CHAPTER I

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For thousands of years all the great and successful teachers have been employing their instinctive skills of being theatrical while communicating and transferring knowledge to their students without ever knowing that they were being theatrical. In every age teachers have contemplated ways and means to become more effective in the classroom. And unconsciously the methodology centers on theatrics in teaching techniques. The techniques were clearly acknowledged by educationists around the year 1965, when Gordon Vallins with Jessica Hill, Ann Lister and Dicken Reed formed the 1st team at the Belgrade theatre Coventry to explore the dimensions of theatre technique of education. The technique was given a term “Theatre-in-Education” acronymed as “TIE”. The team scripted and presented plays on teaching materials targeting different age groups of students. It was a revolutionary concept for entire western world academia and the concept was adopted by almost all the academic society of the time. The team said that the artist and the teacher were two facets of the coin. Their professional motto was to be a teacher through theatre and the dual role earned the title “actor-teacher”.

TIE members should be actors who could teach and ideally had received some kind of teacher training or teachers who could act. The work demanded what has become known as ‘teaching in role’. They stressed upon the need that TIE members should be actors and should have received some kind of formal training in teaching or teachers should have the
quality to act and must have undergone formal training in theatre. They further developed the concept of ‘teaching in role’ implying that a teacher should switch roles and go into the describing and come back to oneself when needed.

A teacher-in-role, therefore, in a very special way, is working in theatre. Just as a playwright and director will consciously create tension etc. so that an audience might experience. The relationship of teacher to class is equivalent to the relationship of playwright to audience. *(Gavin Bolton, 1980, P. 72.)*

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s ‘Emile; Jean or, on Education’* is the first complete philosophy of education in western tradition way back in 1911. In Emile, Rousseau includes the novelistic story of Emile and his tutor in order to illustrate how one might educate this ideal citizen. The text is divided into five “books”, the first three are dedicated to the child Emile and the final book outlines the education of his female counterpart, and Emile’s domestic and civic life.

*Clive Barker: As a professional actor, director and drama teacher. Theatre into education:* In the circumstances, the ensemble was the best teaching instrument. The group had to define very clearly the common ground that existed between the members. It became clear early on that no political, religious, or philosophic common ground existed between us and that all we did have a common was concern for the human condition. Hence, the grandiose and rather preventions little, ‘The Theatre of Man’, was adopted as the basis on which we could build the ensemble.

The willingness in a teacher to learn is what makes him/her a competent teacher. A teacher is a friend, philosopher and a guide to all students under his/her care. Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, whose birth anniversary is being celebrated as Teachers’ Day every year, was an ideal teacher with impeccable character.

    Anand Dwivedi’s ‘Dance of the Bee’-It shows three levels of our brain:
    1) Old Brain-Hand- 0-4 years-body, five senses, language
    2) Mid Brain-Heart- 4-7 years- imagination, feeling, fantasy
    3) New Brain- Head. i. (Right Side) 7-11 years- creativity
        ii.(Left Side) 11-16 years-reasoning, logic, philosophy
“factory-schooling” leaves no rooms for self expression or creativity...They have to subject themselves to a fixed time-table and jail-like discipline. (Dance of the Bee P.102-103)

The new brain has two sides—left and right. These are the main stages of development the brain goes through during the first sixteen years. The completion of brain-development coincides with puberty, the maturation of the body. From then on, the brain can’t develop any further.

…the scene is changing now. Some people are trying out new ways of education. They are trying to create a lot of space of creativity. ‘Yes. In India Rabindranath Tagore; Mahatma Gandhi, Aurobindo Ghosh, and Krishnamurti have done a great deal of work in refining education.’

In the history of education in India J. Krishnamurti’s experiment rank in the highest category. Among other significant innovations made in teaching techniques, use of theatre techniques hold special significance in his approach to teaching and learning. His oft quoted concept of “3 Hs” (head, heart, and hand) was received very enthusiastically by the teaching community. His essential concern was the synthesis of Head (mental), Heart (emotional) and Hand (physical) faculties which when working together can lead to an ideal stage of learning achievements. By direct implication, this concept of “3 Hs” is a meaningful pointer to the relevance of theatre in our education system. Presently we have been overemphasizing head and hand, ignoring the heart’s participation in the process of learning. Heart denotes awakening student’s sensitivity and interest in the process of learning.

“When these three are in complete harmony—that is, the mind, the heart and the body, then the flowering comes naturally, easily and in excellence. This is our job as educators, our responsibility, and teaching is the greatest profession in life.” (Letters to the Schools, p.8)

The significance of theatre has very crucial dimension, therapeutic value of theatre, which has so far been under estimated. J.L. Moreno invented psycho dramatic techniques through his “Theatre of Spontaneity” founded in Vienna in 1922. The technique was used to cure
the psychic patients by asking them to act out their problems. The technique was given an artistic turn by his successor Ira Greenberg. She carved out a new dramatic genre called "Psychodrama" for the patients and also for stage. Psychodrama as a form of therapy involves the acting out by the "patient" of situations and conflicts that disturbed him.

He has the support of a group of "actors" who play other parts, or support the patient's own role by articulating unexpressed feelings for him. Patients and actors may change roles, or the patients become the audience for his drama. In any case, it is the task of the therapist to guide the performance through an act of imaginative "living through the experience, towards a cathartic emotional release and eventual understanding of the problem. Some of the "plays" presented have included themes of juvenile delinquency, marital difficulties, family feuds, and hypochondria. The director of the play (and these vary) begins by asking the troubled person to describe a typical situation involving the problem.

In the modern Indian educational scenario where very few of the educational institutions have teachers well grounded in the teaching methodology. Such institutions also invest on the capacity building of the teachers and have regular provisions for the Human Resource Development (HRD). In more than 80 percent of the schools the teachers are not unfortunately so thorough and receive almost no HRD input all through their life. As a result the teachers utterly fail in communicating their knowledge to the students. Even the teachers whose command over their subject is unquestionable become at times boring in their expressions.

It was probably after taking into consideration thousands of such examples of situation and individuals that Prof. Yashpal came to the conclusion that efficacy of teaching can be enhanced many times by using theatrical techniques in teaching almost all the subjects of study. The degree and intensity of theatricality in every subject may vary but theatricality will increase the efficacy of communication. The crux of the matter is: Theatrical devices in teaching enhance the aspiration level of the students. They sit in the class room fresh and motivated.
Martin Buler described the secret of being a good teacher in Between Man and Man. He says that what is needed is true dialogue in which both are equal partners (Martin Buler “Between Man and Man” -1947).

Moral education in the ancient world when Plato (The Republic) and Aristotle (The Poetics) handed the theme, meant the learning of something like good manners or good form, good doing and good making; it was dynamic concept, a concept of mobility, of wisdom, of courage... (Herbert Read “Education for Peace”-1950. p.49.)

Leo Tolstoy wrote in On Popular Education, “All of them, beginning with Plato and with Kant... They wish to guess what it is that man needs, and on theses more or less correctly divined needs, they build their new school”. (Leo Tolstoy, On Popular Education).
To change the trend, emphasis should be shifted from top to bottom. People should educate themselves in a way that will give them the competence and courage to be responsible for their own lives-individually as well as collectively, without direction or interference from above. In short, the pyramid has to be flattened. Mahatma Gandhi called it real Swaraj, self rule. (Devi Prasad “Education for Living Creativity and Peacefully”-2005. p.115)

Vinoba Bhave said that you should consider yourself truly educated only if doing service to others becomes an integral part of your personality. Or true education is that which liberates one from all bondages, physical as well as mental.

Gandhi wrote that real education must secure the student economic, social and spiritual freedom.

Shri Shankaracharya defined peoples’ education as in essence, “the elimination of man’s tendencies to evil”. It is also said that the true object of education is to give man “the unity of truth”. (Devi Prasad “Education for Living Creativity and Peacefully”-2005. p.125).

According to the Declaration of Human Rights, it is a violation of the right defined in Article 25, which is self explanatory. “Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special
care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social problem".

The present study is expected to present to the teaching community of this country the results of the experiments made by the researcher during the period of study. The study will present a comparative chart of the total results of a teaching supported by theatrical sense or input and the other feedback which is totally devoid of the theatrical sense or skills. The significance of the study also becomes focused when it brings to the fore the individuals and the institutions who have already pioneered the work in this direction. The study will bring out categorical details of the experiment made by the great educationists like Ravindranath Tagore in Shantiniketan, Gandhi in Gandhi Nagar Gujarat, Jiddu Krishnamurti in Rishi Valley School and Annie Besant School, Varanasi, or by Gijubhai Badhka in Bhavnagar, Gujarat.

And the social significance of the study is that it assimilates the theatre into education and thus synthesizes art and education together. Theatre has so far been looked upon as a discipline of hobby or just as a training meant for producing entertainers. The TIE movement has brought theatre into the mainstream disciplines. Now theatre is no more looked upon as “Art for Art’s Sake” but an art for life’s sake. The present study is one step forward in the journey towards making theatre something centrally useful for education and a tool of achieving spiritual perfections in an individual’s life.

**Scope of Study**

The scope of the present study is delimited to the experiments in theatre application to education in India. The study includes the comprehensive study of the philosophy and concept of the Theatre in Education Company of the National School of Drama, New Delhi and Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, New Delhi. Theatre plays an important role in the all round personality development of children. It develops physical, mental and emotional aspects of the children. It enhances Creativity, Innovation and Imagination.

As a therapy, it helps in problem solving and decision making of the children. It develops the power of expression, explore leadership as well as language skills. It develops
sensitivity, listening, speaking, thinking, analytical and critical power of expression of the children.

Catharsis Therapy\(^7\) - Change the life of those children who have been diverted from the main stream. To teach Social study subject through theatre techniques in classroom situation from class 6\(^{th}\) standard to 8\(^{th}\) standard (middle school) – as an educational method. It is also beneficial to maintain freshness, cooperation, discipline and enhance activeness of the class. It makes teaching-learning more interesting, exciting and effective.

Theatre contributes a lot to build a competent teacher. It plays an important role in bridging the gap between the teacher and the student and bringing them to a common platform to understand each other. Even parents of the children can be invited.

Teacher becomes more sensible, kind hearted and emotional from the children’s point of view. He develops patience to listen more to the others. He develops necessary qualities for communication. A teacher can develop his expression, voice, body movement and energy and active personality development through theatre techniques and by daily practicing. It can be a new alternative in educational methodology.

It's not clear that it is an integrated part of a curricular as a subject. Theatre can be a separate subject like other subjects. Theatre not as complete art form but few necessary elements should be in the course.

The researcher has conducted various experiments both as an actor-teacher in the TIE Co. of the National School of Drama, as a theatre teacher in Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, and as a researcher for the present project. The following experiments have been conducted all over the country and have been chosen for analysis in the present study:

Production of Shakespearean plays, Teaching poetry through theatre, Producing multilingual plays, Lessons in Hindi language, Mathematics, Chemistry through theatre, Science, Biology, Geography, History, English and Hindi literature, Staging plays based on short stories, Adaptation of fictions for stage, Application of psycho-dramatic situations
in dealing with the clinical cases.

Specific theatrical courses aiming at designing courses with theatre input were conducted at renowned educational institutions like DIET, Pritam Pura, Darya Ganj, Keshavpuram, Aditi Maha Vidyalaya, Lady Sri Ram College, Maharshi Valmiki College of Education, Delhi,

Theatre workshops for the purpose of present study were made not only with the educational institutions but also with other reputed institutes like Goa Kala Academy Panji, Gurukul of Arohan, Kathmandu, Nepal; Centre for Folk Performing Arts and Culture, H.N.B. Garhwal University, Sringar etc.

As an actor-teacher in the Theatre-in-Education Co. of NSD, the researcher has experienced the impact of theatre on the children in Warsaw, Poland, U.K. and other European countries. The same set of experiences was felt in several cities of India where the researcher participated in the play productions of the TIE Company. In these institutions the researcher undertook the task of teaching theatre prescribed in their syllabus and minutely observed the impact of theatrical input in the process of cognition. The teachers undergoing training were trained to use theatrical devices as teaching tools to effect meticulous communication of the contents taught to the students, the case studies have been dealt in detail in the chapter III: Comparative Study.

The present area of research has remained neglected so far and needs greater emphasis all over the country. The study is likely to encourage more studies in the field.

Methodology

Data Collection: Published Material

The data has been collected, in the first phase, from the internet, libraries of NSD, Central Library Delhi, Central Institute of Education (CIE) Delhi, Sahitya Kala Parishad, Sangeet Natak Academy, Sahitya Academy, Urdu Academy, Tulsi Sadan, British Council,
American Centre, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya (Delhi), Punjab University, Chandigarh and HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar, Imago⁶, the acting studio of Barry John has been the centre of maximum material collection. This collection was guided by Barry John himself. It was interspersed with frequent interactions with Barry John who is universally accepted as one of the doyens of modern theatre.

Theatre Experiments

In the second phase, data based on theatre productions oriented with TIE concept and philosophy was collected from the records on workshops conducted by the researcher all over the country. A substantial amount of data was compiled on the experience of teaching theatre and conducting workshops in Sardar Patel Vidyalaya. The Sardar Patel Vidyalaya has proved to be a laboratory for the researcher for preparing modules of teaching lesson.

Tools/Techniques used in theatre experiments:

It is qualitative and analytical

Questionnaires

For questionnaires see ANNEXURE - i

Interviews

Teachers teaching various kinds of subjects were interviewed in order to evaluate the difficulties in teaching without motivation, an idea which in TIE terminology is theatrics. The teachers mainly interviewed were Barry John, D.R.Purohit, Abdul Latif Khatana, Srish Dobhal, Manoj Madan. The teachers were selected on the basis of the milieu they came from, e.g. theatre-training school, Degree College of remote locality and University of an upcoming town. A random sampling was prepared for extracting unbiased answers
Focus Group Discussion (FGT)

In order to explore the dimensions of the national policy of India on the TIE the researcher has visited as a visiting faculty to various colleges, University of Delhi and participated in many seminars and debates on the topic taking place at national level.

FGT organized by NCERT.

Annexure - ii

The following are the main institutions visited and the seminars attended:

1. BTC (Basic Teaching Course) workshop with teacher trainees, (Uttarkashi, Uttarakhand) in February, 1991.

2. DIET (District Institute of Education and Training) sponsored trainings of students in theatre in Darya Ganj, Keshawpuram, Pitampura etc. were conducted as an expert.


4. LSR (Lady Sri Ram) College for Women in 2006-07 etc.

5. B. Ed. students of theatre for work experience in MVCOE (Maharishi Valmiki College of Education) in 2006 to 2008

The questionnaires were prepared from the teacher trainees of BTC, DIET, B El Ed, B Ed and Senior Teachers from different schools. There were 30 participants in each category which were again divided in 3 groups having 10 participants in each group. Their question based format of theatre experiences were collected through FGT process.
Workshops

TIE workshop was conducted with Repertory Artistes of Aarohan, Gurukul School of Theatre, Kathmandu, Nepal by researcher and also interacted with same artists regarding their Children Play-‘Tara Baje Lai-Lai’ in February, 2007. Sunil Pokharel, Artistic Director of the group contributed a lot in theatre for education especially introducing Kachahari Natak i.e. the theatre of the Brazilian theatre creator Augusto Boal’s remote message. His theatre is-a theatre of balance. He thinks there should be a balance of entertainment and education without weakening the message. We were acquainted with other artists from Bangladesh & their drama in education work. Group is in contact with the experts from Denmark, Norway & Sweden.

One month production oriented children workshop with Centre for Folk Performing Arts and Culture Srinagar, Uttarakhand with Collaboration of National School of Drama Delhi in May, 2008.

Observation

This method is used in the following activities:

Theatre workshops with participants age group 5 to 19 years. Theatre workshops with trainee teachers conducted by other theatre experts. Work process of various reputed children theatre groups' directors. Conventional as well as Modern classroom teaching method under the formal teaching process especially for middle class from class VI to VIII standard.

Review

A classroom situation teaching-learning work can be reviewed. At times written feedback can be taken from the participants.

Restriction

End Notes

1 actor-teacher: an artist who has teaching skill as well as acting potential.
2 J. Krishnamurti: one of the educationists of Rishi valley and Annie Besant School.
3 Psychodrama: invented by J.L. Moreno for therapeutic value of children
4 Catharsis: purgation of the soul by pity and fear.
5 Warsaw: venue of international theatre festival for children in Poland.
6 Imago: established by Barry John along with theatre and education concept
7 Aditi Maha Vidyalaya Delhi: trainee-teacher for B.El.Ed course.
8 Lady Sri Ram College Delhi: trainee-teacher for B.El.Ed course.
9 Maharshi Valmiki College of Education: trainee-teacher for B.Ed. course.
10 Tara Baje Lai-Lai: a Nepali children play conceived by a director from Norway.