



Drama and Theatre in the Realm of ELT

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Abstract ;

Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) can be enhanced by integrating drama and theatre, which are creative pedagogical approaches to engage learners and make them interact in realistic or imaginary scenarios; this can prepare them to deal with real-life situations. The teaching/learning process of foreign languages, especially the English language, which is the global language, can be rejuvenation with renovated methods in English language classrooms. English language teachers may use either a targeted model or make learners imagine and write about their own scenarios. Henceforth, receptive and productive skills can be used to strengthen learners' language development and thus facilitate their social and emotional development.

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1. Introduction

The lack of exposure to foreign languages prevents learners from practising them. However, integrating drama and theatre through role play and conversations, where learners can act as another person in an imaginary scenario, allows them to overcome their anxiety; it can contribute to improving their vocabulary, motivation and creativity.

Arguably, language cannot be separated from its culture; teaching or learning a language should be within its social milieu through dramatic techniques since it is human-centred. On the contrary, Holman (2022:15) argues, "To truly communicate and participate in the target language (TL), students must be taught in a way that decontextualizes language into its culture and builds their communicative skills."

Drama activities create a warm atmosphere that leads to a change in both teachers' and learners' roles. The teacher is no more the controller of the classroom and the learners' participation and self-confidence increase. Drama is learner-centred since it allows learners to express themselves through cooperative learning among learners.

Language is connected to performance Gee (2011). Therefore, to create an environment where language can be rehearsed, language curricula should be infused with drama and theatrics to transform language from simply conjugation drills and vocabulary quizzes into a breathing piece of art, culture and life." (Holman,2022: 15)

2- Drama and Theatre in Language Teaching

According to Scrivener (1994), the drama activities commonly found in the English language teaching classroom are:

- Role-play enables students to step outside themselves to accept and modify into a different character. The students improvise or create their own roles or are assigned role cards. In both cases, it has a stimulating effect, and students find it easy to engage in learning.
- Simulation: In the initial stages of learning, students are familiar with different roles, from simple to complex ones, such as day-to-day incidents to problem-solving and plays etc.
- Drama games: These games make learners involved in the action and exercise the imagination, which engages both learning and acquisition and allows various emotional expressions such as ice-breakers, warm-ups, fillers, concentration games so on so forth.
- Guided improvisation: In an activity's initial stages, the teacher guides the students. Once the students start participating, they become part of the activity and use their imagination and improvisation; until then, the teacher's role is significant.

Bonala Kondal 2016: 94.

Drama develops foreign intelligence, as shown in the table below :

Intelligence	Means by which it might be used and developed
1- Linguistic intelligence	Means by which it might be used and developed
2- Logical/mathematical intelligence	Structuring movement activities and presenting logical image sequences
3- Bodily and kinesthetic intelligence	Movement, dance-drama, improvisation, enactment, mime
4- Musical intelligence	Using and linking music and emotion within the drama context, creating soundtracks, sound collages
5- Interpersonal intelligence	Teacher in the role, improvisation, group playmaking, tableau, performance
6- Intrapersonal intelligence	Empathizing and reflecting whilst working in a role

Table1: Using and Developing Different Bits of Intelligence Through Drama

(adapted from Baldwin, P. & Fleming, K., 2003) Cited in (Bonala Kondal, 2016, p. 95)

Many authors differ between theatre and drama. Slade (1955) defines theatre as performing on stage, whereas drama is viewed as a spontaneous work that goes through a process by which learners are learning. Drama is not memorizing and repeating like theatre; it is instead used through activities and games that include learners' movement and interaction with each other to encourage communication. Case and Wilson (2003) add that drama in teaching English context "(...) makes students aware that English is not just words, structures and idioms, but it is a lively, dramatic and versatile means of

communication.” (p.4). Drama is an opportunity for learners to develop both fluency and accuracy (Zalta, 2006). Davies (1990) explains:

Drama in the English language classroom is ultimately indispensable because it allows learners to use their own personalities. It draws upon students’ natural abilities to imitate and express themselves, and if well handled, it should arouse interest and imagination. Drama encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts the language into context, and by giving learners the experience of success in real-life situations, it should arm them with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom. (p. 97).

On the other hand, the theatre creates an environment where realistic practice is at use through performance (Holman, 2022). Stern (1980) says about dramatic role-play:

If they fail to communicate outside of class, the results can be embarrassing or harmful. Nevertheless, in role-play, having the courage to demonstrate the ability to use a second language is a success, and they should not be embarrassed by a poor performance. It follows that they should be less inhibited using the language in role-play than in real life and function better than they thought they could. This, in turn, should raise their self-esteem. (1980: 85)

Through theatre, learners can overcome fear, anxiety, and low motivation; it is used to make learners more creative, motivated, and having fun since they can feel like they are taking charge of their learning when they can turn mistakes into positive experiences.

The table below shows an example of how theatre can be used inside the classroom through activities that encourage the use of the target language and enhances communication and student /student interaction.

Theatre	Activities	Application
Improvisation	Short games that allowed students to practice spontaneous speech and work on extending the length of the speech.	Playing games like “Scrapbook,” a game where two students pose as if they are on vacation and a third student must tell the story behind the 'photo' of the two students, or "One Word Story", a game where students go around in a circle, each contributing one word to tell a story collaboratively
Theatre Production	Students modified a script for their performance; rehearsed with it; designed costumes, lights, and a set, and worked on publicity. This project gave the class a real-world application and demonstrated students' improved control over the English language in a public Setting.	A production of <i>Sorry Wrong Number</i> complete with costumes and a set (even if just a few chairs and a hat or scarf to show the different characters) and rehearsed over several weeks and performed one night for friends and family

Table 2: Activities and Practical Applications for Developing Theatre Genre

(Dodson, 2002) Cited in Holman 2022.

3- Activity

Role-play

Objective: To practise conversational skills, vocabulary, and cultural understanding in the target language.

Target skills: Listening and speaking.

Instructions:

- 1- Two volunteers who are going to play the role of tourists
- 2- Provide the other learners with a table to fill in when watching their mates performing the play

FurnitureFurniture	Ethel's remarks	Sidney's remarks	Your reaction

- 3- Make learners guess what will happen after each action; the winners continue performing the play, and so forth. (to make the activity more challenging)

The play

Shakespeare's House

Scene: The living room of a house in Stratford-upon-Avon, the town where Shakespeare was born

Characters: Sidney and Ethel, tourists. A man

Sidney: Well, Ethel, here we are in Shakespeare's house front room. This must be where he wrote all his famous tragedies.

Ethel: I am not surprised with furniture like this.

Sidney: What do you mean?

Ethel: Well, look at that armchair. He could not have been comfortable sitting there.

Sidney: Do not be silly! He probably sat at this table when he was writing tragedies.

Ethel: Oh, yes.... Look!

Sidney: Shakespeare's typewriter?

At this stage, the teacher asks the learners to guess the conversation between Ethel and Sidney; this activity can be done in pairs, and the learners who guess the conversation about the typewriter are going to perform. After the conversation about the typewriter, the teacher gives them another part of the play:

Ethel: Sidney, look!

Sidney: What?

Ethel: Over here. His must be Shakespeare's television

The teacher again asks learners to guess and continue the conversation between tourists till the end of the play. This kind of activity makes learners use their creativity and imagination, it is not crucial if the learners do not have the exact words like the original play, but the idea should be the same. (for the whole play, see the appendix).

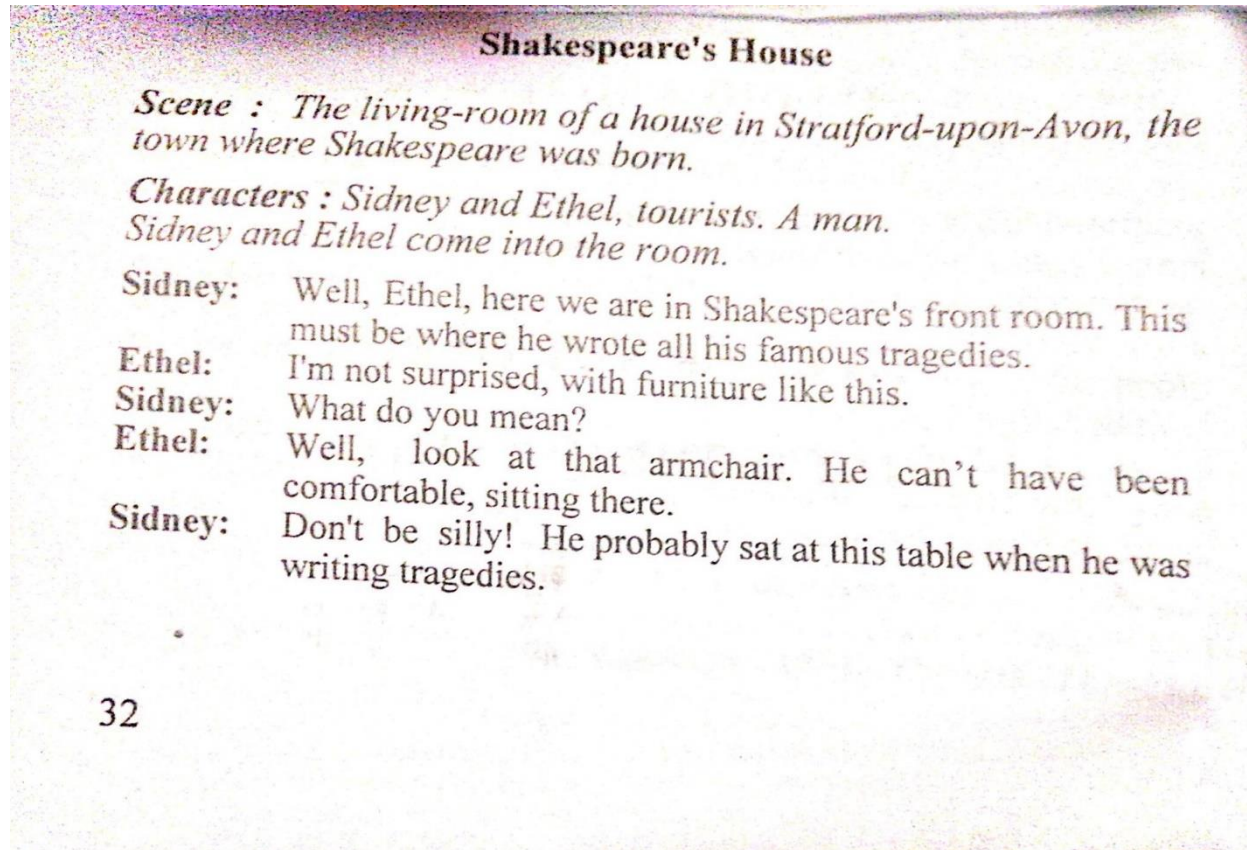
4- Conclusion

Theatre and drama should complement other approaches in foreign language teaching and not as a substitute. This creative strategy tackles verbal and non-verbal aspects of the language; there has been proof of the benefits of using such a pedagogy in enhancing foreign language learning through motivational activities that engage learners in the teaching/learning process and make them more confident. Learners can be involved in different cases: role-playing, writing scripts, adapting literary work or even writing scripts and scenarios inspired by either their own culture or a foreign culture through imaginary situations where they can improvise.

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Appendix



Bouakkaz, H & Hadjij S Comet. A communicative Language Teaching Course Book for Streams. 3ème AS. (2003: 32)

Appendix

Ethel: Oh, yes . . . look!
(She shows Sidney a typewriter.)
This must be Shakespeare's typewriter.

Sidney: Shakespeare's typewriter ?

Ethel: Yes. He probably wrote all his plays on this.

Sidney: Ethel ! That can't be Shakespeare's typewriter.

Ethel: Why not ?

Sidney: Because Shakespeare didn't use a typewriter.

Ethel: Didn't he ?

Sidney: No, of course he didn't. He was a very busy man. He didn't have time to sit in front of a typewriter all day. He probably used a tape-recorder.

Ethel: A tape-recorder ?

Sidney: Yes I can see him now. It's probably on this chair that he used to sit, holding his microphone in this hand, saying, "To be, or not to be".

Ethel: What does that mean ?

Sidney: Ah, well that is the question.

Ethel: Sidney, look !

Sidney: What ?

Ethel: Over here. This must be Shakespeare's television.

Sidney: Yes it must be. It looks old . . . But Shakespeare didn't have a television.

Ethel: Why not ?

Sidney: Why not ? Because he went to the theatre every night. He didn't have time to sit at home, watching television.

Ethel: Oh.
(They hear someone snoring.)
Sidney, what's that ? I can hear something. Oh, look!

Sidney: Where ?

Ethel: Over there. There's a man over there behind the newspaper. I think he's asleep.

Sidney: Oh, yes. He must be one of Shakespeare's family. He's probably Shakespeare's grandson.

Ethel: Ooh !

Sidney: I'll just go and say "Hello"
(He goes over to the man and shouts.) Hello !

Man: What ? Eh ? What 's going on ?

Sidney: Good morning.

Man: Good mor-Who are you ?

Ethel: We're tourists.

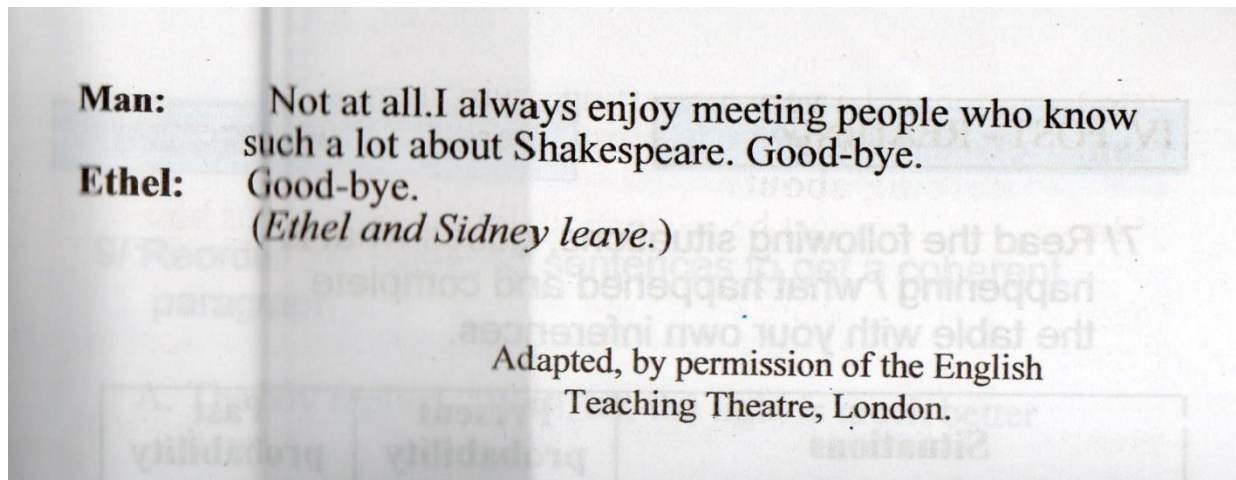
Man: Tourists ?

Sidney: Yes.

Appendix

Ethel: It must be very interesting, living here.
Man: Interesting? Living here? What are you talking about?
Sidney: Well, it must be interesting, living in a famous house like this.
Man: Famous house?
Ethel: Yes, there must be hundreds of people who want to visit Shakespeare's house.
Man: Shakespeare's house? Look, there must be some mistake.
Sidney: This is Shakespeare's house, isn't it?
Man: This is number 34, Railway Avenue . . . and I live here!
Ethel: Yes. You must be Shakespeare's grandson.
Man: Shakespeare's grandson?
Ethel: Yes.
Sidney: Look at this!
Ethel: What is it?
Sidney: Look at it! He is holding an ash-tray.
Ethel: Ooh, Shakespeare's ash-tray!
Sidney: Yes, William Shakespeare's ash-tray!
Mr. Shakespeare, I would like to buy this ash-tray as a souvenir of our visit to your grandfather's house.
Man: For the last time, my name is not . . .
Sidney: I'll give you ten pounds for it.
Man: Now listen . . . Ten pounds.
Sidney: All right then. Twenty pounds.
Man: Twenty pounds for that ash-tray?
Ethel: Well, it was William Shakespeare's ash-tray, wasn't it?
Man: William Shakespeare's . . . oh yes, of course. William Shakespeare's ash-tray. (*Sidney gives the man twenty pounds.*)
Sidney: Here you are. You're sure twenty pounds is enough.
Man: Well . . .
Sidney: All right then. Twenty five pounds. (*He gives the man another five pounds.*)
Man: Thank you. And here is the ash-tray.
Sidney: Thank you very much.
Ethel: I hope we haven't disturbed you too much.

Appendix



Bouakkaz, H & Hadjij S Comet. A communicative Language Teaching Course Book for Streams. 3^{ème} AS. (203:35)