show innovation.	.005	.304	.005	.018	.986
Studying contemporary issues and problems.	.291	.121	.273	2.409	.039
Integrating action and reflection.	.627	.147	.557	4.250	.002

As shown in the above table, variables that had significant value less than 0.05 includes: it helps to overcome nerv

ousness, studying contemporary issues and problems, and Integrating action and reflection.
Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected; role-play does have a significant impact on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

Challenges associated with role-play

H_0: role-play does not pose significant challenges in the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

H_1: role-play does pose significant challenges in the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

The results of the correlation analysis are shown in table 9.

Table-9. *Correlation of hypothesis 2*

	Do you think role-play poses significant challenges on student formative assessment?		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Lack of professional and theoretical preparation on the part of teachers.	.763**	.000	20
Lack of classroom space.	.163	.491	20
Cost a lot of classroom time.	.858**	.000	20
Chaos in the classroom.	.247	.293	20
Lack of enough opportunity for all the students to participate equally.	.816**	.000	20
Lack of grammar work on the part of the student.	.784**	.000	20
The teacher losses control over what is learned.	.790**	.000	20

May not be taken seriously	.727**	.000	20
Might make some uncomfortable	.138	.563	20
Difficult for the teacher to evaluate student individually	.063	.791	20
Big failure if the group participating does not understand the topic	.737**	.000	20

Pearson correlation was used to assess the relationship between the role-play method and its challenges on student assessment. The results were quite varying. However, there are variables whose significance value came out to be less than the set criteria value of 0.05. But there were some variables whose significance value exceeded 0.05. These variables were lack of classroom space, chaos in the classroom, might make some uncomfortable, difficult for the teacher to evaluate students individually. Out of the variables remaining variables, the variables that showed the highest correlation includes Cost a lot of classroom time (.858), Lack of enough opportunity for all the students to participate equally (.816), The teacher losses control over what is learned (.790), Lack of grammar work on the part of the student (.784).

The next step in the process is regression analysis. The regression analysis was undertaken with the variables that had the significance value greater than 0.05. The results of the regression analysis are shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10. *ANOVA of regression 2*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	40.844	7	5.835	33.248	.000b
Residual	2.106	12	.175		
Total	42.950	19			

The table-10 above presents the model summary for the regression analysis for the framed hypothesis. The researcher first used the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) in order to determine whether there is any statistically significant difference between the means of the dependent and independent variables. Firstly, the null hypothesis that is role-play does not possess any significant challenge on the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students is rejected since the p-value is coming to be .000 which is less than the significance value of 0.05. In addition to this, the F value is quite high (33.248) so the probability of accepting the alternate hypothesis is quite high and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. Moreover, the variance as shown by the regression sum of square (40.844), is quite high in comparison to the residuals or the error variance.

Table11. *Model summary of hypothesis 2*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.975[a]	.951	.922	.41892

Following this the regression analysis was conducted for the following hypothesis, the results are shown in Table 11. The results of which are as follows the value of R was .975; this value is used for examining the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. The value of R Squared is .951 which tells how well the data fit the regression line.

Finally, the value of adjusted R squared came out to be .922 which tells how much the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable; here 92.2% variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable which is quite high.

Next in order to understand the extent of challenges role-play has on the English major students' assessment the coefficient of regression was calculated. The result of which is presented in Table 120
.

Table-12: *Regression of hypothesis 2*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Standardized beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-1.442	.331		-4.352	.001
Lack of professional and theoretical preparation on the part of teachers.	.081	.131	.064	.618	.548
Cost a lot of classroom time.	.732	.159	.535	4.593	.001
Lack of enough opportunity for all the students to participate equally.	-.080	.161	-.071	-.500	.626
Lack of grammar work on the part of the student.	.147	.149	.140	.989	.342
The teacher losses control over what is learned.	.163	.152	.155	1.077	.303
May not be taken seriously	.258	.093	.239	2.766	.017

Big failure if the group participating does not understand the topic	.163	.175	.129	.930	.371

As shown in the table above, the variables that had a significant value less than 0.05 include Cost a lot of classroom time (.001), May not be taken seriously (.017).

Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected; role-play does posses' significant challenges in the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

Discussion

As highlighted by the various studies on role-play as a beneficial strategy, has proven to be very effective in increasing students' enthusiasm, their self-confidence, empathy, critical thinking abilities, vocabulary and language skills (Alabsi, 2016; Rojas & Villafuerte, 2018, Kaovere & Mbaukua, 2018; Zaidi et al., 2017, MacDonald, 2012; Krebt, 2017; Hidayati & Pardjono, 2018; Rashid & Qaisar, 2017). Moreover, role-play as a teaching strategy is a cost-effective and a fun way for both the students and teachers to exchange knowledge, thus positively impacting the students' academic performance (Crow & Nelson, 2015). The similar pattern can be traced from the present study as well, where it was found that the role-play method tends to improve the average scores of the students as compared to the students taught using the traditional method. In terms of its impact on the student, role-play helps in increasing student motivation, develops their creativity, adds variety, brings a change in pace and opportunity for the English major students. Thus, it helps the teachers critically evaluate the individual student performance and provide solutions to their problems. Thus, role-play proved to be beneficial when it comes to the strategy for teaching and formative assessment. Altogether, discussing with the research questions of the study, role-play has a significant effect on teaching English and formative assessment of the undergraduate English-major students in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, it faces significant challenges in the formative assessment of the undergraduate English major students.

Conclusion

The present study highlighted the effectiveness of the role-play as a tool of teaching and formative assessment of the English major students of Saudi Arabia in the Riyadh region. The implementation of role-play has shown in attaining proficiency in the target language. Saudi Arabia has always been regarded as the country that has an innovative outlook in terms of education and has also recognized the English language as the vehicle for social and economic progress. However, it is seen that irrespective of the great achievements, the proficiency level of the students in terms of the English language still remains below the required standards and inadequate. The atmosphere of learning English is not influencing the students for several grounds including the traditional teaching strategies, incompetent instructors, and tedious learning materials. Thus the present study suggested role-playing as an effective technique that could use widely in order to solve the classroom interpersonal troubles, and it would help the students imbibing the human-relation skills among the students along with increasing their proficiency in the English language. Also, it helps the students with the vivid altercation and elucidation of their relationship with others. However, irrespective of the importance of the role-play technique in English teaching and assessment, the educational system of Saudi Arabia is still not able to completely apply the following technique in their teaching environment. Thus, the teachers should

encourage working in the small group and facilitating dialogues and role-play in the English Language classrooms.

About the Author:
Dr. Muhammed Salim Keezhatta is an Assistant Professor of English at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia., and his research interests include Applied Linguistics, ELT, Neurolinguistics and Discourse Analysis. He has published articles in various international journals and presented papers in many national and international conferences. He has 12- year experience in teaching English.   https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4376-3716

References
Adams, J. D., & Mabusela, M. S. (2014). Assessing with Role Play: An Innovation in Assessment Practice. *J Soc Sci*, *41*(3), 363–374. https://doi.org/10.1080/09718923.2014.11893371

Anderson, J. (2017). *ROLE PLAYS FOR TODAY: Photocopiable Activities to Get Students Speaking. Book with Photocopiable... Activites*. Ernst Klett Sprachen GmbH.

Ahmad, W. F. B. W., Shafie, A. B., & Latif, M. H. A. B. A. (2010). Role-playing game-based learning in mathematics. *Electronic Journal of Mathematics and Technology*, *4*(2), 184–196.

Al-harbi, K. (2011). E-Learning in the Saudi Tertiary Education: Potential and Challenges. *Applied Computing and Informatics Journal*, *9*(45), 31-46. DOI: 10.1016/j.aci.2010.03.002

Alabsi, T. A. (2016). The Effectiveness of Role Play Strategy in Teaching Vocabulary. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *6*(2), 227–234.

Alsudais, A. (2017). Teaching English as a foreign language: The case of Saudi Arabia. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, *5*(9), 18-27.

Baruch, Y. (2016). Role-play Teaching: Acting in the Classroom. *Management Learning*, *37*(1), 43-61. DOI: 10.1177/1350507606060980

Crow, M L., & Nelson, L. P. (2015). The Effects of Using Academic Role-Playing in a Teacher Education Service-Learning Course. *International Journal of Role Playing*, *20*(3). Retrieved from http://ijrp.subcultures.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/IJRP5_CrowNelson.pdf

Davies, P. (2009). The use of drama in English language teaching. *TESL Canada Journal*, *8*(1), 87–99. DOI: https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v8i1.581

Hidayati, L., & Pardjono, P. (2018). The implementation of role play in education of pre-service vocational teacher. *IOP Conf, Ser. Materi. Sci. Eng, 1-5*.

Holt, L. C., & Kysilka, M. (2012). *Instructional Patterns: Strategies for Maximizing Student Learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication Ltd.

Kaovere, N., & Mbaukua, D. (2018). *The Role of Role Play as a Teaching Method on Social Skills Through the Development of English Language of Children at Junior Primary School Level: A Study of The Perception of the Namibian English Language Teachers,* University of Eastern Finland.   Retrieved   from   https://epublications.uef.fi/pub/urn_nbn_fi_uef-20181262/urn_nbn_fi_ uef-20181262.pdf

Keezhatta, M. S., & Omar, A. (2019). Enhancing Reading Skills for Saudi Secondary School Students through Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL): An Experimental Study. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *9*(1), 437-447. DOI:10.5539/ijel.v9n1p437

Kilgour, P., Reynaud, D., Northcote, M. T., & Shields, M. (2015). Role-playing as a tool to facilitate learning, self-reflection and social awareness in teacher education. *International Journal of Innovative Interdisciplinary Research*, *2*(4), 8–20.

Krebt, D. M. (2017). The Effectiveness of Role Play Techniques in Teaching Speaking for EFL College Students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *8*(5), 863–870. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0805.04

Liu, F., & Ding, Y. (2009). Role-play in English language teaching. *Asian Social Science*, *5*(10), 140–143. DOI:10.5539/ass.v5n10p140

MacDonald, C. (2012). Understanding participatory action research: A qualitative research methodology option. *The Canadian Journal of Action Research*, *13*(2), 34-50.

Islam, P., & Islam, T. (2012). Effectiveness of role play in enhancing the speaking skills of the learners in a large classroom: An investigation of tertiary level students. *Stamford Journal of English, 7*, 218-233. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3329/sje.v7i0.14475

Rashid, S., & Qaisar, S. (2017). Role Play: A Productive Teaching Strategy to Promote Critical Thinking. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, *39*(2), 197–213.

Rawlusyk, D. P. E. (2015). Assessment in Higher Education and Student Learning. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, *21,* 1-34.

Rojas, M. A., & Villafuerte, J. (2018). The Influence of Implementing Role-play as an Educational Technique on EFL Speaking Development. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *8*(7), 726–732. DOI: 10.17507/tpls.0807.02

Wiliam, D. (2011). *Embedded Formative Assessment*. Victoria: Hwker Brownlow Education.

Woodhouse, J. (2007). Role play: A stage of learning. *Strategies for healthcare education: How to teach in the 21th century*, 71-80. UK: Radcliff Publishing Ltd.

Yen, Y. C., Hou, H. T., & Chang, K. E. (2015). Applying role-playing strategy to enhance learners' writing and speaking skills in EFL courses using Facebook and Skype as learning tools: A case study in Taiwan. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *28*(5), 383-406. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2013.839568

Zaidi, N. N. A., Rani, M. S. A., & Rahman, Z. I. A. (2017). Challenges in Performing Role-play as an Assessment: Students' Views. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *7*(12), 186-202. https://hrmars.com/hrmars_papers/Challenges_in_Performing_ Role-play_as_an_Assessment_Students_Views.pdf