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Masks Method and Impact in the Classroom

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Abstract

This article presents research on the usage of masks in the Australian secondary classrooms. Whilst we know that masks are used within the classroom, for the teaching of Drama, what is not known is the what, if any impact there is. Using observation and coding of classes observed, followed by interview responses from students, the key results of what impacts masks have the engagement and social development and identity of adolescents in schools is explored in this paper. The findings suggested that masks may have a potentially positive academic, emotional and self-awareness developmental impact on students. In particular masks may also provide a more inclusive way of supporting students with special education needs (SEN), improving their confidence and overall learning experience. The research argues for further research needing to be undertaken in this area, not only with masks and their potential for wider educational impact, but also in the use of performative objects as tools for learning.

Keywords

Education, Masks, Australia, Autism, Identity, Achievement

1. Introduction

Drama presents a particular role in engagement for children in their learning. Through embodied learning techniques, from a foundational basis of self-discrepancy theory, drama can allow students to engage in the process of self-actualising (Wright, 2006).

This article presents the data and responses from the research of mask usage in secondary Drama classrooms, where classes were observed, coded, and students were interviewed in regard to their experiences. The context for the schools involved is presented, followed by a narrative of each of the observations. The student commentary of their experiences is then presented, followed by an analysis of the data.

The central research question was, "What impacts do masks have on the engagement, social development and identity of adolescents in schools." In addition, a sub-question was researched: what can be learnt through observation about how masks are taught and used in the teaching of Drama and Theatre Studies in Australian secondary schools?

Observational data and the students' own self reflections demonstrated increased students' self-awareness and engagement in the learning process. Students with recognised neurological disabilities were additionally observed to have a higher level of engagement and inclusion, both personally and from "others".

The initial choice of analysis of data, to determine the role and place of masks in the curriculum, was to use a mixed methods approach of both quantitative and qualitative data (Cresswell & Clark, 2011). One of the main goals was to undertake observation comparison for these classes by looking at teaching methodologies and student engagement.

2. Selection of Observed Participants

Previous, related research into Australian teacher knowledge and engagement of masks asked for potential volunteers for the classroom observation of this study. Drama teachers across Australia, were asked to complete a survey in regard to their usage of, and training, in masks for education in the Drama classroom Twelve teachers out of 49 who participated in earlier research volunteered to have their classes observed and their students invited to be interviewed. The classes involved were middle school years 9 - 10 partaking in ongoing mask work as part of their normal curriculum. Of the 12 volunteer teachers, six teachers in different schools were observed at work with their participating class. The selection of the final six classes was in part due to availability in curriculum cycle, of classes to be observed in the study. Five of the classes observed used masks as the key tool, and one did not and had never used masks in a classroom setting. This final participant class was observed as a point of comparison between mask and non-mask use.

All six classes were elective drama classes in non-government (Catholic or Independent) schools. The public education sector did offer several schools considered to have achieved high quality teaching and achievement in drama that the researcher could approach. Teachers in two of these schools volunteered to take part, but neither was using masks with Year 9 or 10 students. Of the initial 12 volunteers, two teachers had moved to a new school and observation was no longer possible. Four other schools' timetables did not match with the research requirements.

The six teachers and their classes were observed at work in their classrooms on a single occasion over a four-month period. Two of these teachers taught in independent non-faith-based schools, one in New South Wales (AUS) and one in Victoria (AUS). The remaining four schools were in Catholic systemic schools, one in Victoria (AUS) and three in New South Wales (AUS). All six classes were

in schools in provincial (as distinct from metropolitan and rural) areas and were non-academically selective, mixed gender and had similar mixed socio-economic backgrounds. Furthermore, there was no significant difference in the curriculum content requirements in middle school drama between Victoria and New South Wales. These similarities reduce school background as a possible source of variation in analysis, strengthening the comparative analysis.

The teachers observed had a minimum of five years' experience as fully qualified drama teachers teaching middle school drama and worked in schools that offered drama from Year 7 to Year 12.

3. Methodology Principles/Process

The data collection process was standardised for all classes. Prior to the researcher's visit, all staff and students involved were given information sheets outlining the research purpose, aims and methodology. All participants were required to complete consent forms. Any potential participant had the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any point without explanation.

All class lessons were between 50 and 55 minutes in length. For each class, the lesson was a routine lesson and no change to the curriculum or content was made to accommodate the research. This was done to maintain as high a degree of authenticity in the classroom observation as possible. The researcher was in situ before the class entered the room and remained in the classroom until after the students had left. The researcher only observed the class activities and did not interact with students during the teaching element of the lesson. Five to 10 minutes were set-aside at the conclusion of the lesson for whole class responses to set questions. One class chose to return during recess to answer the questions because the lesson was five minutes shorter than usual due to wider school timetabling. The discussion was digitally recorded and transcribed afterwards for analysis. All information collected by the researcher which might identify the participants or school was de-identified and stored securely.

4. Quality Teaching

Field notes were taken of the activities, and the researcher coded the lesson using the Quality Teaching framework (NSWDET, 2003). The use of this framework provided a recognised measurement tool for coding classroom observations (Ladwig, J. G., & Gore, J., 2005). The Quality Teaching framework places the focus on teaching and learning rather than the merits or otherwise of the individuals taking part. The framework is a reflective tool adopted by the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (NSWDEC) and is also recommended as a tool for assessing teaching and classroom practice by Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

5. Observation Field Notes and Interview Data Principles

Observation as a method in field research can be problematic in realising ex-

pectations (Cohen et al., 2018): although an observer might not participate in a lesson, their very presence might change the nature of what is being observed; and that the students participating are aware that they will be "interviewed" after the lesson may well impact upon their interactions in the classroom and the learning being undertaken. Therefore, a first consideration for this study was the mode of approach. Adler and Adler refer to three "conceptions": the complete-member-researcher, the active-member-researcher and the peripheral-member-researcher (Adler & Adler, 1994). The research observations for Phase Two were supported by interviews with the participants, and so there was no means to be fully detached. Nor was the researcher involved in any of the activities, and so the mode of peripheral-member-researcher was adopted. Having been a drama teacher/head of department for nearly two decades, immersion in the setting of the secondary drama classroom had already occurred, allowing for a deeper understanding of a classroom's activities and interactions (Roy, 2009).

The observations undertaken were semi-structured, allowing the categories of observation, whilst partially planned, to be responsive to the observation noted (Heath, Hindmarsh, & Luff, 2010). The categories noted and compiled with (Table 1) were created by the researcher through experience, pedagogical methods and the observations of the classes (Neelands & Goode, 2000). Whilst the researcher was a "complete observer" the observation was not covert but was detached from the group and non-participatory. This enabled the researcher to:

"generate numerical data from the observations. Numerical data, in turn, facilitate the making of comparisons between settings and situations, and enable frequencies, patterns and trends to be noted or calculated" (Cohen et al., 2018: p. 545).

In addition to observation, there were semi-formal focus group interviews. Gubrium and Holstein explore multiple methodologies, informant foci, key characteristics and modes for interviews for field research (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). This study focused on a qualitative methodology, had an informant focus, which was a focus group of children, and used a face-to-face mode. The key characteristics were semi-structured and conversational (Watts & Ebbutt, 1987).

All students who partook in each lesson agreed to be interviewed. It was chosen for the interviews to be undertaken as a group interview as this is a known form for many drama students for "appreciating the work of others" as an assessment and pedagogical tool used in the drama classroom. It allows students to feel less intimidated and avoid feeling that they need to produce the "correct" answer, as their peers support them, and, in addition, it allows them to build upon other statements (Morgan, 2001). The group was placed in a circle, so all participants were equal in status positioning, including the researcher. The teacher was not part of the interview circle but did remain in the room. The voice recorder and microphones were placed in the centre of the circle.

Table 1. Observation field notes of activities.

Activity Structure	A	B	C	D	E	F
Short direct instruction introduction	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Warm up			✔	✔	✔	
Whole class activity				✔	✔	✔
Group work	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Series of activities			✔	✔	✔	
One key activity	✔	✔				✔
Playbuilding	✔	✔			✔	
Scripted work				✔	✔	✔
Workshop	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Skills focus	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Knowledge focus				✔	✔	
Presentation	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Discussion	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Teacher mask trained	✔	✔		✔	✔	
SEN students fully engaged	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	

One unexpected source of data came from the fact that all the teacher participants voluntarily sought to discuss the class teaching that had just been observed. Such data was included in the field notes, as prior permission to record the teachers on tape in any interview mode (formal or informal) had not been obtained. The teachers were able to offer layers of context to the students and their behaviour/reactions/interactions that would not have been possible without greater ethnographic immersion in each classroom setting.

The same questions were asked of each class in the same order, with only the addition of prompts, to expand on any issues raised, used within the discussion/interview.

The observation of students involved six drama classes in six schools. Five classes used masks, and the sixth was a class that did not, and had never used masks. A total of 89 students were observed, 46 female and 43 males across the six class observations. All classes were middle school students (Years 9 and 10) aged between 14 and 16 years old, and were of mixed gender and mixed social economic background. No students who identified as indigenous were present. Sixteen students had recognised Specific Learning Difficulties (SLD) but this was not a focus of the study, and this information was only revealed by the teachers after all data collection had taken place. Each class was de-identified with an alphabetic letter A-F. Class F was the non-mask usage class.

6. Classroom Observations

Field notes were taken of the various activities and pedagogical modes. In all classes involved, there a brief direct instruction was provided. All students had an opportunity to present work to the rest of the class, and all students partook in critical analysis.

The classes that were engaged with mask usage all had additional similarities. All mask-based classes used group work and workshops, and all the children with SLD needed to be specifically identified, as their challenges were not apparent through observation, meaning they were both fully included and engaged.

To facilitate an understanding of the variety of classroom activities, I devised a simple coding system, based on my 22 years of drama experience, 17 as a teacher, to code general activities undertaken with a drama class and varying methodologies of application undertaken in a typical drama class, based upon texts (Bird & Sallis, 2014; Clausen, 2016; Neelands & Goode, 2000).

7. Narrative of Observation

Class A was a Year 10 class. The teacher chose an unusual method for introducing the lesson topic. She chose to wear a full-face mask as the students entered the classroom. This led to a brief initial discussion with the class on how they felt as "audience" members. Concepts of disassociation and intrigue were raised. It was clear that the students were highly focused on the coming lesson. After a brief teacher led discussion on mask etiquette and background, the class self-formed into two groups to playbuild a scene and present it using full-face masks. Students had engaged with mask work earlier in the year—half-mask Commedia dell'Arte. No full-face masks had been used before. A brief class discussion was held after each presentation.

The students self-formed groups according to gender. After the conclusion of the lesson, the teacher informed me that this was unusual, although the reason for such a choice by the students was unknown. No other class that I observed chose to divide this way and so it may have merely been a coincidence.

The gender division did create some differences. The male group started physically rehearsing faster. All students in the group were involved, but two individuals appeared to be more dominant, one of whom took the lead non-masked (initially) role. The female group spent longer discussing the activity and their response to it before physically engaging. Again, all students were fully involved. It was less clear whether there were any leaders in the female group. The class were all very vocal in their rehearsal processes and appeared very comfortable and secure in the classroom, with the implicit freedom to explore materials, ideas and space. The teacher took on more of a facilitating role, engaging with groups when requested, or when observing something of interest in each group devising processes.

All the students were fully involved. Three students had SLD: one had mild autism, one was dyslexic, and one had unspecified behaviour/concentration is-

sues. The researcher was unable to identify from the observation which students had SLD but two were male and one female. The teacher commented that whilst all students were usually engaged in the class activities, the students seemed more engaged as a whole than usual, especially the SLD students.

The male group positioned themselves in a line with very clear, distinct physical movements; stylised, timed and choreographed. The female group used movements more akin to dance. Again, they were very precise in movement but there was greater variety, being less stylised. Neither group chose to use any dialogue.

What was most interesting was the choice of narratives the students chose as a group, without any awareness of the other group's choice identity and acceptance. Both scenes featured the lead character/protagonist not wearing a mask. In each group, the lead protagonist "individual" adopted a mask in order to be accepted by the rest of the group.

Class B was a Year 9 class. After a brief teacher led discussion on mask usage and background, the class self-formed small groups of between two and four individuals to playbuild a short scene and present it using full-face masks. A brief class discussion was held after each presentation. The students had never used masks before and most of them were fully engaged. They formed friendship groups to work in and all class members were supportive of each other's work.

The class appeared quite excited at the prospect of working with masks. Of all classes observed, they appeared the least mature emotionally, making comments such as "Can I hold it?" "Can I wear one" and "Not sure if I like it". The class was quite lively and still developing class rules. The teacher gave clear instructions regarding how to approach the lessons' key activity: the students were to form small groups and work out a very short scene where an action occurs; their scene was to be silent; the characters in the scene were to wear masks; and the students should attempt to rehearse without masks at first.

The classroom itself was a large double sized classroom with chairs stacked at the back wall, and various rostra blocks at the side of the classroom. The teacher had a desk area with a computer and "smart board" at the top end of the classroom, towards the left. The room had no windows and was a 'black box' in that the carpet, walls and roof were all black. There were some fixed stage lanterns on the roof. The majority of the room was open and clear to allow students to move with freedom.

One group in particular was noteworthy: four boys did not engage well as a group. They stated that they had not rehearsed much and, when the class briefly discussed their presentation at the end of the lesson, agreed that they had been distracted during rehearsal. The boys did not like the masks and did not want to wear them. The teacher later informed me that those four boys usually engaged very well, despite some behavioural difficulties in other classroom settings (not Drama), so this was unusual for them. The scenario they undertook lacked any narrative but was a series of disconnected conflicts—almost an excuse for the boys to play fight. The four boys chose not to wear their masks on their faces but

positioned the mask on the top of their heads, similar to a visor having been lifted.

Other groups had a variety of scenarios they devised. One group, of one boy and one girl, created a scenario involving two thieves breaking into a house. There was a degree of unfocused movement, but inventive ideas. In contrast, a group of two girls and one boy devised a playground-bullying scene. They presented very clear and precise movements with no dialogue.

One group, of two girls and one boy, enacted a customs check at an airport. They applied mime skills that had previously been developed in class in a past unit of work with visuals such as looking at items in a bag and shrugging shoulders.

Using a simple scenario of asking for directions, two boys created a comedic piece with many misunderstandings between characters revealed through exaggerated gestures and body reactions. It was quite a complex piece of performance for students who had not used masks before.

A group of three girls devised a performance involving a famous star with a bodyguard who is met by a fan and almost stalked. This allowed the students to use clear physicality in performance.

The group involving one boy and one girl was interesting as both of those students had an SLD diagnosis, both on the autistic scale. The teacher commented that this was the best work and the most engaged she had ever seen them. It was noticeable that they were different in behaviour, quite serious but unaware of audience and space.

Two additional pupils were also SLD. One student was of limited cognition (a life skills student) and the other had speech pronunciation issues. Neither student stood out and both were equally engaged across the class activities in rehearsal and presentation in their respective groups.

The class was very new to drama as a subject (not given in Year 7 or 8 except in a two week taster as a part of English in Year 8). Basic performance skills were still being developed, and they had only playbuilt a few non-scaffold scenarios before. No scaffolding was offered for the scenes worked on in class, except for the teacher moving between groups to encourage ideas. The teacher wanted to explore how mask work would affect their scenes, and they chose to use the lesson, in part, as an observational, formative assessment of learning.

Overall, most students seemed to use the limitations caused by the application of masks to stretch their imagination in creating simpler ideas with greater emphasis on physicality, building upon a previous unit of mime.

The Class C students were led through a series of activities using masks to focus on movement. The final activity required the students to devise a very short scenario demonstrating power relationships and status. Status was a performance-blocking concept that had been previously explored by the class, though not with masks. The students were of mixed gender and age (Year 9 and 10). Although they used mixed masks, some half and most full, all students reacted as if in full-face masks and worked silently.

After an initial warm up activity involving timing and precision of movement, the teacher led the class through a series of skill workshops/activities building to the final scenario activity. The class was then taken into the school theatre, which was similar in style to a Greek amphitheatre. It has an oval stage area, with tabs (side curtains and a cyclorama at the back) and curved seating around it. Each row of fixed seating was raised higher the further from the stage you were. There was full stage lighting for the theatre.

Activity One was focused on reacting to others. The students wearing masks had to work as a chorus, standing in a circle and finding/mimicking the movements of each other (one led whilst the others copied). In Activity Two, the students developed precision in body language through applying mime. An individual would find an object and use space, weight and shape through mime to communicate to other members of their small group. The group reacted to the object through improvisation. Masks were worn throughout this activity.

Larval masks were used in the third activity to develop characterisation stereotypes. Larval masks (sometimes referred to as Basel masks) were developed by Jacques Lecoq and inspired by the carnival masks of Basel, Switzerland (Murray, 2003). They are usually white with small eyes, a nose, a face form and no mouth, and are very simple and exaggerated as a caricature. During the lesson activity, students were told an emotion to portray in groups, whilst wearing the masks. The key discussion point was that different characters can have similar emotions, despite the formed features of the mask; however, the mask caricature did create differences in the interpretation of the emotion, or the objectives behind the emotion for the character. Another observed class, Class E, also used larval masks.

The final two development activities involved time and space, and then status with the students wearing standard full-face (neutral) masks throughout. Firstly, standing as a whole class in a circle, the students demonstrated the seasons through plant/tree growth movements changing through the seasons. This allowed the additional focus of slow, deliberate movements to be developed. Students then split into pairs using physicality and movement to demonstrate their status that the teacher changed frequently in each pair. Students considered height, size and blocking (stage positioning) to represent status.

Throughout the activities, students varied the person with whom they worked. Although there was a mix of Year 9 and Year 10 students, they freely mixed between the two year groups.

The final summative activity was the development of a short scenario demonstrating status and an individual being isolated. Students had to demonstrate a transformational journey in their narrative, which matches an assessment requirement of an element of the state's Year 12 drama examination performance. The teacher very briefly commented on all the scenarios at the end of the lesson.

It was an active and busy lesson. The class members were all fully engaged. While there was a variety of disabilities apparent in class, all students were fully

included. This was particularly noticeable regarding one student had Achondroplasia (dwarfism) and who was fully included; indeed, the status activity involving this student was incredibly powerful.

Two students had an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis. Both were fully engaged in mask usage. Two other students had co-ordination/interaction challenges. The teacher stated that engagement for all pupils was higher than expected, especially with all those who were SLD and introverted.

One student appeared less comfortable with masks (no specific previous issues had apparently been present, although the teacher did label the student as a strong performer/alpha-female).

Class D was a Year 10 class that had studied drama as a full subject from Year 7. The students, therefore, had a wider drama experience than some other classes. The students were looking at Greek theatre. The lesson explored the use of chorus in drama and substituting play scripted language for colloquial translation. The students worked in two teacher chosen groups. The students were of mixed gender (Year 10). The masks were Greek inspired mask designs with the mask characters already specified by the teacher, yet in a half-face mask (similar to Commedia dell' Arte). Students did not question the given characters of the masks but did portray different emotional states of the characters.

Working in an open double classroom area with no desks, the students undertook three key activities. After a brief discussion about the Greek Chorus, the students were given Greek "inspired" half-masks to explore chorus blocking. Put into three groups, the students were asked to enact different emotional states using frozen exaggeration in tableaux form. As students presented their tableaux, there was a discussion of skills such as the use of gesture, head positioning, body positioning and interactions with others to create meaning. Taking turns, each group built upon the experience of previous groups' presentations. Students displayed a strong awareness of mask rules.

For the second activity, two passages were used from Sophocles' "Antigone". Students were given the chorus speech at the beginning of the play and the final chorus speech at end of the text. The students were allowed ten minutes rehearsal and they worked in pairs; each pair being given one of the speeches. Students first rehearsed without masks, then with the same masks they used in the first activity. Most groups spent the majority of the time rehearsing with masks, perfecting movements and choreography. The performances without masks demonstrated a strong awareness of text, but not the potential of the masks.

Activity Three involved the students using two other passages from Sophocles' "Antigone"—working in groups of two. Each pair was given a duologue Antigone/Ismene or Creon/Haemon. There were two versions of each duologue, either a traditional translation or a modern "adaptation" using current vernacular and rephrasing. All the groups rehearsed without masks first, and then with the masks they had been using throughout the lesson. Throughout the process, the teacher engaged with the students supporting their rehearsals, performances and

positioning skills development. Most groups spent the majority of the time rehearsing with masks and perfecting movements and choreography. What was noticeable was that all the groups chose to apply mask usage earlier in rehearsal and gave more consideration to the adaptation of the positioning of the masks for the audience's to be able to observe actions clearly.

The class whole was fully engaged. All were positively encouraged to participate and were fully included. The students had some limited mask experience. Masks were used as a skill tool for developing ideas of chorus movement in initial activities. When engaging with script work throughout the rehearsal process, students used masks as an end aspect of rehearsal rather than as tool in its own right.

The teacher informed the researcher that one student had Asperger's Syndrome. He was fully engaged in all activities (above the norm), and fully engaged with masks. An awareness of the student's special needs was only apparent when informed by the teacher. One student had neurological challenges and yet was also fully engaged in all activities (above the norm), as well as being fully engaged with mask usage. An awareness of this student's special needs was also only apparent when informed by teacher. The teacher stated that engagement for all pupils was usually high, and the SLN students took on more dominant roles in the creation process than was the norm.

Class E was a Year 9 class with limited practical experience of masks, although they had undertaken some theory in regard to the masks to be used in the lesson observed. Within the lesson observed, the students undertook various short scenarios, devising, focusing on movements and emotional communication through mask wearing. The lesson was designed specifically to explore different facets of mask work as an introduction to masks.

The class was of mixed gender. The masks were Basel/Larval masks with the characteristics of mask already previously presented in a previous lesson. The students did not question the suggested characters represented by the masks but did portray different emotional states of the characters.

The lesson consisted of two main activities. The first activity involved paired students taking part in the activity "Hot Seating". In this activity, a student sits in a chair in character and is asked random questions. The responses to these questions create a character that the student/performer can develop in performance. The students appeared to have had previous experience of this activity, as the individual in the "Hot Seat" was only allowed to respond through movement. Students reversed roles so both had an opportunity in the "Hot Seat". As a class, the students evaluated what was unusual and how character was represented emotionally, despite the challenge of the potentially imposed character of the mask. Several students wore the same mask "design" and yet different scenarios and backgrounds created alternative reactions to the mask's emotional state, depending on the user. The students demonstrated a strong adherence to the standard mask wearing/usage rules despite their limited experience of mask usage.

The second activity again involved the students working in pairs, but with a

different partner. In this activity, two characters met in an everyday, authentic situation. Students had to choose an emotional state in which their character would be and then undertake an improvised rehearsal without masks. Students then chose a specific Larval mask to match their interpretation of the character they had created. After a brief rehearsal with masks to develop blocking, they performed their scenarios to the rest of the class. The teacher indicated to the class that this activity was being used to support performance and rehearsal techniques, as well as characterisation.

The whole class was fully engaged. All students were positively encouraged to engage and were fully included; however, one student chose to exclude herself (and therefore did not partake in any aspect of any activity—despite discussing this with the teacher). The issue was a sore hip from an athletic injury. The student did not engage with any discussion of work, though she did partake in the interview for the research at the end of the lesson. This student is regularly emotionally and physically withdrawn in class.

One child had an Asperger's/ADHD diagnosis. This was only noticed after discussion with the teacher, as she was outstanding in body awareness and engagement, and dominant in discussions. Her behaviour and interactions did not fully match with her diagnosis, as she fully engaged with masks and supported other learners. The teacher stated that the engagement for all pupils was higher than expected, especially with those SLN.

Class F was a non-mask usage class. The lesson was focused on blocking movements for a previously rehearsed scene, as part of a larger performance to be undertaken as part of a showcase for parents later in the year. The student demographics were of mixed gender, mixed to low social economic status. The students were highly engaged and responsive. The teacher stated that engagement for all pupils was as usual.

Clear connections between Knowledge Learning Areas were made in music and Drama. The students applied realism skills to "Cat's Musical" numbers—though no real explanation was offered, nor justification given for this dichotomy other than emotional realism (simplistic knowledge) for characterisation.

There were no noted students with SLD but one student (male) was focused on operating technical equipment more than performance, was withdrawn and less engaged with other students—this was suggestive of mild ASD, which the teacher suspected.

8. Coding of Lessons

Separate to the field note observations, the lessons were coded through the Quality Teaching framework (NSWDET, 2003). As previously noted, classes are coded in 18 areas, with a coding scale of 1 - 5. Having 17 years' experience as a drama teacher and having been using the Quality Teaching framework for nine years, I undertook the coding. The researcher has coded over 250 individual lessons and lead many professional development sessions for teachers in its use (Table 2).

Table 2. Quality teaching coding of classroom observations by school.

School/Coding	DK	DU	PK	HOT	M	SC	EQC	E	HE	SS	SSR	SD	BK	CK	KI	I	C	N
A	5.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00
B	5.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	5.00	1.00	5.00
C	5.00	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	2.00	3.00
D	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	5.00	3.00	5.00
E	5.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00
F	4.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	1.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
NSW	3.31	2.68	1.71	2.32	2.27	2.70	1.68	3.02	2.36	3.49	3.40	1.50	2.72	1.38	1.38	3.93	2.05	2.21

There were several key areas where the classes that were observed using masks achieved equal or higher codes than the New South Wales average for secondary schools or the non-mask using class (Class F). The New South Wales average class results stem from the Systemic Implications of Pedagogy and Achievement in New South Wales Public Schools (SIPA study) (Ladwig, Smith, Gore, Amosa, & Griffiths, 2007). Lead by Associate Professor James Ladwig and Professor Jennifer Gore, SIPA represents a collaborative effort between researchers at the University of Newcastle and the NSWDEC to understand and enhance the quality of professional learning, pedagogy and student learning in New South Wales public schools. The study was jointly funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) and the New South Wales Department of Education & Training (2004-2007) as part of the ARC Linkage Program.

In 92% of cases, the coding for the five mask classes was higher than the New South Wales (SIPA) comparison figures for secondary schools. The exceptions were for:

- Cultural Knowledge where there was "no explicit recognition" of cultural knowledge in any of the mask classes (scored as 1), except for Class D which scored a three, indicating "some cultural knowledge is recognised and valued in the lesson, but within the framework of the dominant culture"; and
- Connectedness (to the outside world) where Class C and Class E scored two, which was marginally below the New South Wales average of 2.05, indicating "some weak connections" were attempted, and Class B which scored one, indicating no "clear connections" were made.

In 76% of cases the coding for the five mask classes was higher than or equal to the non-mask comparison class (Class F). The notable elements were:

- Explicit Quality Criteria, where the score for the non-mask class was four (indicating "detailed criteria regarding the quality of work was made explicit or reinforced"), which was higher than any of the mask classes;
- Connectedness, where the score for the non-mask class was five (the highest score). One of the mask classes scored one, two scored two and the remaining two scored three; and

- Cultural Knowledge, where all of the classes scored one (indicating some cultural knowledge was recognised and valued in the lesson, but within the framework of the dominant culture).

This descriptive analsyis, whilst not conclusive in isolation, suggests that drama classes can provide rich pedogogical environments. Findings of this kind align with those demonstrated by DICE (Eriksson et al., 2014) and The Role of Arts Participation in Student's Academic and Non-academic Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study, Home, and Community Factors (Martin et al., 2013) in asserting that drama education is able to support quality academic and non-academic outcomes. However, this needs a further longitudinal study of Quality Teaching before firmer conclusions can be made.

Cultural Knowledge was at the lowest coding possible for all but one class observed, which potentially supports suggestions that, in Australia, a male anglo-centric curriculum is being delivered with minimal gender perspective let alone other knowledge groupings (Amosa, Ladwig, Griffiths, & Gore, 2007). Problematic Knowledge is also on an average level with the state. Drama education may be value adding to the student's learning, however, the lack of Problematic Knowledge, Cultural Knowledge and Connectivity as a whole across all studies may be cause for concern.

It is important to reiterate that Quality Teaching data, at this point, does not indicate that any KLA is "better" at any particular area than is another (Roy, Baker & Hamilton, 2019). There was enough variation in each specific class to potentially support the idea that it is individual classes (pupils and teacher), not subjects, that make a difference (Ladwig, Smith, Gore, Amosa, & Griffiths, 2007). The current study provides a snapshot of six classes coded using the QT framework at one point in time. Although not a specific focus of this study, there were important indications that masks may offer additional support for inclusivity and engagement for SLD students. Further observation and coding of the classroom teaching of drama and masks is needed to develop a defensible evidence base and demonstrate further patterns, but these are all just snapshots of individual lessons. The next section looks at the student interviews as another source of evidence.

9. Student Interviews

The interview data offering the participants' learning responses supports the reality of the classroom learning experience that the observation data suggests. All students observed within the mask usage classes consented to partake in the interview process. The non-mask usage class participants were not interviewed as the interview questions were directly related to mask usage in the classroom and thus would have not been applicable. There were 74 students interviewed in the context of their class groupings. The interviews took place in the classrooms at the end of the lessons and lasted 6 - 9 minutes. Interviews were recorded using a digital recorder. The researcher and interviewees were seated in a circle. This

occurred to minimise any potential distinct power relationships between the researcher and interviewees. It additionally allowed for easier eye contact to be made with all participants. All students took part in the responses.

The researcher transcribed the recordings. The students were de-identified in a similar manner to the field notes. All classes were given an alphabetic code. Gender was distinguished in transcripts through a numerical value (1—female; 2—male). Each speaker was given an additional numerical identifier, thus Pc.2.3 was the third male participant to speak in Class C.

There were five key questions asked of each of the five mask usage classes observed.

1) How are masks used in the classroom?

2) What is enjoyable or good about using masks in classroom?

3) What is less enjoyable or difficult about using masks in the classroom?

4) Does using masks in the classroom change your view or approach to learning?

5) How does using masks make you feel about yourself?

The questions were derived by the researcher, based upon the wider overarching questions of the research. Question One was created to provide an understanding and comparison as to how students viewed masks usage in the classroom. Questions Two and Three were devised to allow students to focus on the positives and negatives of the experience of mask usage, but they were kept open. These questions were devised to allow students to consider their personal responses, and they also built upon the reflective outcomes imbedded in the "Arts: Drama Curriculum" (ACARA, 2015). Questions Four and Five allowed the students to focus upon their own conceptual understanding. Taken in totality, the questions were created to support students through the three phases of Vygotsky's intellectual processes of adolescents; from the primitive syncretic, through complex forms to potential concepts and genuine concepts (Vygotsky, 1986).

> "The child unites diverse objects in groups under a common 'family name'; this process passes through various stages. The second line of development is the formation of 'potential concepts,' based on singling out certain common attributes. In both, the use of word is an integral part of developing processes, and the word maintains its guiding function in formation of genuine concepts, to which these processes lead." (Vygotsky, 1986: p. 144).

Student comments were categorised into related areas of response.

Masks were used in an equal number of purposes from the students' perspectives. Two responses linked mask usage to being topic specific, two to fun/engagement in learning, and two for developing body awareness as a purpose.

This was a non-probing general introductory question reaffirming the teacher's comments from the beginning of the lesson as context and creating an atmosphere of congeniality and informality. The students made links between the purpose of masks and their classroom learning. There was no requirement for higher order responses as students settled into the format of the interview (Table 3).

Table 3. Positives in relation to masks.

Response	Skill Development (Including Movement/Body)	Communication	Alienation	Self-Identity Exploration	Anonymity/ Becoming Other	Challenge	Fun/Different	Confidence Building	Freedom
Number of responses	19	5	3	2	27	8	4	14	4

Across the five classes observed with masks, the majority of statements were made in relation to masks allowing the adoption of an alternative identity that had no relation to the self. This was related to students commenting on personal skill development and confidence in learning. The students communicated that masks had an impact on their self-perceptions and achievement potential.

Pc.1.6 *It makes me think about trying more things. I'd use masks all the time now.*

Student Response

Students made clear links to the skill development potential of masks. This had not been made explicit as a purpose for the activities in the classroom.

Pd.2.1 *Yeah, it's good just for practicing in, not for actual performing but to practice in that you try that and then you take it off and like you feel more natural to use your facial expressions, I guess.*

Student Response

This could be seen as significant because it suggests that students have a higher developed sense of reflective pedagogical response and understand the significance of learning activities that is not always explicit in classroom observation.

Pe.1.1 *You mainly focus on how the body works rather than making speech and it also helps you in other subjects to use your body language rather than your voice.*

Student Response

Students in two classes noted a clear difference between full-face masks and half-masks, with full-face masks offering greater freedom and anonymity, but half-face masks having greater comfort and offering better visual/spatial awareness.

Pd.1.8 *I think that it's good for people that can't get focused. Like cause if you smile then they're not going to notice that you're not keeping focus.*

Pd.2.5 *Unless it's one of those masks that don't cover.*

Pd.1.8 *But if it's a full-face mask then that's a benefit.*

Student Response Discussion

One student stated that they engaged more with masks, as they were interested with the historical context that they originated from.

Pd.1.7 *I like history, like I enjoy history, so I like the link back to history of wearing a mask. I think it's interesting say in Antigone they, I don't know if*

they used masks or not, but you assume that character and it links back to great theatre.

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

The students identified a variety of areas that they felt masks usage had created a challenge for themselves. The largest groupings of comments were based upon masks being a barrier to clear verbal communication, with eight respondents noting this. Five respondents did comment on visual/spatial awareness limitations, although students also recognised that these restrictions forced them to develop greater body awareness. Three students noted slight discomfort, with one student feeling somewhat claustrophobic. This was a significantly lower number than might have been expected from the total of 74 students interviewed.

Five students also commented on the "smell" of the masks; however, all five comments were from the same class, and linked specifically to the PVC Basel masks being used. Whilst two students referred to the negative aspect of alienation that the masks could cause to an audience, again only one student of the 74 commented upon feeling "*unnerved*" by the observation of other performers being masked. Two students did state their dislike at being anonymous, which was contrary to the 27 students who saw this as an overwhelming positive of mask usage.

Students in all five classes regularly built upon any negative responses towards mask usage with a positive clarification. Masks may offer challenges in communication, but the students would build upon this negative, stating that it forced them to experiment and seek new skills and opportunities.

Pa.2.2 *When you use it you can focus on your body completely without having to worry about your face. So that way even if it's over exaggerated you can still make sense.*

Pa.2.5 *I think it's the opposite of that. I think that it's harder because if you can't show expression in your face you can't tell the audience with just your emotion in your face when like you may be in a still moment. You need to use your body more to try and get the message across to the audience.*

<div align="right">Student Response Discussion</div>

The activities appeared to be both frustrating and yet challenging, offering self-satisfaction and reward whilst increasing engagement.

Pe.2.3 *It's difficult because you can't speak. You've got to try and use your hands and your body. I like how you have to use your body, like, because it's more of a challenge.*

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

The comments relating to the challenges of smell as a negative all came from the students who used rubber masks. The masks were kept clean, but the rubber material used did have a strong, pungent smell, so the student response to the material was understandable. As a counter to this, some students appeared to find that the rubber "Basel" masks were more comfortable and fitted better on the face.

Pc.2.5 *The smell!*

Pc.1.6 *Yeah, they stink.*

-general agreement noises-

Pc.2.4 *Oh mine was ok.*

Pc.1.5 *I couldn't see very well.*

Pc.2.1 *Yeah you have to watch where you're going.*

Pc.1.7 *I didn't like them. I like to use my face and expressions, and I couldn't.*

Pc.2.3 *But that's what I like about them.*

Pc.1.7 *Nah, I'm really expressive. I like to be seen.*

-laughter-

Pc.2.2 *I wanted to speak, but I guess it was good to try and talk with my body.*

Student Response Discussion

Visual limitations in performance and rehearsal also linked to the 'Basel' masks were visually engaging, but also offered the greatest challenges personally to the students.

Pe.2.3 *It's difficult because you can't speak. You've got to try and use your hands and your body. I like how you have to use your body, like, because it's more of a challenge.*

Pe.2.4 *Your view is very restricted. It's harder to see around. If you're practicing without the mask, you can see around, you can see the chairs; you can see the person next to you.*

Pe.2.5 *It's good to use your body language and everything but using your facial expressions can really help and not getting to do that can make it a bit harder in what you are trying to say.*

Student Response Discussion

Surprisingly significant was the reaction of those students with neurological based conditions that have the sensory processing disorder comorbidity. Not one of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) students commented on sensory limitations or negatives in the physical wearing of the masks. Each of them commented on the positive anonymity and freedom that the masks offered them in rehearsal and performance, suggesting that the beneficial engagements and impacts of using a mask in the classroom superseded their sensory processing issues which can often lead to high levels of exclusion from collaborative and interactive activities.

Pc.2.5 *It felt good; I was kind of hidden, so I could just go for it.*

Pc.1.4 *Yeah me too, it was free.*

Pc.2.1 *I really had to think about what I was doing with my body. Focus on my movements.*

Pc.1.6 *It's amazing how just everyone looked different and you couldn't see who they were.*

Pc.1.2 *I'd have had no idea it was you, if I didn't know.*

Pc.2.4 *It's hard but good.*

Student Response Discussion

It was a minority of the socially aware, extrovert students who felt that anonymity was a negative aspect of mask wearing. This in itself was an unexpected finding, yet important, as it suggests that the societal stereotype of the drama student/actor needing to "show-off" with their ego attached via individual recognition is an exception more than a majority position of elective students in the subject. Indeed, students commented in the recorded interviews, and teachers in informal discussions, that those who were more inclined towards introspection took risks and developed more extrovert attributes because of the anonymity the masks provided in the disassociation from self.

Pc.2.5 *Yes, I find it hard sometimes but with the mask on I felt … free.*

Pc.1.4 *I get embarrassed when performing. I didn't today. It felt good. I wanted to try out things.*

Student Response Discussion

An additional unexpected finding was that, of the 74 students, only one found the masks claustrophobic,

Pb.2.6 *I think feel shut off a bit.*

Student Response

To help understand student responses, student confidence in learning and general engagement, the answers were also codified in relation to the positive change indicated by students and to the skills and techniques used in drama.

Ten students saw the masks as being directly related to improving skills and focus in the wider drama classroom activities separate to mask usage. An additional four students commented on the potential of masks being used as a rehearsal tool, and an additional five students recognised masks as developing confidence in performance. Several students in one class focused on mask skills in the class had made them consider how they would use their new awareness of movement to "read" other individuals' body language outside of the classroom.

Pe.2.6 *It just makes you think about what other people are feeling and it gives you an idea how to portray other characters plus yourself. Like it makes you think what if that happened to me in real life? How would I deal with that?*

Pe.1.9 *I don't know but I sort of felt like in some the masks that I saw I could sort of see aspects of myself in that. I don't know. I guess it's just like certain things that I do maybe like the character Pe.1.2 was portraying. Sometimes I act like that maybe and its sort of saying that now that I've seen it, I probably shouldn't be acting like that.*

Pe.2.1 *It's like what Pe.1.9 said. It can like, the only reason masks, it can change the way you think about your life. You can be character and see a character and say I do that and it's not very nice.*

Pe.2.5 *It makes you think about the emotions that you put towards people; which goes back to the question you asked before. It makes you reflect on what you do with your body, and think did I ever do something that rude? Did I ever cheat in a test? Did I ever do any of that? Then it makes you think about what your body is doing and then you'll rethink it later if you like, I shouldn't have done that. Why did I make that assumption I was doing something different?*

Student Response Discussion

Other students were keenly aware of the potential for masks as a tool, which, as previously noted, was not explicitly mentioned throughout any of the activities.

Pd.1.4 *It changes what you are thinking about doing on stage because you know you have the masks on. I'd say like it's developing a skill, when like using the mask.*

Pd.1.6 *I think you're less vulnerable as well. Like, people can't see your face so it's like you can do whatever you want and you're like not as worried about making a fool of yourself. Like if you do the big things, you're just getting into the character and you already look ridiculous with the mask on anyways, so you don't need to worry whether you're just going a bit too over the top or you look ridiculous because…*

Pd.2.9 *Yeah, I found that when I was doing that singing activity today, I just hate singing in front of an audience, but when I put the mask on, I didn't really have a problem with it as it felt like not me.*

Student Response Discussion

Students' self-awareness of positive pedagogical practice that they can apply is a significant piece of knowledge that is supported in the coding of knowledge integration but was not be clearly identifiable through classroom observation alone. It suggests that discussion and substantive communication with students about their learning is an important complimentary source for reflective teaching practice to fully understand the learning needs of a class, rather than the coding of observation in isolation.

Pe.1.8 *I think before any mask work, I sort of focused on using my voice and my facial expressions to convey what I was trying to say, but now that I've done mask work, I can sort of, I've improved with how I use my body language, so I don't have to over compensate with my voice.*

Pe.1.3 *Just in addition to that, you learn to do more extravagant body movements to convey something, so before mask work, I would have done the body movements with a little less effort.*

Pe.2.6 *Going on from what Pe.1.8 and Pe.1.3 said, now that we learnt all these body, like, movements we can then go without a mask and make our performance better because it then helps us use our face plus our body more; because you didn't use it as much as you were working on your face and your voice.*

Student Response Discussion

It was of crucial importance to gain an understanding of whether or not students could self-reflect on their own personal identity, and the effects that masks could potentially have upon this. Students appeared to be able to correlate the use of masks intuitively to intrapersonal and interpersonal self-awareness.

Pc.1.1 *But I like the half mask more, so I could speak a bit, but yeah, you can be someone else and really think about it and what it's like to be that person, how they move.*

Student Response

Thirty-six of the 74 students interviewed made specific statements in relation to the role masks had upon their own awareness of self. The largest grouping of comments numbered 14 in relation to the development of self-confidence.

Pc.1.5 *It was like I could see myself as I wore the mask.*

Pc.1.3 *With movements and things. It made me really aware what I might be doing when I move. You don't always think about what your movements say.*

<div align="right">Student Response Discussion</div>

Six students referred to the masks creating an awareness of personal behaviour, with an additional three students expressing a desire to change their behaviour directly because of the mask activities they had just undertaken. Five students commented on the role the masks played in increasing their awareness of emotional empathy to others whilst, interestingly, four students commented on the power of the mask to allow them to dissociate from themselves to observe the situation in which they were involved, and they deemed this to be a positive form of personal development.

Pa.2.1 *When you have a mask on you can do whatever you want, and you don't have to worry about it. They don't see you look like an idiot.*

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

Of the 36 comments on self-awareness, only four were about specific drama curriculum skills. It was interesting to note that, whilst the students did find responding to any self-awareness questions challenging, it was the younger students more than the older who offered responses with more depth and confidence in their own self-analysis. There is no specific empirical evidence with which to offer any reasoning behind this. The responses were distributed equally across genders in all classes.

Pb.1.6 *Well for me, I don't like performing much so it's better that I hide myself, so you could be anyone. Yeah, I could be anyone, so it makes me feel better about performing.*

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

The specific responses to "changes in attitude to self" summarise the wider responses from earlier where students recognised confidence and anonymity in mask usage that appear to suggest that students' self-perceptions of mask usage is both positive and inductive to self-reflection.

Pb.2.5 *It makes me … want to do a really good performance and show my best talents.*

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

Pd.1.2 *I think it creates a lot more disconnect between you and the character because, because of the mask you don't use facial expression, as much and I know for me I use facial expression to get into a character and so having that taken away, it creates a kind of a barrier.*

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

Pe.2.4 *It also helps you later on in life like if you had a certain job and you had to read someone's body language, it helps you focus on their body language*

rather than what they are talking about.

<div align="right">Student Response</div>

In addition to student interviews, one staff member volunteered to have personal observations of the learning experience recorded. Of particular note was the students' enjoyment of being separated from their identity.

Teacher *I spoke to the class at the end and asked what they liked, and they said … oh you feel like someone else. You feel like you feel heaps more confident. Can we do them again? Can we make our own mask? So suddenly they are very, very interested and very enthusiastic so I'll extend that for a couple of lessons into next week, to carry on from today for those guys. The girls who are really shy, they both said it was really good. One still didn't face the audience when she performed. But she did perform and rehearse and engage better in the process than she would overall. And all the ones I spoke to were really positive about it. The main thing was about hiding their identity and that they felt safe. That people couldn't see their faces.*

<div align="right">Class Teacher Response</div>

10. Conclusion

From the observed classes, it appears that student mask usage had positive impacts on the students' reported self-awareness and perceptions. Students were engaged in their classrooms when using masks and offered perceptive self-reflections, not only of the learning potential of using masks in the classroom, but also of their sense of identity and their behaviours outside and beyond the classroom and school. Whilst there is evidence of positive impacts in what their teachers and students reported and what was observed in classrooms, this is insufficient to establish a causal relationship definitively between mask use and the self-development of students. It is necessary to undertake further research to replicate such findings.

What we now call identity and our understanding of it has been apparent from the earliest records of Homo sapiens. One of the earliest recorded explorations and understandings of this fact was through ritual ceremony and the role that mask has played in allowing people to explore what it means to be us through adopting the "other" (Congdon-Martin & Pieper, 1999; Lévi-Strauss, 1982). Identity formation in adolescents is an ever-growing concern and preoccupation within formal education, with a need to identify factors that can positively impact upon adolescent development (Groundwater-Smith, Brennan, McFadden, Mitchell, & Munns, 2009; Hewlett, 2013; Pring, 1976).

There is significant new knowledge potential from this research for both national (Australian) and international audiences. In practical ways, the research explores engagement in, and the application of, masks in the secondary curriculum. Further, through the analysis of student engagement, it presents the potential intrinsic and extrinsic benefits, as well as recognising the pedagogical challenges of mask usage. Through developing an understanding of masks as a key

dramatic tool to be used in the classroom, this research offers additional methodologies to help support student engagement, self-awareness and inclusion using drama and masks as pedagogical tools to support student identity (Roy & Ladwig, 2015).

Mask usage clearly allowed the students to access their learning activities in different ways, offering deeper and more meaningful inclusion for students with different needs. Masks also provided a more inclusive way of supporting students with special education needs (SEN), improving their confidence and overall learning experience (Roy & Dock, 2014). It is acknowledged that more studies of mask usage in classrooms are needed to replicate and extend these findings that were, for pragmatic reasons, based on quite a small sample with a specific demographic and educational level. Nevertheless, the Phase Two qualitative and observational data represents a substantial capture of information on the use of masks in drama classrooms that is potentially representative of a wider population. Through focusing on qualitative data, there are always potential sources of bias in analysis, and this must be recognised in any concluding statements (Norris, 1997).

There are some key challenges arising from the data for educators engaging with masks to consider. One important challenge is that some students find that wearing a mask actually inhibits their sense of self and could restrict their learning in the classroom. This does not necessarily preclude the use of masks in classrooms if teachers are able to support student reluctance. If masks are to be used, how could they support or detract from other key skills that need to be developed as required by the curriculum? The broader evidence from the literature and previous studies suggests that mask usage in classrooms is often minimal, irregular and not fully integrated with other learning activities. Students might respond better to the use of mask if they use them more often and more effectively. Given the evidence from the professional theatre's usage of masks as a rehearsal tool, it follows that students may well benefit from the regular usage of masks as tools whilst exploring other drama pedagogies and learning topics.

This small but focused study demonstrates that masks may have a potentially positive academic, emotional and self-awareness developmental impact on students. However, the role that the embodied learning process of drama education has upon these matters also needs to be explored in a wider context, as does the role of object usage. Masks may allow students to adopt an alternative role, as Wright found in his study of role play (Wright, 2006), taking on a role supports developmental processes. Further comparative studies could be undertaken to determine the extent of the effect that masks could have separate to other Drama pedagogies. Therefore, it is suggested that:

Subsequent studies should employ a mixed, cross-sectional and longitudinal approach so as to detect any interaction between developmental processes and classroom-based drama programs (Wright, 2006: p. 57).

It can be seen from this that mask usage has positive benefits, although there are implications for which type of mask and the materials used in their making should be used, as well as the context in which they are engaged. In addition, the potential for further and wider research on the potential usage of objects as tools for both pedagogy and student personal growth can be explored.

It is not the purpose of this research either to redefine the source of identity or to offer an overarching theory for a definition of culture and place. Claude Levi-Strauss asserts that it matters not whether culture is integrated or merely a collage with no underlying pattern (Lévi-Strauss, 1982). Nor is it crucial to determine whether cognitive relativism has a cogent application to culture, despite the variance of languages in culture that might undermine such an idea (Just & Monaghan, 2000). Masks are one of the few objects that appear to transcend all of these theories. It is simply that masks have a role in all cultures, including schools. To gain an understanding of the place and use of masks and their potential impacts, it is crucial not to merely focus upon what masks do, but also on how they do what they do.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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