

A Brief Introduction of Drama Applications in Educational, Social, and Therapeutic Domains in Taiwan

綜述應用戲劇在台灣教育、社會與治療領域的運作情況

Hsiao-hua Chang (張曉華)

National Taiwan University of Arts, Taiwan (ROC)

Abstract

In the beginning of mid-20th century, North American, Canadian, European, and Australian universities showed a growing interest in applying knowledge and techniques from theatrical production to the fields of education, social service, and psychotherapy. Acknowledging that some universities in Taiwan have joined this international movement, the author presents research methods and personal teaching experiences to encourage an increase in the application of methods from drama, and the author also feels that an increase in this application will benefit the people of Taiwan.

Keywords: applied drama, educational theatre, drama/theatre in education, drama/theatre in social action, drama therapy

摘要

自20世紀中葉起，在美國、加拿大、歐洲與澳洲的一些大學，將傳統劇場演出的製作知識與技巧，轉向為對教育、社會服務與心理治療方面的戲劇應用。作者有鑑於臺灣的一些大學亦加入了這個世界性趨勢的發展，擬透過研究方法與個人教學，試圖探索其運作的情況，期能激勵戲劇應用的提升，並因此而造福更多的人。

關鍵詞: 應用戲劇、教育性戲劇、戲劇/劇場教育、戲劇/劇場社會活動、戲劇治療

1. Why Apply Drama/Theatre?

In the middle of the last century, the studies of drama/theatre changed as an application in the field of education, social action, and therapy. It made many universities in the West establish their departments and research in the field of drama/theatre applications, and this trend still continues and is expanding now. Such well-known universities include University of Exeter, University of Warwick, and University of London in UK; New York University, Arizona State University, and University of Kansas in USA; University of Victoria in Canada; University of Melbourne and Griffith University in Australia, etc. Following this international trend and its development, some universities in Taiwan also have established a drama/theatre research and

education system, such as National Taiwan University of Arts (NTUA), Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA), National University of Tainan (NUTN), Chinese Culture University (CCU), etc.

Compared with traditional theatre education, the biggest difference in drama/theatre applications is the range of objectives. The purpose of traditional drama/theatre education is for the literature studies and performances of theatre arts that serve the audience's entertainment needs. The drama/theatre applications were not only involved in creations and productions for the theatre, but also largely in extensive contribution toward the domains of education, social services, and psychotherapy. The service objectives included classroom students, social welfare institutions, and clients with psychiatrically-oriented problems. Therefore, the scope of drama/theatre applications was much larger than for the traditional theatre arts. Thus, the functions benefited more people in their everyday lives.

The field of academic study of the drama/theatre applications is referred to as Applied Drama in the UK and Educational Theatre in the USA. In this article, the term "Drama Applications" includes the integrated concepts of Drama and Theatre and emphasizes the applications of drama/theatre approaches. In the universities, the basic study in acting, playwriting, directing, and stage crafts is required at each department of applied drama or educational theatre. Since the scope of the drama applications is so wide, the curriculum of applications of the three domains in education, social action, and therapy has mostly been arranged as selective courses or a part of a concentration study for the program.

Nowadays, the drama/theatre applications have already created the use of praxis in the schools' curricula, social activities, communities and hospitals in Taiwan. In this article, the author would like to utilize document research, teaching experience, and personal observation to introduce the approaches for these three domains, and encourages more students and researchers to join this international innovation and trend.

2. Drama Applications in the Education Domain

An overview of the world trend drama/theatre education, for example, shows that in UK the law of "Educational Reform Act" was approved by the Parliament in 1992. Drama was combined with English studies in the multi-disciplinary curriculum in schools. The development of Drama Applications would continue to be widely extended to general education.

In Taiwan, the course of drama study of performing arts was first enacted in the law of the Arts Education Act (藝術教育法, 1997, 總統公布法律令). According to the law, the Ministry of Education published the Public Education Grades 1–9 Curriculum Union Guideline (教育部, 1998), and Public Primary and Junior High Schools 1–9 Curriculum Guideline (教育部, 2003) in which the performing arts of drama/theatre have been combined with visual arts and music into the domain study of Arts and Humanities in

our primary and junior high schools. Subsequently, the Public High School Curriculum Guideline (教育部, 2008) pointed out that the performing arts curriculum included drama and dance based on a two-credit design in the course of Arts Living; then the National Basic Education Unit Guideline 12-Year (教育部, 2013) added the Creation of Performing for a two-credit elective course. Now, the learning and teaching of drama/theatre from K to 12 in public schools and the training for pre-teachers within Taiwan's education system have been practiced, developed, and supported for more than a decade in Taiwan.

In accordance with the teaching goals of the Curriculum Guidelines, teachers should adopt general art teaching methods. As a convener of the Guidelines committee, the author was invited to draft the Performing Arts curriculum outlines. From the viewpoints of academic theories and government documents, the explanations of the praxis of drama applications in Taiwan are discussed in the following subsections.

2.1. Creative Drama: the Course in Arts Study

Creative Drama is a way of teaching drama in the classroom. It is very popular in teaching the Arts and Humanities curricula in Taiwan. The study content of Creative Drama includes concentration, physical movement, relaxation, game, imagination, pantomime, improvisation, storytelling, and playmaking. McCaslin notes the values in Creative Drama as the following (McCaslin, 2006):

...an opportunity to develop the imagination, independent thinking, the group to develop its own ideas, cooperation, social awareness in a diverse society, a healthy release of emotion, better habits of speech, an experience with good literature, an introduction to the theatre arts, recreation, for the child with special needs and values for the teacher

Creative Drama also can motivate and extend learning in other content areas to promote values, attitudes, and personal growth. The teachers or leaders consider the evaluation for the study of Creative Drama on the personal and social development of the students to be of primary importance (Figure 1).

In Taiwan, publications on creative drama such as the author's *Creative Drama, the Theory and Practice for Teachers and Leaders* (1996), *Creative Drama 120 for Teaching Performing Arts* (2008), and Mei Chun Lin's *Creative Drama: the Study on Theory and Praxis*, etc., were appreciated by teachers. These publications show that the studies and teaching in creative drama are quite popular, and these courses have been very welcome from K to 12 in Taiwan.

2.2. Drama in Education: Applied Drama as the Teaching Method

Drama in Education (DIE) is a way to apply drama/theatre techniques into the teaching methods of the curriculum. In the relationships of interactive learning, the participants can fully develop their imagination, express ideas, gain aesthetic experiences, and improve living skills (張曉華, 2004). Actually, DIE is one of the dramatic teaching



FIGURE 1 | Creative drama in the classroom. The author demonstrated the teaching of imagination exercise for the Third grade class of Zi Qing primary school (Photo taken by the class teacher, 1990).

methods which can be flexibly applied by the teachers of these courses. Cecily O'Neill and Lambert (1982) defines DIE as:

Drama in education is a mode of learning. Through the pupils' active identification with imagined roles and situations in drama, they can learn to explore issues, events and relationships

Almost all the course in the schools can be integrated with the DIE process, especially languages, mathematics, and social and natural sciences. With drama conventions in the teaching approaches, the teachers can lead the class to make up a story and to explore the themes and problems thereby developing the students' self-confidence, expressiveness, and social awareness.

In Taiwan, academic DIE theses can be easily found on the website of National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertation, such as Hui-ling Xie's (謝慧齡) *Application of the Mantle of Expert Approach' of Drama in Education to the Life-Curriculum in the Elementary School* (2006) ; Meng-Chyu Wu's (吳夢秋) *The Application of DIE for Gender Equality Education: A Case Study of Fifth Grade Students in Jiji Elementary School as an Example* (2013), and some publications such as the author's publications of *Drama in Education: the theories and development* (2004) and *Drama in Education for Transdisciplinary Domain Instruction: the Lesson Plan and Praxis* (2015). Under the policy of Aesthetic

Education of the Ministry of Education from 2014, more and more teachers have applied DIE approaches into other teaching domains.

2.3. Theatre in Education: Applied Theatre as the Teaching of Subject

Theatre in Education (TIE), an audience-participation form of theatre, has been applied as an educational medium for students. TIE performances are engaged with, especially, designated projects in a learning process. Jackson (1993) explained TIE work as:

Essentially TIE seeks to harness the techniques and imaginative potency of theatre in the service of education. The aim is to provide an experience for children that will be intensely absorbing, challenging, even provocative, and an unrivaled stimulus for further work on the chosen subject in and out of school.

Mostly, a TIE product is composed, rehearsed, and performed by professional children's theatre companies for certain groups or classes for the purposes of appreciation of the performances, discussion of some issues, and understanding better ways to solve problems. It makes the subjects interesting for the students and induce them to think and feel more deeply about situations, events, and stories.

In Taiwan, there are some children's theatre companies that go to schools or theatres to perform TIE projects, such as Song Song Song Children's and Puppet Theatre (九歌兒童劇團) production of *The Magic Block*, and the Tainanese Company's (台南人劇團) *The Big House Build*. The author also assembled some students in the Department of Drama, NTUA, to form a volunteer troupe to perform the TIE production of *We Are Happy Learning Good Friends* into the schools in the 921 Earthquake (21 September 1999) area to soothe the children who were probably still in fear or depression after that natural calamity. These productions were highly appreciated by the teachers, children, and their parents.

In Taiwan, mostly, the TIE productions in school are conducted by teachers. They are composed of teachers' groups or troupes to perform educational subjects for students, such as Ying-gou Chang's (張應垢) *William's Doll* (2006) for the sixth grade class portraying the concepts of dimensions of gender stereotypes, and Ya-ru Liang's (梁雅茹) *Black White Village* (2013) for junior high students about the issue of ethnic groups interacting with new immigrants. The TIE project can be carried out in schools by most teachers of performing arts.

2.4. Youth Theatre: the Rehearsed Theatre by Students

Youth Theatre is a kind of non-professional theatre production. Under the guidance of teachers, the preparation and performance of group-devised or scripted plays are conducted by children or adolescents in school. FitzGerald (1990) defines Youth Theatre as:

In youth theatre the actors are young people (ranging from primary-school age to about twenty-five) working under the guidance of experienced adult tutors and directors. Frequently they write or improvise their own plays and

are responsible for many of the technical aspects of production. As well as performances, there are workshops designed to teach theatre skills and foster the participants' personal development.

The purpose of Youth Theatre is also a kind of arts education. The performance arrangement should follow the school regulations, and the audiences are almost always invited students, parents, and teachers. They join to appreciate, inspect, and learn from one another's work.

In Taiwan, from primary school to college, almost all schools have their own drama organizations. They invite parents and classmates to see their performances. Besides, many government institutions sponsor competitions for different educational purposes every year, such as the contest of original puppet theatre (from 2005 till now) sponsored by the National Taiwan Arts Education Center and the yearly short play production contest on the subject of sexual equality conducted by the educational bureaus in every county and city.

3. Drama Applications in the Social Action Domain

Drama/Theatre activities can lead groups to assemble and are always welcomed by the public. The influences and effects of drama/theatre can be seen from many aspects, such as box office income, educational policies, social welfare, and elections. Therefore, many drama/theatre activities and performances have been subsidized by the government, communities, or private institutions in Taiwan.

3.1. Children's Theatre: Performances for Recreation and Appreciation

Children's Theatre is a kind of professional theatre production for younger audiences whose age is from about 3 to 15 years old. Sometimes it is referred to as Theatre for Young People or Recreation Drama. It is defined by Children's Theatre Association of America as:

Theatre for young people "consists of the performance of largely predetermined theatrical art work by living actors in the presence of an audience of young people." (Rosenberg, Prendergast, 1983).

The value of Children's Theatre for young people is aesthetic and intellectual, including working with a good story, the creation of credible characters, good performance skills, creation of beautiful visual effects, challenging ideas, an opportunity to learn about other persons and different cultures, and the foundation for an appreciation of the theatre as an adult. Children's Theatre, no doubt, is a welcomed theatre production for all audiences.

In Taiwan, the first children's theatre troupe, Happy Children Company, was established in 1982. After that, private troupes such as Moki, Cup, Shoes, One Unit, etc., were formed (陳晞如, 2011). After 2000, many new companies were still being formed, such as As So, Puppet Bings, Six Arts, Corn Chechen, etc. Now, there are over 400 Children's Theatre companies registered under government administrations.

Some famous and active troupes, such as *If So*, *Paper Wind Mill*, *Song Song Song*, *Apple*, *Beans*, etc., present their new productions almost every year. They regularly perform in theatres and sometimes are invited by government institutions to perform in schools on a certain project or during the summer vacation for the children in arts season activities.

The most noticeable production was *Paper Wind Mill*'s '319 Rural Children's Art Project.' It started from 24th November 2006 and went to 319 rural areas in Taiwan. The project lasted for 5 years, with a cumulative total of 381 performances, more than 26,000 donations, and 790,000 spectators (國藝會線上雜誌十月號, 17 June 2015). In Taiwan, most parents like to accompany their children to the theatre, and the productions are always appreciated and satisfy both children and adults. Of course, owners of children's theatre troupes earn quite good profits from these productions.

3.2. Community Theatre: Promotion of the Total Communal Construction

Community Theatre is a kind of non-profit, social service and theatre production, and a medium for the interaction of people in the community. Through applied dramatic activities or extracurricular activities, they create their own theatre performances within a variety of community spaces. The aims of Community Theatre are: (i) providing theatrical entertainment, (ii) learning theatre techniques, (iii) improving the capability of self-expression, (iv) creating productions in the vernacular language, (v) understanding some local or particular issues or events, (vi) working together with the local culture, and (vii) communicating with audiences directly on the spot.

In Taiwan, there are some subsidies from the government, as Brockett (1992) mentions. "Typically, a community theatre employs a full-time director who supervises all productions. The more prosperous groups also have a full-time designer-technician, and some hire a director of theatre for children and youth as well." Mostly, under sponsorship of the government, Taiwan's community theatres hire a part-time professional director or professional troupe for the production. The other members working with productions are volunteers, and the spaces for performances can be any place in the community.

In Taiwan, the Council for Cultural Affairs (now upgraded as the Ministry of Culture) began to support local theatrical activities and fostered community theaters from 1995. The first national promotion project started in 2007 followed by the Community Theater Personnel Training Project in 2009. The Project built community theater demonstration sites in the counties, cultivating over 200 seed teachers (賴淑雅, 2011). This policy lets community theatres perform in different styles: Peking opera, Taiwanese folk opera, modern drama, etc. Even some Western theatrical methods were introduced into Taiwan such as *Theatre of the Oppressed*, *Playback Theatre*, etc., to reflect on the people's environmental concepts, politics, or public issues. Sometimes, they involve other local activities into the productions. Nowadays, it is not difficult to see these performances in the cities or rural areas in Taiwan (Figure 2).



FIGURE 2 | The community theatre performance of an election run by a local representative in Xin Zhong City, Taipei County (photo taken by Hsiao-hua Chang on November 2004).

3.3. Drama Applications for Public Services

Many government and private institutions, including the Children's Arts Season, library, museum, religious, cultural, and educational organizations, hold drama/theatre activities as a public service. The purposes of these services are to utilize more public resources, spread a certain idea, promote an institutional reputation, support government policies, etc. Here are the introductions to these public services.

3.3.1. The Children's Arts Season Activities

In Taiwan, many cities and counties arrange Arts Season activities for children every summer vacation. The first Arts Season was the Taipei Arts Festival sponsored by the Taipei City Government in 2000, and then Chiayi in 2001, Tainan in 2004, Taichung in 2010, and New Taipei City in 2012. These Arts Season activities invite some famous domestic and overseas Children's Theatre troupes combined with many other large fairy tale activities performed in the theatres or the squares of city halls. The budget for Arts Season activities from the New Taipei City government, for example, is about NT\$18,000,000 (US\$600,000) this year. From the subsidies of the government, the participants pay only about 50 dollars for a ticket to see a theatre production. It is most welcomed by parents and children.

3.3.2. Employee Training for Enterprises

Many enterprises' administrative departments arrange dramatic curriculums for training employees. In general, the content of enterprise training has four dimensions: knowledge, attitude, skill, and customer (彭勇文, 2011). Although the training methods can be a way of lecturing to instill knowledge into the employees, the curriculum comes to be dull and uninteresting. The drama curriculum lets the participants not only enjoy the process of learning knowledge, but also improves their capabilities in sympathy, imagination, expression, and dealing with a contingency or an emergency.

In Taiwan, for example, Beard Chang, a traditional Taiwanese food chain restaurant, is a good example of the training program of a company that has designed many customer correspondence courses for the staff every year. It has proved very efficient and acceptable by the employees.

Another example is teaching hospitals, such as National Taiwan University Hospital, Taipei Veterans General Hospital, etc., which need the Standardized Patients (SP) examination for physicians. In 2011, according to the regulation of national examinations for a physician's license, a qualified physician needs to pass the SP examination. The test involves an actual person to role-play patients in accordance with a script. Therefore, the hospitals designed the training curriculum for SP actors in order to let them obtain a license and become qualified SPs. Thus, SP training program can be applied for the use of medical teaching and testing performance. Because a large number of SPs are needed in hospitals, the Taiwan Standardized Patients Association was founded in 2010 (紀家琳, 2015). This proved the importance of drama applications in hospitals.

3.3.3. Dramatic Activities in Libraries

Libraries are not only places for audiences to read, but also cultural centers for performers to perform because libraries carry many resource materials. Dramatic activities are advantageous for developing intimate relationships between children and parents. Effectively used facilities of the library will lead many people to go there. Some libraries have their own spaces such as supermarkets, dining rooms, halls, basements, and even a theatre which do not disturb other readers. As Pereira (1976) says "A good program attracts participants. They start coming regularly. They discover and re-discover its resources." These dramatic activities certainly benefit both the individual and the institution.

In Taiwan, the author was invited to Dao Xiang Library in Taipei to work for teachers and successfully performed *Three Little Golden Pigs* in the theatre of the library in 1997. And, there are some experimental theatres in the libraries. The most notable one is a professional Black Box in Kaohsiung Public Library Sanmin Branch for some dramatic activities and performances, such as the TIE workshop on the subject of Children Safety in 2015. A library can be a welcome venue for a special project.

3.3.4. Dramatic Activities in Museums

Dramatic activities in museums make relics and art exhibitions no longer static. By applying dramatic activities exhibited in a museum, culture, art, antique objects, or other materials will achieve excellent educational goals and lead participants to a much clearer understanding of history. For example, the museum in Williamsburg, USA reproduced Henry Irving's play productions of the late 19th century when Irving's troupe toured there. The plays were regularly scheduled and the performances became a "highlight" activity at the museum.

In Taiwan, for the Shihshang Museum of Archaeology, New Taipei City, the community theatre performed government land expropriation events of the museum in its auditorium. At the National Museum of Taiwan History, Tainan City, the TIE production, *1895 Open the Town Gate* (許瑞芳, 2009), in 2009, introduced the historical

event of the Japanese army that invaded and occupied the city of Taipei. These productions let the audience be aware of the background of the museum and its vivid historical story.

3.3.5. Dramatic Activities in Religious Localities

In general, a religious locality has its own space for worship, sometimes along with a stage in it. Many religious activity planners arrange play productions for their followers. Sometimes, they invite teachers or leaders to work with dramatic workshops for the participants. Drama/theatre in religious places of worship has become a medium for social awareness and self-recognition.

In Taiwan, many dramatic activities are held in religious localities. Some followers even compose the professional troupes and perform their plays for the public such as Asia Eastern, Hei Men Shan Company, etc. Drama/theatre is quite important for applications in spreading their religious doctrines.

4. Applications for Drama Therapy

Drama Therapy engages drama therapeutic techniques to deal with personal psychological problems. The British Association of Drama Therapists (1979) defined Drama Therapy as:

Drama Therapy is a means of helping to understand and alleviate social and psychological problems, mental illness and handicap; and of facilitating symbolic expression, through which man may get in touch with himself both as individual and group, through creative structures involving vocal and physical communication.

Drama Therapy is based upon the complete structure of the Drama and Theatre Arts process. It places the clients into the activities through the relationship between individual and group interaction, spontaneously exploring the experiences of life in order to release emotions, build awareness, and resolve mental diseases or disorders. The purposes of Drama Therapy are to promote personal growth, achieve physical and mental health, develop personal potential, and build a positive outlook on life. Therefore, Drama Therapy can work not only with clients with psychological problems, but also with normal persons who need to build self-confidence and a sense of competence.

In order to let more people know about the international trend of Drama Therapy, some important pioneers of the field have been invited to Taiwan. The first expert was Robert Landy in 1995 (Landy, 2001). He conducted lectures, activities, rehearsals, and therapeutic theatre productions of ‘Ji-gon Asked for Rehabilitation’ (Figure 3). The reason he selected Chinese Daoist monk, Ji-gon, as a protagonist for the role of the productions was:

He is not only a healer, but also a trickster, one who is independent and carefree. His favorite targets are the affluent and well-heeled. To many class and poor people, he becomes a Robin Hood figure, who takes from those who have to give to those who have not (Landy 1997).



FIGURE 3 | The theatre performance of Drama Therapy: ‘Ji-gon Asked for Rehabilitation’ directed by Robert Landy in Taiwan, 29–30 December 1995 in the theatre of National Taiwan Performing Arts School (photo by Hsiao-hua Chang).

Since the final productions connected with Chinese culture, many of the audiences were easily accepted the play and deeply touched by the performances.

The other pioneers invited to Taiwan were Renée Emunah for workshop in 2010 and Sue Jennings in 2014 for a conference and lectures. These international communications have greatly improved the research and teaching for the scholars and students in the field of Drama Therapy.

4.1. The Sessions and Methods of Drama Therapy

Drama Therapy programs in general encompass at least the required warm-up, action, and closure in three sessions. Warm-up means to assist the client or therapy group to reach the circumstance of being suitable for the treatment and emotional process of dramatic events. In the action session, the therapist is more like a director on the dramatic structure, guiding the group spontaneously using language, body movements, props, or other media for performances. Mostly the client will be encouraged or guided to imagine through a role play in the performance in order to convey the feeling of the real world and his inner psychological thoughts. In the closure session, the therapist guides the de-role activities to cool down the performance mood and let the client return to his/her true self sharing memories, opinion analysis, feelings, and discussions with the group.

The scheme of drama therapeutic activities should be considered and adjusted to fit the needs of the treatment, creative potential, and the promotion and development of individuals. Many drama therapeutic methods such as Role Drama, Psychodrama, Metaphor, Game, Ritual, Theatre Game, Body Movement, Dramatic Projective, etc., can be used in the process of the sessions. The therapist should be able to cope with the adjustment proceedings and methods in a timely manner, as the situation in a given structure can use skills proficiency, preferences, and judgments.

4.2. The Healing Applications of Drama Therapy

Drama Therapy can be applied in medical institutions, schools, communities, families, and for individuals. It can be used very extensively in Taiwan, hereby described in the following sub-subsections.

4.2.1. In Hospitals and Clinics

Drama Therapy in hospitals and clinics for psychological cure is conducted by a licensed therapist to host or cooperate with a medical group. Drama therapists can handle the emotionally disturbed, conduct disorders, mental handicaps, schizophrenic disorders, abused persons, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other symptoms.

In private clinics, drama therapists are handling a number of issues, mostly as a basis for general political, social, medical, and psychological events relating to diagnosis. These include lonely, elderly persons; the mentally retarded; the orthopedically disabled; substance abusers; sex abusers; etc. (Landy 1994).

Until now, a suitable system and a business for therapists still have not been established in Taiwan. There is no license legally issued for Drama Therapists. Many licensed drama therapists who are from abroad, such as from UK or USA, can work only under the supervision of the hospitals, such as Adventist Hospital in Taipei, Wizcare Hospital in Taichung, etc. Therefore, we still need to step up the legislative action for these therapists.

4.2.2. In Schools

Drama Therapy is mainly used in schools for students with disabilities in special cases. Drama Therapy in schools is often used to assist those students with physical disabilities caused by emotional imbalance, mental retardation, or other learning difficulties. For mainstream education, Drama Therapy techniques can be applied in guidance and counseling from the tutor's work to enhance the students' understanding of learning and help them solve their problems in life.

For the needs of the school in Taiwan, Drama Therapy has become a required training course of two to four credits for pre-teachers. Many teachers' colleges in universities such as NTU, NTU A, TNUA, NUTN, and PCCU employ qualified drama therapists to teach Drama Therapy courses.

Besides, courses of Drama Therapy are also part of a general curriculum in some colleges and universities, such as Fu Jen Catholic University, Tunghai University, The National College of Performing Arts, Fu Hsing Kung College, Taiwan Theological College, etc.

4.3. Community Therapeutic Activities

The dramatic activities in everyday life can be regarded as Drama Therapy. As Jones (1996) said, “The drama is the therapy.” Landy (1982) said that children playing with dolls, adolescents imitating their favorite movie stars, and adults “rehearsing” their behavior before job interviews, can be seen as therapeutic. Drama Therapy no doubt can play a therapeutic function in the life of a community. Many Drama Therapy activities are sponsored by the government or private institutions regularly in Taiwan.

With support from the Culture or Social Welfare Bureau, there are many activities for Drama Therapy brought into different nursing homes and elderly rest-homes. For example, as the author experienced in 2010, a Drama Therapy program was brought into Taipei County (now New Taipei City) for disabled children in the nursing home named Pai Ai-Hsin Home for Persons with Disabilities, as well as in elderly rest-homes and the Taipei County Senior Citizens Home for Compassion in Taipei County. Moreover, in 2012 and 2013, the author was invited by the Social Welfare Bureau of Taoyuan City to work with the older people with dementia in Yu Jian and Yi Ci the Homes for the Aged. It is believed that such kinds of activities occur quite often here in Taiwan.

Drama Therapy integrates drama, religious rituals, psychology, history, sociology, pedagogy, and medical sciences, as well as for psychotherapy and counseling services purposes. The achievements in Drama Therapy have been just the same as those Jennings (1998) mentioned:

Dramatherapy is a therapy of optimism; it is a therapy of now and the future; it is able to assist people to move on, rather than perpetually delve into an unhelpful past.

Truly, in Taiwan from these case studies, we can earn benefits from drama applications which enable all the participants to realize a sense of competence to face real life.

5. Conclusion

From the above introductions to the theories of drama applications and the author’s survey and experiences in Taiwan, some conclusions are drawn as follows:

5.1. Drama Application is a Worldwide Trend

Drama is more widely used in education, social services, and psychological treatment than before, and the objectives of drama services extend to students in the classroom, the members of various groups, and organizations in the community, as well as patients with psychological problems or social difficulties. From the point of view of founding departments in the world’s universities and academic research, Taiwan is also following this global trend of the times in the extension and development of drama applications.

5.2. Drama Application in Education is a Learning guide for both Personality and Knowledge

From the view of drama education for schools, drama is aimed at guiding students into spontaneous willingness to learn, to think creatively, and to engage in practical actions.

In Taiwan, drama/theater arts education is part of a general education in school. The teaching activities have to be vivid, lively, interesting, and in accordance with daily life and artistic disciplines. Therefore, school teachers should adopt general art teaching methods, as in Creative Drama, DIE, TIE, etc., rather than adopt artistic teaching methods in professional arts education.

5.3. Drama Application in Society Enhances Cultural and Service Activities

Drama/theatre is a very effective medium for social services in many aspects. In Community Theater, through the creation of performances, people can learn culture and vernacular languages in their community performances. Drama/theatre serves different communities to meet their needs. Drama/theatre used in business can promote its growth not only in different social education functions, but also in providing solutions to difficult problems and in enhancing positive education and fellowship opportunities. Furthermore, in Taiwan, many government institutions continually make budget plans and arrange drama/theatre activities for public services yearly. Drama application will be developed more and more active in the near future.

5.4. Drama Application in Therapy can Mitigate Psychological Difficulties

Drama Therapy is a natural systematic form of drama which combines human history, religious ritual, and modern psychology, sociology, pedagogy, and medical sciences, as with the services of psychotherapy and counseling. Taiwan has many scholars and professional therapists, and new theories and methods are still constantly being developed from them, produced in their case work and studies. Now it still needs more people to make more effort to develop effective applications in promoting the techniques of Drama Therapy and to establish a rule or law for drama therapists in Taiwan.

About the author

Hsiao-hua Chang (張曉華), Professor of Department of Drama National Taiwan University of Arts, New Taipei City, Taiwan (ROC). e-mail: chang.hh@msa.hinet.net

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