

**DRAMA IN EDUCATION WITH REFERENCE TO
SHAKESPEARE'S SELECTED PLAYS**

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Abstract

This paper tackles the issue of using drama as a method of teaching whether in schools or universities with reference to Shakespeare's drama. Drama is both an art form as well as a highly effective teaching and learning methodology. Using drama techniques in education has great impact on grasping the scientific and literary materials to students. Based on role play, dramatization and structured play, students will enact their senses to grab the idea, which makes it easy to remember it when it is needed. The paper also examines these dramatic techniques in literature, particularly Shakespearean drama. Shakespeare had manipulated the idea of using drama techniques to teach his characters certain ideas mainly when using 'play within play' style of writing. Hence, this style added much to Shakespeare's plays enhancing their tragic and comic content along with giving a sense of enthusiasm over the audience. This paper will conduct the meaning of drama, drama/theatre in education, drama techniques in education and in Shakespeare's Hamlet and A Midsummer Night's Dream, and a conclusion. It is related to axes of literature, theatre, and students. Significantly, This research highlights the fact that drama in education can be very pleasant and encouraging to students and is widely accepted by the public through referring to Shakespeare's drama. Through drama, people of all ages could gain a sense of responsibility greater than oneself.

Key Words: Drama in Education, technique, role play, dramatization, structured play.

1. Introduction:

"Drama is the most completely personal as well as the most highly socialized art form we have"(McCaslin, 1990:18). It appears to be a coin of two faces; an art form and a methodology of learning and teaching through involving various drama and theatre techniques in the field of education.

Drama in education (DIE) is a brilliant choice to break the routine of the education process when encouraging students' performance by exposing them to variety of activities. Indeed, this technique seems to fit all types of learning and improves the development process.

In general, drama might be concerned with written texts (plays) or production (performed texts). Thus, several performances might construct a production. to reach a production a context is required involving words, sets, sounds, actors, and other theatrical techniques.

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2. Drama in Education and Applied Theatre(DiE & AT)

Drama in Education (DiE) is the use of drama in the education process by enhancing the make-believe play as a major learning medium. Members of the education process can partake situations, or demonstrate fictitious images for deep perception and growth (McCaslin 1990:10). DiE assists raising learners' awareness of the material they are learning and promotes their skills along with sense of collaboration to produce aesthetic knowledge.

Drama-in-education, also known as creative drama, is an improvisational, non-exhibitional, process-centred form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences. According to Landy (1982:5) it requires both logical and intuitive thinking, personalizes knowledge and yields aesthetic pleasure.

Drama in education is also considered an improvisational process-centred form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact and reflect upon human experiences(Athiemooram, 2004). is an improvisational, non-exhibitional, process-centred form of drama in which Applied Theatre (AT), however, is not the same as DiE. Applied Theatre is a more recent field of study that aims at achieving specific ends by adopting theatre in contexts which do not involve theatres or schools nor does the audience include students and teachers.

Although DiE and AT are somehow related, the latter seems to be not connected with institutional spaces and formal education. According to Prentki and Preston's understanding of it, it is a theater "created for, with, and/or by communities for the purpose of improving social conditions through emancipatory and active engagement" (2009, 68).

Commonly, the concept of DiE is referred to as drama education/applied theater. It has been deeply involved in the growth of its own discipline and contribution to social life making drama an artistic as well as a social or socializing practice. Hence, drama is considered essential to the development of the discipline as an educational and a cultural practice.

With the crossing of the century, 1990- 1916, the world has witnessed many calamities from the Iraq war to Afghanistan, to the Syrian refugee crisis. Since art always there to respond to these crises, drama/applied theater, indeed, do so by manifesting the dramatic meaning-making in immeasurable ways such as through the projects of Theater in Development (TiD), international research collaborations, and the efforts to enhance drama in education at all levels, Kindergartens, schools and colleges, along with focusing on the current local and global ethical and moral issues the world is living nowadays (Nicholson, 2005).

2.1 Drama in Education or Theatre in Education?

On one hand, Drama in Education is both a method and a subject. When this concept is used as a curriculum subject then it focuses on various dramatic elements, and performances. However, it is a method to teach a number of subjects as used in some Primary schools. Drama can also be a separate department as in many Secondary schools

On the other hand, Theatre in Education involves providing schools with professional teams of trained and experienced actor/teachers to present relevant materials, projects

or experiments through several visits. Such programmes are aimed to be educational presented for small groups of one or two classes of a specific age level using theatre, drama in education and teaching techniques.

Providing educational aids, Theatre in Education can be a source of spur for both teachers and pupils. Some institution use this method all the time, and others only occasionally. It is mainly used didactically beside being a helpful tools pointing at ideas and values in society (Redington, 1979).

The difference between the two terms lies in the fact that in time 'theatre' in education was seen as "a more product-oriented approach", 'drama' in education was commonly argued to be process-oriented (Somers, 1994:6). In other words, TiE follows ideas that are less adaptive than 'drama' which focuses primarily on student-led initiatives that would harness knowledge through performance and lead to a "desired state of artistic autonomy" (Somers, 1994: 6).

hat the former does not necessarily lead to the creation of a production for an audience DiE does not necessarily lead to the creation of production for an audience, whilst the focus of the latter is on a production which will educate the audience on a particular issue affecting society at large.

Thus, the term (DiE) has been currently used as a development or adaptation to (TiE) which has been found to be less flexible. On mentioning Dorothy Heathcote, a British drama educator, one should refer to her patent impact on drama as a mode of investigation across curriculum in schools . Over 50 years, her approaches of teaching, particularly her Mantle of the Expert, has become a standard for drama teachers around the world (Heathcote & Bolton, 1994).

Moreover, 'Process Drama' and 'drama structures' approaches added further dimensions to the DiE principle. The early 1990s, Cecily O'Neill (1995) in the United States, and John O'Toole (1992) in Australia established the model of 'Process Drama' in which the classroom would be transformed into an imaginative world exploring an educational topic or theme when a teacher starts an extended improvisation to diverse and investigate cooperatively with students (Bowell & Heap, 2001). Thus, each student would be enabled to be "a more knowing participant in the social dialogue which constitutes all discourse" (O'Neill, 1989, p. 528).

'Drama Structures', however, incorporated the use of diverse forms of theatrical ideas as a method of "communicating and interpreting meanings," as well as "conventions" that studied the "exploratory and rehearsal stages of dramatic inquiry and performance," a fascinating amalgam of form, convention, and content (Neelands & Goode, 2000: 2).

3. Drama in Education Significance:

Engaging students with Drama and performing arts would urge their creativity and balance their patterns of study. Indeed subjects that offer practical learning are crucial for the process of education.

Katz (2000:2) contends that the following points mark the significance of DiE:

1. It promotes students' life skills through appreciating critical feedback.
2. Students would be able to express human's depth and thus comprehend life and challenge it.

3. Using Drama techniques in the learning process would develop cognitive abilities and help understanding other disciplines. For instance, drama students learn to understand their study approach through various manners which promotes creative thinking and new study techniques. It also encourages confidence.
4. Allows students to display cultural leadership qualities Communication and group activities.
5. Allows the imagination to thrive, aiding internal exploration. It's self-developed method.
6. Provides a window for expressing a variety of emotions exploring feelings of delight, anger and unhappiness.
7. serves to generate a system of reciprocal benefits for both students and community.

4. Techniques of Drama

Using techniques of theatre to structure a drama process is different from employing these techniques in an educational context (Aslan, 2007). There are over 60 techniques for use in dramatic processes (Neelands, 1990) and to use drama in education means to use variety of drama techniques in the education process.

The researcher will refer to the most familiar techniques used in the teaching process as well as adopted by Shakespeare in his plays.

A major technique is Role play. In the education process, students assume a role and play it as if they are somebody. This technique helps students be inventive and playful as possible (Ladousse, 1992). Students try to reflect that role's (a certain character) thoughts and feelings. They would have the opportunity to articulate their own ideas through that role. Role play technique is thus useful for helping students overcome their social difficulties (Aslan, 2007).

An internationally recognized authority on the educational uses of drama, Betty Jane Wagner declares the purpose of role play as "improvisational, not scripted and memorized to present a performance for an audience. The emphasis is on drama as an intentional teaching strategy to enhance learning in a particular curricular area" (Wagner, 1976: 5).

Such a technique is also important in "enhancing students' imaginative skills, experiencing what it's like to be someone else, understanding why some people behave differently to others, seeing things from another viewpoint or perspective" (Cowley, 2007: 85).

Dramatization is another convenient technique used in drama. It is concerned with employing dramatic elements and forms. In other words, it is dramatizing stories by re-enacting it rather than telling it (McGregor et al. 1977).

A third technique is using structured play in a drama context; so it is a game technique. Such games help in simplifying complicated experiences. These structured plays are controlled and the participants must submit to the rules (Neelands, 1990). Such a technique helps exposing the game structures in real-life situations, i.e. treachery, hiding and deceiving (McGregor et al. 1977).

4.1 Techniques of drama in Shakespeare's drama

4.1.1 A Midsummer Night's Dream:

In A Midsummer Night's Dream, Role play technique is very clear when distributing roles over the labourers who are going to act a play about 'Thisbe and Pyramus' to be presented on the wedding day of the Duke and his Duchess. Bottom, the weaver, asks Quince, the carpenter to call for actors: "You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus" (I, ii, 19). Then, Quince starts explaining briefly the roles by identifying the characters assumed. As for Pyramus, Quince says "A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love" (I, ii, 21). "Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man as one shall see in/ a summer's day; a most lovely, gentleman- like man" (I, ii, 81-82). Giving information about these roles, actors will be able to express themselves and even anticipate the reaction of the audience. Bottom comments at his role "that will ask some tears in the true performing of it", and "I will move storms, I will condole in some measure" (I. ii. 22, 24).

Another role is that of Thisbe: "Flute, you must take Thisbe on you" (I.ii.41). He clarifies the role: "it is the lady that Pyramus" (I. ii. 43). Quince direct the actors on how to act telling Fluit, for instance, that he has to wear a mask to perform the role of a lady and speaks "as small as" he could (I. ii. 47).

Shakespeare still using Quince to continue attributing roles to actors "Robin Starveling, you must Thisbe's mother" (I.ii.57). Tome Snout, another labourer, would be "Pyramus father" and himself is "Thisbe's father(I. ii. 60). Finally "Snug, the joiner, you the lion part. And I hope here is a play fitted" (I. ii. 61). Quince shows how would be the lion part: "It is nothing but/roaring" (I.ii. 65-66). He addresses Snug "You should do it too terribly, you would fright the Duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek" (I.ii.71-72).

When those simple labourers went to the forest to do the rehearsal and train themselves, they start to give suggestions. So in role pay, after staging their roles, actors would be able to suggest, add or omit things. Bottom proposes to write a prologue to tell the audience "that Pyramus/ is not killed indeed". He also suggests that Snout who takes the lion part "must name his name and half his/face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he/himself must speak through" identifying himself as Snout (III.i.34-6).

The technique shifts from role play to a structured play in which these roles would be taken. Quince directs the play correcting the speech role of Pyramus and tells other actors when to start their roles and feel the right moment for that.

Flute	Must I speak now?
Quince	Ay, marry, must you, for you must understand [Pyramus] but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again (III. i. 83-5).

Then, Quince shows Flute (Thisbe) that he should not speak his turn all at once but to give a space for the words of Pyramus.

Shakespeare makes such a structured play opens with a prologue which introduces the actors and their assuming roles to the audience. Then he prepared the setting for the

meeting between the two lovers (Pyramus and Thisbe). They meet and exchange love words through a hole in the wall which separates them.

The lion part then comes to the show. As the actors agreed in the rehearsal, the lion speaks to the audience and then it roars after Thisbe who runs away leaving her "mantle" which the lion wore. Pyramus reappears to find her mantle stained with blood (VI. i. 276). Thinking that the lion has eaten his beloved, Pyramus chooses to die too. He stabs himself and dies. When Thisbe returns and finds her lover dead, she stabs herself too.

Thus, Shakespeare employed normal people who are in fact simple labourers to present a play that parallels the life of the guests and serves the plot of the main play (A Midnight Summer Dream). These untrained characters need to be directed and given the opportunity to express themselves to the guests who comment on their actions to clarify the theme of the play. Thus techniques of role play and structured play are used to delineate Shakespeare's main play.

4.1.2 Hamlet

In act III, scene ii, Shakespeare employs Hamlet to direct a number of Players whom Hamlet has invited to present the play: 'The Murder of Gonzago' before the king, Hamlet's uncle and suspected killer of his father.

Hamlet composes a speech and insert it into the play calling it 'The Moustrap'. He asks Player1 to pronounce the lines the way he wants. He clarifies "do not saw the air too much with/ your hand, thus, but use all gently" (III. ii. 4-5). Hamlet is not only a director here but also a tutor who explains the effects of these directions and how they would help the Player to expose his passion.

Hamlet continues in giving directions teaching his Player to not be "too tame" (III. ii. 17), rather to let his disposition be his tutor. This is indeed important in role play which as a technique allows the Player to reflect himself while exposing certain theme or articulating an idea. The one who takes a role would be able to "Suit the action to the word,/ the word to the action" (III.ii.18-19). Yet, a Player should not overstep "the modesty of nature" (III.ii.20). Hamlet comments that when reflecting life through acting, one should not go far in presenting an image and be a mirror to reality. A Player should try to reflect "the very age/ and body of the time his form and pressure"(III.ii.24-25).

5. Conclusion:

Drama is more likely a distinctive experience when applied in schools for young children as they are transformed smoothly to new characters through role playing. Thus dramatic forms are easy to be included in the education process because of the children's natural association in the dramatic play.

Partakers are involved in activities and indulged in the roles, which they assume. Drama stimulates and also involves many different kinds of intellects. It creates a sense of challenge, and reaches students throughout traditional teaching methods.

Role play, structured play and dramatization are vital techniques for self-expression as they work to support learners to undertake responsibility, take group discussions, cooperate, develop new interests and seek fresh information. Significantly, drama in education provides school students with opportunities to experiment with different dramatic techniques and elements and be able to relate them to their personal experiences. Role-play can be a very powerful teaching tool.

Indeed, the education process is becoming like routine especially when the topics taught are not being applied creatively in any area. To change this atmosphere, drama in education (DIE) presents an outstanding approach where students are exposed to variety of activities through performance. It satisfies all types of learning.

In linking (DIE) with Shakespearean drama, techniques of drama are very apparent as part of the text itself. They do not serve only the plot but also present images of macro-classes where responsible leaders guide their learners on how to understand the meaning of something or how to express themselves in role playing. Shakespeare's influence on the education process has been of great value through generations. For him, acting is an essential part in the process of learning to develop and understand oneself. Thus, acting is not an acquired skill. Acting here means to be an active instrument in your own life as well as understanding the world around you.

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