

THE TRAUMA CLASSROOM VERSUS THE DRAMA CLASSROOM: THEATRE IN EDUCATION

Praveenkumar C
Ph.D Research Scholar
Department of English
Pondicherry University
Puducherry, 605014

*“Literature mirror’s Life,
Drama mirror’s more than Life”*

Abstract

The English teacher should give up teaching and should start training the students in a language classroom. A well-known fact, the students like anything than stereotyped classroom. The drama is a first-class mode to use in ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom to kindle learner’s involvement in the learning process. The theatre in the ESL classroom, enables the learners to acquire the language in a very natural and practical way. It develops the students’ conversational abilities by learning to communicate in a lifelike situation. Theatre and songs in the classroom pave the foundation for mnemonics. The students learn to learn together (Peer group). The theatrical activity in the ESL classroom is more interesting and it kills student’s anxiety. In General, the students listening skills and speaking skills are developed and the fluency level is achieved. The ultimate aim of teaching should lead to fun and joy. Thus, drama classroom woven the learners to acquire the SL in a joyful manner. It lays the foundation for lifelong learning process and provides pleasurable-learning environment. Thus, the paper aims to depict the teacher’s role in imparting the importance of theatre and songs in the ESL classroom.

Introduction

The trauma classroom entails the stereotyped lecture method palmed by the teachers in the present scenario. The most significant remark in a lecture method is its one-way communication. On the other hand, the lecture method seizes the learner autonomy in the classroom by not promoting the learners to put forward questions and their persuasions on a topic. In many schools and colleges, our teachers are not providing the space for their students to explore their

interpretations. With the help of lecture method the teachers have become like a dictator in dominating the students. It promotes the learners lack of interest in the learning process and it increases the understanding gap between the teacher and the student. Thus, the lecture method causes a rupture in the classroom and hinders students rapture in the learning process. It becomes a trauma classroom, students are longing for the bells to toll in such a juiceless classroom dominated by a teacher and his/her lectures.

Drama as an Educational tool to cater H. Gardner's 'Multiple Intelligences Theory'

A Drama played a significant role in educating the common people in ancient days. Education is the key to development and prosperity. A well-known fact, people have had lifelong education by the mode of drama and theatre. Therefore, the drama classroom stands for the need of employing the theatre and the songs in the teaching methods. An American developmental psychologist Howard Gardener points out that the students are multiple talented in his book "Frames Of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences" (1983). Gardener preferred eight abilities that promote the students' individual choice of learning such as music, visual, verbal, logical, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist. Gardener puts forward that his theory of multiple intelligences should "empower learners", not limit them to one mode of learning. Therefore, theatre and songs should be used as a teaching tool to meet all the eight modalities of learning. Theatre in Education is a rising educational tool to kindle students involutions in the learning process. As we all know at present education is becoming a rote learning one. The sole benefit of any learning results in how one is going to apply his learning in a real life. In many schools, our teachers are promoting the habit of rote learning with the students. Nowadays, education has become a result-oriented one rather than a key to development and prosperity.

The function of theTeacher

The most heartbreaking fact, in our schools is that English is taught as content subject rather than a skill subject. Due to the challenging issues of education, the role of teacher plays a crucial thing in elevating the students' interests in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher should use eclectic methods in teaching such as applying theatre and songs in a language classroom. Theatre and songs provide a good path to approach for interpretation, discussion, sharing, creating and performing something. The teacher should arrange a professional team or trained actors perform and to teach the genre performing arts to the students. The teacher should create a pleasurable learning atmosphere and should be a co-actor with his/her students. The teacher should boost learner autonomy by giving them a chance to explore. By using performing arts in the classroom, the teacher can bring some attachment of the learner towards the language which she/he is learning. The theatre and songs enable the learning as a joyful activity. Further, Education becomes a celebration. It gives a cross-cultural understanding of different a different language. The teacher can use the theatre and the songs in an effective way because it becomes a easy way to memorize(mnemonics). It is the teacher's duty to promote learners communicative competence by the use of dialogues in the drama and the rhythmic lines in a song.

Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than Knowledge". Therefore, the teacher should create a meaningful environment to develop students' imaginations. Fostering the lateral thinking among the students is regarded as one of the key achievements in teaching. The students should taught to solve their problem in a creative way. It is the right platform, where the teacher can foster the peer learning process in the classroom. Drama mirrors more than the life, by

enacting a play students learn human values and feelings of life. The teacher should teach learners to imagine the unimaginable? Cultivate interests in performing arts.

Shakespeare Inaction or In Action

In colleges and school, drama should be adapted as a mandatory curriculum. A drama stage should be built in the educational institutions. Instead of reading William Shakespeare's text and A.C. Bradley's analysis, it should be acted publicly by a set of trained actors or amateur students attempt. In general, Shakespeare is in inaction due to the age old teaching methods relying on text, notes and analysis rather than performing the play. For example, instead of reading the dialogues in a play. The teacher should enact the dialogue to bring the attention of the students in the classroom. It gives better understanding and enable students' mind's eye to visualize more and more. A drama matters more only in action. The Education system and the teachers should find a place for students to stretch their wings , and make all the world their stage. Drama teaches more than anything in a present scenario. Due to the emergence of modern electronic gadgets our students are not ready to lend their ears to anyone even they hate lecture method in a dry classroom. They want something new and their hunger for learning to be more and more and therefore the teacher should use drama as an effective educational tool to cater the needs of the students. To a large extent, the problem is not with the students, it is with our educational system and teachers' poor performance in teaching.

Holistic Model; The Theatre and Songs in education“

It is very difficult to find a person who hates the theatre and songs. The peer learning plays a prominent role and the students themselves learn to learn together. An acceptable fact, students' anxiety level is very low in the midst of theatrical activity in the classroom. They feel very comfortable and their attachment to the teacher and the subject becomes very closer. It makes the teacher and the students as co-explorers pointed out by an ELT(English Language teaching) exponent Kumaravivelu in his seminal work “The Post method Pedagogy”. The theatre and songs involve an active team formation as a crew. Therefore, the teacher should be aware that the theatre and songs bring the students very close to the life. In summation, drama is used in the old days to educate the masses, we have lost the thing that drama in education. Henceforth, it should be used in a language classroom to promote the students imagination, likeness and their lateral thinking.

Work Citations

- Gardner, H. (1995). *How are Kids Smart: Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom-* ISBN 1-887943-03-
- Taylor, Phillip (February 2006). “ *Applied theatre/drama an e in 2004. Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance j 11 (1): 90–95.* Do:10.1080/13569780500437960
- Nicholson, Helen, *Applied Drama: The Gift of Theatre*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke, UK, 2005.
- Jackson, Anthony, and Chris Vine. *Learning through Theatre: The Changing Face of Theatre in Education*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2013. Print.