

Creative Drama in Design Education within the context of Theatre, Body and Space

Hare Kılıçaslan¹

¹(Department of Architecture, Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey)

ABSTRACT: *The study aims to determine the significance of theatre and creative drama as a field of art for architecture discipline in the context of mankind and spatial experiences. The relationship between architecture and other branches of art is examined through the partnership of the phenomena; body and space. The study dwells on the relationship between theatre and creative drama, considered as a performing art, and design education that benefits from several branches of art. The knowledge suggesting that creative drama can be used as a teaching method in design education is exemplified by means of applications that are conducted within 3 different lectures at the departments of Architecture, Interior Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning. It is believed that utilizing creative drama method which enables students to take part in the learning process corporeally, mentally and emotionally will provide an alternative point of view for design education.*

Keywords: *Body, Creative Drama, Design Education, Space, Theatre*

I. Introduction

Art is in general manner defined as an action through which people influentially and originally express their emotions and ideas by using specific means and methods such as line, color, form, sound, speech, rhythm in accordance with a purpose and in a certain sense of beauty [1]. The action is also a process in which man generates an aesthetic product by expressing himself through the aforesaid means. The concepts of human and art are the expression of a unity as old as human history itself. Even when they relied on survival instinct alone and their consciousness was at such a level as to meet their motivational requirements, people were engaged in art [2].

According to Söylemez [3], man is, by his nature, one of the most significant aspects and elements of communal life. Art is a part of being a man and an expression of human existence. Art is classified into 5 categories by San [4]. These are as follows;

1. Surface and volumetric arts: Paintings, figures, drawings, diagram, prints, posters, photographs, sculpture, ceramics, batik, knitting, weaving, embroidering...etc.
2. Linguistic arts: Poetry, all literary forms including poem, novel, short stories, novellas, essay...etc. Searches and studies on folk tales, folk songs, theater scripts, proverbs...etc.
3. Vocal arts: Music; Information of all kinds of music, and the effort of making music depending on that kind
4. Motion arts: Whole list of dance styles (folklore, ballet, modern dance and ballet, rhythmic gymnastics, ice-skating...etc.
5. Performing arts: All kinds of dramatic representation, improvisation...etc. Puppet shows and movies.

The major means for man to express himself is his body. Performing arts are can be defined as art forms containing intrinsically conduction and communication, in which human bodies get into the act, when viewed from this aspect, it can be said that theatre and creative drama are art branches in which human body has the strongest integration with performing arts.

Primary branches in which people carry out action-reaction exchange between each other as explicitly as possible and without an exterior means are play and theatre [5]. Theatre as a branch of art in which reality is exhibited through human body and space presents a story that belongs to another space and time in a dramatic atmosphere. In theatres, plays are staged through theatre players' bodies within the context of mental and physical interactions [6]. In the process of creative drama, individuals similarly appear together with their knowledge, experiences, memories and all senses. Thus, they share moment and space with group members and experience through their bodies

Body that is a must for space is one of the most significant components for theatre and drama. Merleau-Ponty says "existence is spatial". Self-expression has always been done through spaces. Man, a corporeal being, occupies a place and moves in space. As for the relation of human body with space, space is a means for the purpose of bodily movement [6]. Architectural work of art interacts with observer's eyes while experience represents producer's bodily senses. When considered from this point of view, architecture can be defined as a direct presentation from architect's body to individual's body who encounters architectural work of art [7].

Architecture is a functional art that sets bounds to spaces for us to live in, surrounds our lives, and creates the world order [8]. The art of architecture is one of the visual arts such as drawing, sculpture, graphic arts, industrial design, applied arts, cinema, photography, fashion design [9]. Bruno Zevi defines architecture as spatial doctrine and practice that differs from other art forms since it considers the movements of human body and perceivers as a function and an experience [10]. Actual spatial experience is gained by means of body depending on the positions held according to senses, movements and the space [11].

According to Tuan [12], human body has permanent and sophisticated dynamism so as to perceive the world and receive required external stimulants. Therefore the body is the first means to experience the space. Our relation with architecture reverses our relation with visual arts. We get involved in work corporeally rather than look at from outside [13]. Henri Bergson, an author, says "Objects which surround my body reflect its possible action upon them". What makes architecture differ from other art forms is this opportunity of action.

Bodily reactions are an inseparable part of architecture experience [7]. Hegel suggests that art began with architecture and that architecture is a figurative art [14]. According to Hegel, architecture is autonomous and includes all other forms like music, fine arts and theater performance [15].

II. Theatre And Creative Drama

One of the most significant common aspects of theatre and creative drama is that both are performing art forms. According to Altunbay [16], a written or designed artwork that is represented by players and watched by audience signifies play. Architecture is one of the most remarkable visual arts with its distinctive presentation and expression as well as taking advantages of several art forms such as music, literature and painting.

Theatre is defined as a dramatic presentation of a work -previously written or envisaged in a script form by an author- in a certain place, in a certain period and by certain performers. Basics for art of theater are play, performer, stage and audience [17].

Creative drama is impersonation or representation of an experience, an event, an idea, sometimes an abstract concept or behavior by performers utilizing theatre or drama techniques such as improvisation, role playing ...etc. within a group action through rearranging old cognitive patterns in a play-style process in which observations, experiences, emotions and livings are reviewed [18].

When it is considered that drama and theatre aim to inform people of each other and what is going on around them and make them think about their own lives;

Drama is defined as a work, "experiment", carried out for those who actively get involved in case, Theatre is defined as a work, "experiment sharing", carried out in order to introduce "experiment" to people and concordantly enable to establish a communication with them [19].

Creative drama that has a plenty of characteristics in common with theatre is a different discipline, method, and aesthetic educational field in many aspects in spite of utilizing theatre techniques and taking advantages of theatre. In creative drama, an individual is free and authentic as far as possible in consideration of his creativity, inwardness, previous livings and knowledge. An individual can create and experience types, roles and personalities while playing role just as it is in theatre. However, creative drama activities are neither theatre nor acting. As it is in the process of staging a theater play, *dramatis personae* share a special atmosphere and pleasure that is felt through dramatic processes. The phenomenon of drama is not based on a written script and not staged. It is out of the question that plays staged at a theatre are required to be based on players' own lives. However, performance in creative drama processes is directly dependent on performers' lives [20, 21]. According to San [4], in drama practices, the aim is not to perform a theatre work because what is requested is not entertaining, giving message, shaking up or becoming free from passions. San also says that entertaining, enlightenment, catharsis or sublimate as well as attainment of pedagogical objectives can be provided through drama activities.

It is possible to say that creative drama is an art education field with regard to containing in itself activities concerning all branches of art. Creative drama provides an individual with opportunities of creativity and utilization of senses and therefore can be defined as an art form with this aspect [22]. It has been mentioned that creative drama process is considered as a whole consisting of several complementary elements, entity relationship of which sets the tone. Creative drama is defined as a different art form possessing its own items, the most significant ones of which are group leader/teacher, drama group and space [21]. Theme, technique and materials are quite important for the process of drama as well.

In configuring the process of creative drama, responses to such questions as "what, why, when, how, where and who" set out the phases that must be followed. In order to reach desired acquirements and make these acquirements internalized by individuals through creative drama studies, it is required that activities which are conducted during the process support and complement each other, and that certain phases must be monitored. 3 critical phases relating to the regulation of creative drama event or course are "warm-up/preparation", "impersonation", and "evaluation-discussion" [21, 23 and 18]. In these phases, several techniques that are based on theater can be used. The techniques are helpful to convey and enhance the subjects that are discussed, and also settle conflicts and matters that must be solved.

III. Creative Drama Method In Design Education

In all disciplines containing design in itself, among the terms frequently mentioned are perception, creativity, aesthetic and originality. Design education is a process which aims to provide students with these aforesaid concepts through skill-based activities in which art and visual qualities are at the forefront. When its distinctive features are considered, it is obvious that creative drama as a teaching method will contribute to design education process.

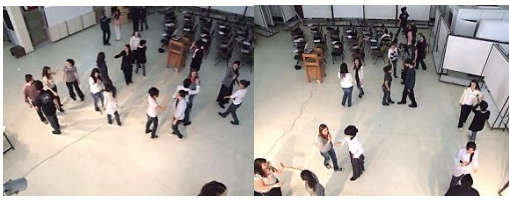

Creative drama approaches subjects through practicing, interpreting and learning by experience instead of learn-by-rote teaching techniques. It seems that the content of design education, as it stands, can be supported through this method. Creative drama practices enable students to personally interact with the space and so learn theoretical information by means of their own experiences. As well as contributing to an individual's mental and social abilities, it enables to take a different approach to environment and events by improving creative thinking. Through creative drama method, individuals recognize themselves and others around and enhance their participation and ability to cooperate with the group.

Creative drama, a means of both teaching method and discipline and art education is a contributor that provides narrative creativity, socialization, awareness. New approaches in education regard drama as significant since it processes phases of the problem solving in the teacher-student relationship and allows for critical thinking [24].

It is aimed to provide individuals to perceive their environment and world considering within the context of relationship between form and place through design education. Today, it is possible to take advantages of all art branches (drawing, sculpture, architecture, visual communication, photography, cinema, music, dance, theatre, literature...etc.) in design education process. The aforesaid process allows individuals to learn by experience providing with the opportunity to recognize, understand and evaluate a given artwork. Design education that shapes the process of how individuals perceive and interpret their surroundings is associated with their expression styles and shows an approach to make the styles unique and aesthetic. Due to its aspect of improving cognitive, emotional, kinesthetic and social competences, it can be said that creative drama is a teaching method required to take place in design education process.

At this juncture, it would be fitting to explain the availability of creative drama method in design education through a study that has been conducted within three different lectures. In this study, the aim is to determine the effect of using creative drama as a teaching method in design education on students' academic achievements. The practices have been conducted in the lectures "Environment-Behavior Knowledge" at the department of Architecture, "Principles and Techniques of Urban Design" at the department of Urban and Regional Planning, "History of Furniture" at the department of Interior Architecture, Karadeniz Technical University. In the process of creative drama prepared and applied by the researcher, various warm-up/preparation works, games, improvisations and evaluation activities that would enable the subjects to be lectured efficiently are included. The applied activities are presented in table 1, 2 and 3 by way of linking with subject headings.

Table 1. Creative drama activities of "Environment-Behavior Knowledge"

I. Warm-up/Preparation	Mirror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sovereinspace ● Confinedspace 	
	Overcoming-obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personalspace ● privacy 	








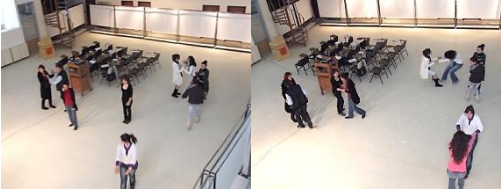




I. Warm-up/Preparation	The work of writing verse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy 	
	Parasite	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriation • Personal space • Sovereign space 	
II. Impersonation	Group improvisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of privacy 	
	Couple improvisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privacy • Personal space • Sovereign space • Appropriation 	
III. Evaluation-Discussion	Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarisation of subject headings 	



Table 2. Creative drama activities of “Principles and Techniques of Urban Design”

I. Warm-up/Preparation	Walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road • Street • Square 	
	Narrow streets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direction • Orientation • Readability 	

II. Impersonation	Group improvisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban design policies 	
III. Evaluation-Discussion	Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarisation of subject headings 	

Table 3. Creative drama activities of “History of Furniture”

I. Warm-up/Preparation	People and chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting elements 	
	Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture-space relationship 	
	Stand-sit-bend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture-user relationship 	
	Exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular designers of the period 	
	Storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular furniture of the period 	

II. Impersonation	Couple improvisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular designers of the period 	
III. Evaluation-Discussion	Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarisation of subject headings 	

In consequence of the study, it is concluded that creative drama is more efficient in enhancing students' academic achievement when compared to conventional teaching method. As is also understood from the visuals, the students took place actively in the lecture period owing to creative drama method. The students who kept in touch with each other by way of small or huge group activities had the opportunity to utilize their bodies and the place in many ways during the practices.

IV. Conclusion

Creative drama method helped the students to perceive both the physical places in which they were and the places they visualized during the activities through utilizing their bodies and sense organs efficiently.

Creative drama is a method that enables students to attend a lesson actively. Games played, improvisations performed and evaluations during the practice enable students to attend the lesson actively and therefore think, share and create new ideas together with other group members. Statement forms that are fundamentally based on creativity and different from each other result in various artistic products. For this reason, it can be said that education through creative drama method occupies an important place in the design and art-oriented departments [22].

Design education is an education model based on perception and interpretation of what is perceived. Therefore it is believed that students can be provided with the ability of audio-visual-bodily expression through an efficient design education. Creative drama method in which body, emotion, thought and imagination take an active role will contribute to students who take design education.

Consequently, activities and experiences are inseparable parts of the interaction which individuals form with place when architecture is considered as a discipline that uses individuals and place as base because individuals act to the extent that spatial organization offers them. Body, an existence, which individually experiences and creates a space in architecture, is the most powerful expression means in theatre and creative drama as well. Accordingly it is impossible to think of any moments or spaces without the existence of body in the art of architecture just as is in theatre.

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