



Game Theatre and Its Application in Theatre Education for Young People in Classroom

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Introduction

'Game Theatre' replaces 'passive appreciation' of traditional theatre with playful and immersive interaction to improve artistic expressiveness of theatre. It invites participant to become 'player' and take over meaning making.

A series of interactive games are presented as general frameworks to stimulate between players performative competitions/collaborations of creativity and expression of feelings/reflection, during which theatre is generated to themselves.

About My Research

Jean Piaget in his "Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood"(1945) considers "practice, symbol and rule" as three key elements of gameplay. Children's playing with these elements with their imagination resembles with adult dramatists' playing with action, representation and communication of theatre art.

It is based on this theory that I design my practice-based research consisting of six experimental workshop sessions.

Stage One: Case Study (session one - session three) (below is one of the most interesting cases and how we study it)

Game of Symbols: Light Show

To use everyday items to make lighting effects



- Play by pair. Embody things listed as below:
forest/sea/sky/dawn/midnight/summer/rain/city/happy/sad
- Play by pair. Describe a special image in memory about Chongqing City to your partner and authorize (not 'instruct') he/she to embody it. After his/her embodiment has been done, do yours.
- Make new pairs and repeat b.
- Together all make a big image of Chongqing with the individual images you got from your partners.
- Together all make a big image of Chongqing with your own special individual images.

Stage Two: Ensemble Production (session four - session six)

The Exorcists

All lights are off to transform the space to be the soul world of the possessed. Four lightened candles are placed in four corners representing important nodes of the soul. Three actors play 'good spirits' and guard three nodes but one node is left vacant.

Firstly, the player playing a young shaman prevents the evil ghost to possess an unguarded node by using a torch to instruct good spirits to move between nodes (the evil moves more slowly than the good does).

After a certain amount of time comes the second level: the evil ghost contaminates good spirits and all candles are extinguished. The player must protect the old shaman who is trying to subdue the evil by playing a drum whenever the light spots of evil spirits reach the old shaman's. Meanwhile, he must run to relight the candles.



Conclusions:

1. Storytelling in game theatre should be simple to make way for the collaboration between game and theatre.
2. The framing of game theatre is still the most difficult part. The framing codes of theatre still apply here but need to accommodate those of game.
4. Game is compatible with theatre when it is de-systematized - free, simple, and expression-centred.
5. There is full of possibilities between ritual and game; in the case of *the Exorcists*, game deconstructs ritual.

References:

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