MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, RESEARCH, YOUTH AND SPORT

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Applied Drama and Theatre – Drama Techniques in Teaching English for Specific Purposes

PhD Thesis (Extract)

Coordinator:

University Professor Dr. BÉRES ANDRÁS

PhD Candidate:

KOVÁCS GABRIELLA

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1. Introduction

1.1. Justification of the research topic

I faced the much debated problem of our education system – that it does not prepare people for life and their future profession – when I started my career as a teacher, fifteen years ago. We accumulate theoretical knowledge along our school years and university studies, which we do not know how to use in practice. This I could feel in my own insecurity and perplexity as a novice teacher, and also in the frequently encountered lack of motivation and interest of my students. As a student I often used to ask, and then as a teacher I often faced the following questions: "Why do we have to learn all these?", "What is the purpose of learning such things?", "What are we going to use this for?". As a teacher I had two possibilities: to accept the situation as it is or try to find alternative methods and solutions which might turn the teaching-learning process into a more interesting and fruitful activity.

I encountered drama techniques first while working as an instructor and program coordinator for Outward Bound Romania, but at this stage I was not aware that the roots of the games and activities which we used there for personality development, team building and also language teaching can be traced back to the domain of theatre and drama.

Encouraged by the success of these games I became more and more interested in using activities like role plays and simulations in language teaching as well, because the main goal of teaching a foreign language to children or adults should be to enable them to "play" better the "role" of themselves before a social audience.

When I started to get acquainted with the literature about drama techniques in language teaching it became clear that the source of the ideas, methods and techniques of this field is the theatre. My goal in this research is to unfold and follow the path which leads from theatre and drama to language teaching, because I realised that there has been no attempt so far to reveal the complex interdisciplinary connections and relations which have made it possible to use some of the experience and methods accumulated in the field of actor training and applied drama and theatre in language teaching.

1.2. The research questions

In this research we try to find answers to questions referring to two main problem areas.

The first refers to the connections leading from theatre and drama to language teaching. Why have some actor training techniques become so popular and adaptable in the domains of education, personality development, or psychotherapy? Why is the domain of theatre the source to which language teachers – and teachers of many other subjects – turn so often for new ideas and methods? Which are those interdisciplinary connections among the domains of theatre, pedagogy, psychology, sociology and philosophy, which make such influences possible?

The second problem area refers to the presence and use of drama techniques in language teaching. The positive effects and usefulness of such activities in language teaching have already been proved and described. Most language teachers are convinced that role-plays and drama techniques can help students become more interested and involved in classroom activities, and integrate the newly acquired knowledge through actively seeking new and creative solutions, addressing different problems, exploring alternatives. But are these techniques equally effective and adaptable in teaching English for specific purposes as well, where the students are mainly adults, not children? Would they find role plays and simulations interesting and motivating as well? Would these activities be considered helpful in preparing them for specific communicative situations and various roles that they can encounter in their profession? Do they think that such activities might help them to improve their communication skills in the target language?

1.3.   Hypotheses

•   We assume that the development of methods and techniques in actor training in the 20th century – due to the fact that they accentuate and concentrate on the development of the whole personality, communicative competence and team building – have had a great influence upon the development of the methods and activity types of applied drama and theatre.

•   The assumption that drama in education and theatre in education create a bridge between the fields of applied drama and theatre and education can be justified by theories regarding personality development, game-theories, experiential learning, the *flow*-theory, constructivist pedagogy and Erving Goffman`s theory.

•   We assume that drama techniques have been present for a long time in language teaching because they are regarded as an effective alternative tool in developing communicative competence in the target language and their ability to perform certain roles in the possible "scenes" of everyday life or their future professions. We presume that adult

learners who study English for specific purposes are aware of the fact that role plays and simulations help them prepare for their future profession and they like these activities and find them useful.

1.4. The interdisciplinarity of the research

The topic of this thesis is the effects of the theatre and actor training upon the larger domain of pedagogy. Therefore it requires an interdisciplinary approach which transcends the boundaries of theatre.

In our search to find the connections and relations that link actor training and applied drama and theatre to language teaching, we appealed to several disciplines. Besides the domain of theatre we referred to theories from the domains of pedagogy, psychology, sociology, philosophy and linguistics. We discussed the interdisciplinary character of language teaching and its relationship with theatre art.

2. Theatre and pedagogy – acting pedagogy and personality development

The influence of theatre upon pedagogy is remarkably manifold and diversified. Different manifestations of this influence can be traced in almost any level or area of education. In the first part of our research we have tried to reveal what new theatrical trends and experimentations and actor training techniques – mainly from the 20th and the first decade of the 21st century - led to the influence of this art form upon pedagogy.

The theatre of the 20th century tried to renew its community-building power, which in the history of humanity has been present since the ancient rites, ritual games and religious ceremonies, where the audience was not passive, but actively involved in the process. Several theatre theorists and practitioners realize and state that the "traditional theatre", which started to seem more and more fossilized and unnatural, should be replaced by new forms, ideas. Lehmann thinks that the theatre has to become a place for real gatherings and heavy bodies and objects, where everyday life and aesthetically organized life intersect, in order to be able to find and keep its place in the world of advanced media and technology. The action takes place "here and now", the time spent in the theatre is a time which the actors and the audience spend together (Lehmann, 2009, 10). When Brook spoke about the *immediate theatre* proposed by him, he emphasized an important characteristic of the theatre – that it manifests itself in the present. The uniqueness of its function resides in its possibility to offer such a common experience, which cannot be achieved or found in films or on the scenes of everyday life – at home, on the street, at the psychologist or among friends (Brook, 2008, 111-112).

The new tendencies in theatre have had a great impact upon the development of methods used in acting pedagogy. According to Balme, this is such a field in theatre arts, where a variety of research areas intersect. He refers to general theories of the theatre, theories of acting and acting pedagogy itself as part of an attempt to a theatre reform. The first actor training manuals did not appear in Europe before the eighteenth century and formal, institutionalized actor training – schools and workshops - began only in the twentieth century. Before that the profession was learned "on the job" mostly in informal apprentice systems. "From the point of view of theatre studies, acting pedagogy is an important and potentially very fruitful area of research. Despite the rise of workshops and other non-formalized instruction contexts, acting schools are still the most important point of entry into the profession. Their methods and philosophies of instruction seem to be increasingly eclectic, a mixture of tradition and individual preferences" (Balme, 2008, 27).

Kaposi emphasizes that acting pedagogy cannot be and is not worth being studied separately. It has to be correlated with all those social, cultural, educational and economic processes that define our present (Kaposi, 2009, 30). Actor training became an essential condition of theatre renewal. In Europe and America Stanislavski is considered to be the starter of the great changes. His influence can be detected in some form in the ideas and practices of almost all the significant actor trainers. The influences (regarding ideas, principles and the use and innovation of certain activities) which the different outstanding personalities of the western world had upon each other – who often emerged from each other's workshop or school - can be observed along the development of actor training.

Regarding the development of acting pedagogy in the 20th century, Balme highlights three main theoretical tendencies concerning the alteration in the relationship between actor and role. These are Stanislavsky's theory, based on *involvement*, Brecht and Meyerhold's *detachment* and Grotowsky's *self-renuntiation* (Balme, 2008, 22). Several variations of these three main tendencies emerged, and most of the different workshops which appeared all over Europe and America can be regarded as their further developed variations.

Along the 20th century there were more and more attempts which favoured the actor's creativity in the embodiment of the characters. In the actor training of theatres that concentrate on spontaneous community-building, personality-development plays an important role. Stress, discomfort or anxiety, the inhibitions and complexes caused by forced competitive spirit and the pressure to measure up to certain expectations can cause heavy problems not only to actors, but also to other people trying to get on in other domains and professions. This is one of the reasons why it became possible to use the methods and

techniques of personality development from the domain of actor training in other fields of education as well. Balme also stresses that "acting pedagogy can also be found in non-professional contexts, especially in the area of applied theatre, where the aim is less to achieve professional-level virtuosity than to foster integrative and consciousness-widening skills. In this context acting can be seen as an empowering and participatory activity, which emphasizes interpersonal interaction. Acting's combination of physicality and cognitive abilities, especially role-playing, make it a crucial element of many kinds of group-building activities" (Balme, 2008, 27-28).

In this part of the thesis we analysed the work of eighteen actor training schools and workshops and the principles and ideas of the personalities who have played a decisive role in the development of these methods and techniques, and by doing so they had a great influence upon other domains of pedagogy concerned with personality development. Starting from the assumption that modern actor training is based on personality development, we try to show that according to these theatre-makers certain skills and qualities can and have to be developed in actors in order to prepare them for a convincing, lively and genuine performance on stage.

If we try to sum up our briefly our analysis, it can be concluded that regarding the skills and qualities which should be developed in actors, Constantin Stanislavsky emphasized the importance of creativity, imagination, communication, affective cognition, emotional memory, concentration, and relaxation; in Vsevolod Meyerhold's biomechanical system physical control, rhythmic awareness, responsiveness to the partners and the audience, teamwork are essential; Jacques Coupeau concentrated on simplicity, spontaneity, sincerity, naturalness, playfulness and overcoming different inhibitions. Mihail Chekhov stresses the importance of imagination, concentration, "higher ego", the creation of atmospheres, radiation, style and the "four brothers": feelings of ease, feelings of the whole, of form and of beauty. Bertolt Brecht favoured observation, recognition, curiosity, teamwork and interactivity, empathy and critical attitude. Joan Littlewood pointed out the relevance of the development of teamwork, communication, flexibility, imagination, openness, trust and the overcoming of inhibitions. Lee Strasberg – similarly to Stanislavsky - emphasized the importance of relaxation, concentration, emotional memory and awareness, and the overcoming of inhibitions. Stella Adler highlights the significance of imagination (as actors relate to the given circumstances of the play), fantasy, creativity, sympathy and physical action. In Jerzy Grotowski's work physical awareness, physical action, communication and the development of creativity are the most important. Neva Boyd and Viola Spolin

emphasized the importance of the development of imagination, playfulness, spontaneity, creativity, problem-solving, team spirit, intelligence, sensibility, empathy, self-discipline, self-knowledge, self-expression and social adaptability. For Peter Brook openness, directness, "transparency", communication, team spirit, receptiveness, sensibility, intuition, connectedness and responsiveness proved to be important. In Augusto Boal's work the overcoming of inhibitions, interactivity, creativity, communicative competence, spontaneity, openness, the expressivity of the body, emotional and physical flexibility and physical awareness are significant. Keith Johnstone and his followers - Tom Salinsky and Deborah Frances White emphasize the importance of spontaneity, creativity, fantasy, self-confidence, the overcoming of inhibitions and relaxation. According to Joseph Chaikin actors should try to enhance their creativity, openness, associative ability and team spirit. Next to the priorities mentioned in Chaikin's work Robert Cohen finds it important to develop trust, discipline, playfulness, receptivity, spontaneity and cooperation. Anne Bogart thinks that creativity, spontaneity, intuition, cooperation, conscious interaction, team spirit, concentration, self-discipline and physical awareness should be developed.

As several experts have stated, the most effective activities of personality development in actor training are the improvisations. Personality development includes the development of creativity, self-expression, relaxation, interactivity, spontaneity, playfulness, inventiveness, self-confidence, sincerity, motivation, communicative competence, concentration, self-discipline, empathy, cooperation, team spirit, trust, intelligence, fantasy, sensitivity, problem-solving, overcoming inhibitions, memory and emotional memory, physical awareness etc. We would like to emphasize that the above mentioned qualities and skills can be very useful in other professions as well. We need different personal competences (emotional awareness, self-confidence, self-control, reliability, adaptability, innovative skills, initiative, optimism etc.) and social competences (empathy, helpfulness, tolerance, cooperation, effective communication, conflict management, openness, team spirit etc.) in any everyday-life situation or profession.

The amount of experience regarding personality development and the related experiments and results, techniques and activities accumulated in the field of actor training in the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century are remarkable. Consequently certain actor trainers – for example Viola Spolin (1963), Keith Johnstone (1989), Augusto Boal (2002, 2006), Tom Salinsky and Deborah Frances-White (2010) – realized that these activities can be used in other domains as well, especially with educational or therapeutic purpose. Experts from other fields – teachers, educators, psychologists, doctors and sociologists – also

recognized the potential possibilities which these games, exercises and different activity types can offer. That is why ideas and projects like those from the field of applied drama and theatre came into existence.

Games are considered to be an important means and activity form in actor training as this has been highlighted by some actor trainers – for example Jacques Copeau (Copeau in Rudlin, 2010, 59), Joan Littlewood (Littlewood in Baker, 2010, 131), Neva Boyd (year unknown), Viola Spolin (1963), Peter Brook (2008), Keith Johnstone (1989), Robert Cohen (1992, 2007), or Tom Salinsky and Deborah Frances –White (2010). The participants in actor training are usually adults, and according to Ruszt playing is the distinctive characteristic of their profession, playing games is what differentiates acting from other professions. According to him the real depth and the secrets of playing techniques can be discovered only by those who have not lost their skills to fantasize and imagine things like they used to when they were children (Ruszt, 2005, 14).

In the thesis we approached the topic of personality development from the perspectives of psychology and learning theories as well. We also examined a few theories and definitions of games in order to confirm our assumption that games play an important role in personality development.

3. Applied theatre and drama

„The old didactic theatre must be replaced by, let us say, pedagogical.”

(Augusto Boal)

Applied theatre and drama is the central theory of our study. In this part of the thesis we tried to demonstrate how this theatre form could appear - based on the experience accumulated in the field of actor training-, what its main objectives and characteristics are, what problems regarding terminology have been encountered since its appearance, and what theatre forms it includes.

In this part our main goal was to prove that through applied drama and theatre new connections and interdisciplinary projects emerged involving and connection different domains, according to social needs and demands. Consequently new possibilities were created for life-long learning.

The appearance of applied drama and theatre is closely connected to the social and political changes that occurred in the twentieth century, and to a new way of thinking and world conception shaped and influenced by wars, political movements, globalization, consumerism, and the endless flow of information in the age of multimedia. Theatre, just like

other art forms, tries to react to these problems by flexibly expanding its influence and sphere of action.

According to Sz. Deme, the change in the role of the audience was based on the recognition - more precisely anew recognition - of the fact that drama and theatre events represent an ancient and basic human need, and by this he means not simply "facing" or "witnessing" such events, but the possibility of immediate and conscious feedback. With this goal in mind the intention of theatre art is something more than simply to impress the audience. In the moment of the generated effect the performers gain inspiration from the spectator's feedback, which influences the further development of the play (Sz. Deme, 2010, 14).

Along with these efforts to create a new type of actor-spectator relationship, a growing interest could be detected regarding a new trend to use theatre techniques for educational or therapeutic purposes. In fact this has not been such a new idea after all. According to Ackroyd the use of theatrical forms to achieve such intentions as to inform, to unify, to instruct or to raise awareness is not new. It is the term of applied drama and theatre which is new. The Ancient Greeks used plays for therapeutic reasons – they intended to cleanse through catharsis (Ackroyd, 2000). Balme mentions that the Jesuits also used theatrical forms for language teaching and propaganda (Balme, 2008, 183). Consequently, it is the term of applied drama and theatre which is new.

A revival of interest in theatrical forms as an educational or therapeutic tool, which led up to the rise of applied drama and theatre, could be observed at the beginning of the 20th century. According to Balme, one of the reasons of this phenomenon was the influence of Freudian psychoanalysis, and another reason was a growing interest in spontaneity and improvisation. Psychiatrist Jacob Levi Moreno organized theatre games for children in Vienna during the First World War, then, turning his attention to adults, organized theatre events based on improvisation under the name of The Theatre of Spontaneity. These attempts to create spontaneous performances helped him to work on the psychodrama concept and method, which he developed mostly in the USA. Moreno was inspired by Freudian psychoanalysis, but instead of the one-to-one analyst-patient relationship and subject-centeredness of psychoanalysis he concentrated on interpersonal interaction. He was convinced that most problems result from people's interpersonal relationships, so they have to be made explicit. A growing interest in spontaneity and improvisation could be detected in Neva Boyd and Viola Spolin's work, whose experiments were based on education through games and improvisation. Most forms of applied theatre use improvisational techniques and

games, and share Boyd and Spolin's belief that human beings are "innately spontaneous and capable of creative expression" (Balme, 2008, 183-184).

Joan Littlewood's ambitious project, *The Fun Palace,* can be considered another antecedent of applied drama and theatre. Helen Nicholson emphasizes the visionary characteristic and novelty of the project, the goal of which was to "afford the therapy of theatre to everyone" as Littlewood wrote in an article (Littlewood in Nicholson, 2005, 1.). She hoped that with the help of theatre techniques people of the deprived East End of London – shop and factory workers – could counteract the daily boredom and frustrations of their unsatisfying working lives. Unfortunately this project could never materialise and *The Fun Palace* was never built, because bureaucratic city councillors were not interested enough in developing such entertaining approaches to lifelong learning. However, Littlewood did not give up her dream and invited young people with different social problems to her *East 15 Theatre* trying to help them with the tools offered by drama techniques. "It is an optimistic story, bearing witness to the power of drama to affect social and personal change" (Nicholson, 2005, 1.).

According to Sz.Deme, experiential, alternative, independent theatre forms *and* performances, which aim to change, shake and motivate to action our society, are considered to be closely linked to Artaud and Brecht's ideas and principles. According to them theatre arts should take part in the education of the individual and the community. In a society facing several new challenges both of them aspired and strived to shape a new approach and attitude of the spectators. Artaud believed that this could be carried out on a metaphysical level, inspired by the world of the mystics of the east, of rituals and magic ceremonies. He saw the possibility to cure society with the help of a theatre which ends in plague, total crisis and death or complete healing for the spectator (Artaud in Sz. Deme, 2010, 21). This means that the person suffering under the pressure of social tension perishes as a result of the disease and crisis, and a new, "total human being" is born (Sz. Deme, 2010, 21).

Brecht, instead of turning to mysticism, tried to activate the critical attitude and the participatory intentions of the spectators in order to initiate some changes in the process of reshaping society. Balme points out that Brecht's idea of *Lehrstück* can be considered an important step towards applied drama and theatre by combining theatre and pedagogy with a political purpose. The basic idea in the *Lehrstück* was that it tried to teach by being performed and not by being seen. The *Lehrstück* could be presented before and audience, but in principle it did not require spectators. The plays were not performed by professional actors but by amateurs, and the main goal was to make them understand that certain actions and attitudes

can have different implications and impacts, and that society is not fixed or unalterable but it can be changed. According to Balme "the *Lehrstück* is exemplary for much applied theatre because it is directed at the participants and not a "passive" audience. If spectators are present, then it is expected that they will engage in discussion with the performers. (…) The spectators can provide suggestions, which may then be taken up and played through. In this sense, the *Lehrstück* anticipates the principles of an emancipatory pedagogy that today's applied theatre usually associates with the work of Augusto Boal" (Balme, 2008, 185).

Performance art can be regarded as another antecedent of applied drama and theatre because of its main aim to involve the spectators into the action, to influence and change them. An important similarity between performance art and applied drama and theatre is that the events are often organized in various premises (streets, squares, factories, museums etc.), and not in traditional theatres. Sz. Deme thinks that these locations guarantee a life-like environment where theatre and everyday life can meet and approach each other (Sz. Deme, 2010, 22)

Based on the above mentioned examples it can be concluded that in the 20th century there could be observed a growing number of trends and experiments which relied on the personality of the spectator-actors, where the spectators did not witness previously chiseled interpretations and explanations, but they encountered problems which made them think or triggered spontaneous reactions. They became partners in the performance, they were offered the possibility to find the truth for themselves and make their own decisions.

Applied drama and theatre is a relatively new, interdisciplinary domain in full development, which tries to meet and respond to the needs of certain social groups. It includes all those theatre forms which focus on personality development or social change attainable with the means of theatre techniques. Ackroyd points out that many of those who work on a certain specific field of applied drama and theatre are not aware of those whom fall in the same category. "The dramatherapist sees her work as distinctly different from that of the group who employ drama to enhance the skills of a company sales team. The prison theatre practitioner will not necessarily relate to those using drama to support the elderly. The practitioners in each group will see themselves working with specific skills appropriate to their work and not therefore the same as those in other fields. How then can we gather diverse practices into one bundle? (…) I suggest that it is an intentionality which all the various groups have in common. They share a belief in the power of the theatre form to address something beyond the form itself" (Ackroyd, 2000). The intentions – to inform, to cleanse, to

instruct or to unify - may of course vary. Different specializations can be observed, with various goals and directions, but the connection with the mainstream theatre is always there.

An important question regarding our topic refers to the terms *applied drama* and *applied theatre*, whether it is possible to make a clear distinction between the two or they refer basically to the same thing. Philip Taylor has tried to define what would be the difference between them: "While there are similarities with applied drama, what one tends to find in the latter in a dependency on conventional British drama in education strategies to teach about issues, events, relationships. Applied theatre is powered by a strong sense of aesthetic education and is usually centered on structured scenarios presented by teams of teaching artist-facilitators" (Taylor in Nicholson, 2005, 4). Nicholson thinks that this sounds like an extension of the distinctions usually made between drama in education (DIE), which is regarded as a process-centered teaching methodology, and theatre in education (TIE), which involves teachers and actors working with students in participatory performance projects. But, according to Nicholson such differentiation is not justified as far as the terms are "used quite flexibly and interchangeably" in the literature of this domain (Nicholson, 2005, 4). We agree with Nicholson in this matter, and that is why we chose to use the mixed term *applied drama and theatre* in our thesis.

Different attempts from the field of theatre, pedagogy, psychology, sociology or even politics, with the common goal of improving the quality of life of different groups or individuals, can be listed under the umbrella term *applied drama and theatre*. It is an interdisciplinary domain, where theatre is closely connected with other disciplines like philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, sociology, anthropology etc.

This theatre form does not require traditional theatre buildings or stages. Prendergast and Saxton points out that the performers or participants are not necessarily trained, professional actors and the spectators usually belong to a group or community the problems of which are debated and discussed in the play, or are interested in the topic for some other reasons. "Whereas traditional mainstream theatre is most often centered in the interpretation of a pre-written script, applied theatre, in contrast, involves both the generation and the interpretation of a theatre piece that in performance may or may not be scripted in the traditional manner. In those cases where an applied theatre performance takes the form of a polished improvisation, a formally written script may never be recorded" (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009, 7). According to Prendergast and Saxton other important characteristics of applied drama and theatre practice are the following: "focus on multiple perspectives; disregard for sequence as fundamental to effective structure; endings that remain open for

questioning; less reliance on words; more exploration of movement and image as theatre language; greater reliance on polished improvisation; theatre as a close, direct reflection of actual life with an overt political intent; to raise awareness and to generate change; a collective approach to creating theatre pieces in which the makers themselves become aware and capable of change; issues of local importance that may or may not be transferable to other communities; audience as an important and active participant in the creation of understanding and, often, of the action" (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009, 11).

Accordingly, theatre and drama techniques can have remarkable educational, community-building and personality-changing effects if they become accessible and tangible to participants and spectators. Applied drama and theatre is a "participatory" theatre form, where spectators play some kind of roles as well, they are in interaction with the performers, and by doing this they become more deeply involved in the topic.

There are several theatre forms which can be included into the category of applied drama and theatre. In out thesis we discussed a few of these (Popular Theatre, Psychodrama and Sociodrama, Theatre of the Oppressed, Theatre for Development, Prison Theatre, Community–based Theatre, Museum Theatre, Reminiscence Theatre, Theatre in Health Education) in order to demonstrate that these activity forms function as tools of personality and community development. One form of applied drama and theatre – drama pedagogy - is discussed separately in our thesis because of its outstanding importance related to our topic.

We concluded that the new tendencies which appeared in the domain of theatre arts and actor training in the 20th century led to the appearance of new theatre forms, the aim of which is personality development, the improvement of the life-quality of different groups, communities or individuals, and the creation of a better world. Actors and non-actors use theatre and drama techniques to generate social, political changes and personality development. Through applied drama and theatre new connections and interdisciplinary cooperation became possible among different domains opening new possibilities for lifelong learning.

4. Drama pedagogy – the link between theatre arts and institutional education

In this part of our thesis we tried to demonstrate how drama pedagogy connects theatre arts and institutional education. Drama pedagogy is mainly concerned with personality development and the development of communicative competence, and it has two main branches: Theatre in Education and Drama in Education.

4.1. Theatre in Education

Theatre in Education (TIE) was developed as a new theatre form in Great Britain in the 1960s, when due to progressive government policies more funds were directed toward arts and education, and theatre companies started to create new programs for the communities. Some companies chose to work together with schools and plan theatre plays together with the children and teachers. The plays were chosen according to the children's' age, interests and the school curriculum. "Because they were dealing with audience participation and curriculum, the actors who worked at and toured into the schools were required to gain an understanding of and ability to achieve effective teaching. The result of these developments was a new genre of theatre—theatre in education—and a new kind of actor, called an actor-teacher. Conversely, for teachers in schools, this new practice became an opportunity for professional development and training in drama/theatre education. Teacher workshops, and the direct involvement of teachers in developing and implementing materials that prepared and followed-up each performance, became of central importance in delivering and assessing the success of TIE projects. (Prendergast and Saxton, 2009, 31-32).

Sz Deme points out that this form of theatre and education can be related to both applied drama and theatre and reform pedagogy, and just like performance art it concentrates on raising questions and it tries to turn the spectators into partners by involving them in the act (Sz. Deme, 2010, 25). The success of TIE lies into the flexible and open arrangement of theatrical and educational elements. The communication and feedback between actors and spectators is essential. Discussions, where all the actors, teachers and spect-actors participate are important moments of these events, because here they have the opportunity to share their feelings, impressions, opinions.

The involvement and participation of the spectators can vary. According to O'Toole there are situations when the events are planned for a more passive audience, and the power of the dramatic plot and the theatrical effects are meant to be used for educational purposes. In other situations the spectators are expected to get verbally involved or act on the stage, becoming part of the plot development. TIE makes it possible for the participants to meet actively with the created experience, and by this to get involved and fully live the experience. If the spectators can influence the plot, the nature of the experience is different, more intense. The depth of the discovery and involvement can be remarkable, the situation may be imagined, but the action and happening from it are real (O'Toole, 1995, 31). According to Sz. Deme the spectators are awarely present from the very beginning, they control what is

happening with them, and sometimes they are invited to help in setting the rules of the event. Taking part in all the phases of the action they become more aware of the responsibility they have for their reactions. The process which is shaped by the cooperation of the conscious spectator open to face and solve different problems, transcends the effects of the theatre and points in the direction of social utility. This is becoming a more and more important goal for theatre makers (Sz. Deme, 2010, 28).

4.2. Drama in Education

Drama in Education (DIE) is a method based on pedagogic and pshychological principles, and compared to the above mentioned forms of applied drama and theatre it is probably the most process-centered. DIE can make teaching different subjects more efficient. Thanks to its process-centeredness it is also called Process Drama, mostly in the United States and Australia.

DIE was developed from the practice of "as if" games. It is a personality-centred method, often associated with reform pedagogy, which aims to develop creativity, spontaneity and communicative competence, preparing students to face real-life situations with less difficulty. Playing games is an important part of this method, because – as it was proved by psychology - games play an important role in the development of the personality. Debreczeni points out that in DIE the participants discover the surrounding world, their own inner world, and the world of the society through group activities and intensive communication. From this process they can gain moral sensitivity, emotional balance and stability, creative thinking and self-knowledge (Debreczeni, 1992).

According to Gabnai (1999), personality development is the main goal of drama in education, which is done through different situational games or role-plays. There is no audience, but the presence of peers helps students to develop self-confidence and the ability to work in a team, and prepares them to communicate more easily in real-life situations. These activities can be considered rehearsals, where the participants have to speak and perform different tasks in the middle of attention, practicing through this the readiness and inventiveness necessary in different social roles and situations of everyday life. Drama games can increase the self-knowledge and insight into human nature of people working in and for a community. Dynamic thinking, a focussed and well-planned working method, and clear, coherent, emphatic way of speaking can be developed through them. They can compensate to a certain extent for the passivity generated by the development and spreading of mass media. Drama games offer collective experience, through which the participants can encounter the

pleasure of self-expression and recognition and develop their decision-making and problem-solving skills.

The socializing effects of drama in education can bridge the gap between institutional education and real life, because they can help the students to acquire the necessary skills, behaviour and knowledge to improve their performance in different professions, and their ability to perform certain specific roles.

Gavin Bolton (1993), the internationally recognized drama educator and theorist of drama in education, called the method developed by him *drama for understanding,* which can be very useful in teaching different subjects. In these activities the participants work in groups and create an imaginary world, where they "play" different roles. In this world they encounter the same kind of problems as in the real world, thus acquiring real knowledge and experience.

According to Heathcote (1995), in drama games and role plays the acts of the participants are deeply influenced by their previous experience and knowledge. This is such a complex pedagogic method, through which the real problems of life can be dealt with in a protective environment, facilitating learning through experience (Heathcote, 1995).

From the point of view of our topic is important to emphasize that there is a strong connection between drama and the acquirement and use of language and communication skills. Bolton stated that from several viewpoints drama is the language itself, and language in drama activities is the means that helps participants to understand the meaning of things. He speaks about language in its widest sense as the verbal and non-verbal code for understanding and sharing an experience (Bolton, 1993, 86-88).

In the thesis we analysed the necessary or adequate attitudes of the teachers who apply DIE in their teaching process, and some possible structures of the planning and facilitation process. The differences between the two main areas of drama pedagogy – TIE and DIE – and the overlapping characteristics are also discussed. A possible framework of drama pedagogy is shown and its present place and importance in institutional education is discussed.

5.   Theories which justify and support the use of drama pedagogy

In this part of the thesis we have presented and discussed a few important theories, which in our opinion support and justify the use of drama pedagogy in institutionalized education. These theories are the following: experiential learning (life-long learning based on experience); Csíkszetmihályi's (2001) *flow*-theory (and the connection between the peak experience and the learning process); constructivist pedagogy (and the constructive drama

defined by Takács Gábor (2009)); and Goffman's (1999) theory about the presentation of self in everyday life (and the interrelations and connections between playing roles on the stage and in everyday life).

One of drama's most important roles in education is that it prepares the participants for real-life situations through experience, experimentation and joyful activity. These theories support the important benefits which drama activities offer: a safe environment where the participants can speak and act free of constraints and inhibitions, can discover their needs, skills and talents, can learn to find and identify the objective truth, they can create their own ideas and images of the world, and they can develop their senses and reflectiveness.

We find it important to point out the parallelisms between playing roles on the stage and in everyday life, based on Erving Goffman's theory. One of the main thoughts of our thesis is that the experience, methods and techniques of actor training can be adopted and used in education and personality development, because these parallelisms exist between role plays on stage and role plays in real life. If we approach the possibilities offered by drama pedagogy from the point of view of our final goal – using drama techniques in teaching English for specific purposes – it is obvious that these activities can help in the development of speaking skills and the presentation of self in the target language in everyday life situations. It is more difficult to shape in the way we would like to what others see in our performance or what others think of us in a target language situation, mostly because of the inhibitions caused by the possible language barriers caused by the imperfections of our target language knowledge. We believe that his can be helped by using drama techniques – role plays or simulations – in the language class.

6. Drama techniques in language teaching

6.1. The premises and presence of drama techniques in different methods along the history of language teaching

Role-plays and drama techniques have always been present along the history of language teaching, but they have been used to various extents by means of different methods. Even in the time of the *grammar translation method*, there were language teaching theorists who tried to introduce innovatory techniques. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the *natural approach methods* emphasized the importance of speaking practice as opposed to grammar and translation exercises, encouraging interaction, contextualization and physical activity.

The main principle of the *direct method* was the use of the target language and the avoidance of the mother tongue, therefore demonstration, the use of gestures and mimics was essential and inevitable. Role-plays, drama, and physical activity gain more importance in the audio-lingual method, where the need for experiencing and discovering the use of language in context grows.

According to Bárdos *humanistic methods* could also be called dramatizing methods. They are based on personality-centred and psychological approaches, where the development of the whole personality of the language learner is taken into consideration. In Asher's method, called *Total Physical Response* (TPR), the students have to respond with action to instructions given in the target language. Asher was aware of the importance of physical activity and emotional factors in the language learning process. The dramatic features in Gattegno's *silent way approach* are the movements, gestures and mimics of the teacher, whose silent performance has to be interpreted by the students in the target language. In Curran's community language learning (CLL) method the emotional factors, mutual trust and a relaxed atmosphere are considered important in the learning process. The main principle in Lozanov's *suggestopedia* is the creation of a tension-free atmosphere in which students feel confident and comfortable. Drama, games, music and songs are widely used in this method (Bárdos, 2005).

Games, role-plays, drama techniques, group discussions and simulations became even more popular in the learner-centred *communicative language teaching*. This trend opens the door to learning based on personal experience and discovery in interactive environments created by information-gaps and problem-solving situations.

6.2. Characteristics and main goals of drama techniques in language teaching

Alan Maley and Alan Duff define dramatic activities in a language classroom as follows: "They are activities which give the student an opportunity to use his or her own personality in creating the material on which part of the language class is to be based. These activities draw on the natural ability of every person to imitate, mimic and express himself or herself through gesture. They draw too, on the student's imagination and memory, and natural capacity to bring to life parts of his or her past experience that might never otherwise emerge. They are dramatic because they arouse our interest, which they do by drawing on the unpredictable power generated when one person is brought together with others. Each student brings a different life, a different background into the class. We would like students to be able to use this when working with others" (Maley & Duff 1991, 6.). According to them, most

traditional textbooks give little attention to the skills we need most when using a language: adaptability, sensitivity to tone, speed of reaction, insight and anticipation, in one word: appropriateness. This neglected emotional content can be put back into language through drama, giving more attention to the real *meaning* of the structures that are being taught.

In our thesis we tried to identify, define and describe the main types of language teaching activities - *mime, language games, group discussions, role plays and simulations -* which can be gathered under the umbrella term *drama techniques.* Role plays can be considered the most widely spread of these, because to different extents they can be present in all the other types.

Alan Maley defines the concept of role-play in language teaching as follows: "The term "role-play" calls to mind the fable of the blind man trying to describe an elephant; the term takes on different meanings for different people. It certainly seems to encompass an extremely varied collection of activities. These range from highly-controlled guided conversations at one end of the scale, to improvised drama activities at the other; from simple rehearsed dialogue performance, to highly complex simulated scenarios." (Maley in Porter Ladousse 2009, 3)

According to Porter Ladousse in *"role-play"* the term *play* means that students can play a part – someone else's or their own – in a safe environment which ensures ideal conditions for playfulness and inventiveness. Students, just like children playing doctors and patients, unconsciously create their own reality and through this experiment with their knowledge of the real world, they develop their interacting skills with others. Unlike in a theatre, in the classroom there are no spectators, and they do not feel threatened by the risks of behaviour and communication which are present in the real world. Thus the activity is more enjoyable, and playing a role in such a relaxed atmosphere can help building up self-confidence. The flexibility of role-plays opens the door to individual ideas, variations and initiatives, and develops creativity, offering direct experience of the unpredictable nature of the target language in use. Ladousse sums up the most important advantages of role-plays emphasizing their benefits and characteristics. A wide range of language structures, functions and vocabulary can be introduced and practiced through role-plays, offering a large variety of experience and training in speaking skills in different situations; in role-plays students are required to develop and use the phatic forms of the target language which are necessary in social relationships; for students who are learning a language to prepare for specific roles in their professional life (e.g. in English for specific purposes), role-plays can function as rehearsals for real life tasks; they provide shy students a kind of mask which helps them

overcome their difficulties in participating in conversations; role-plays are entertaining, fun for students; they develop fluency, promote interaction and increase motivation. The main difference between a role-play in the classroom and a dramatic performance is that the first is mainly concerned with the process of playing a part and not the finished product. Students carry out the activity for themselves, in a team where ideally everybody is equally involved. As humanistic tendencies in education have shown, the learning process can be more efficient in a tension-free atmosphere. The follow up or debriefing is an important part of the activity, where the teacher should insist on evaluation rather than criticism, encouraging positive thinking about the experience (Porter Ladousse, 2009, 5-17).

6.3. Needs Analysis - Role-plays in Teaching English for Engineering

In the last part of the thesis we present the results of a needs analysis, which was conducted with 106 engineering students and engineers about their language learning needs and habits, their experience and opinion regarding role-plays and the popularity and usefulness of role-plays in learning English for specific purposes (ESP). They were also enquired about the specific situations and roles in which they have to use the target language in their work.

The results of the needs analysis show, that the majority of the respondents think that developing their speaking skills and their professional communication skills is very important. Most of them are aware of the advantages of group work and like to work in a team. A great number of respondents like role-plays in ESP because they think these activities prepare them for better communication in different profession-related situations. The reasons given to support the usefulness of role-plays in ESP confirm the ones from the specialized literature: they prepare them for better communication in their profession; their language skills, especially speaking skills can be improved; they learn from their own experience; they get to know better themselves and others; it is easier to learn in a playful, relaxed atmosphere; their power of thinking, self-confidence, problem-solving skills, team spirit and cooperation can be developed. It is important to emphasize that the vast majority of the respondents think that role-plays in ESP are useful, even those who do not like them.

Engineering students and engineers have to be prepared to use English within workplace, professional, or academic environments. In ESP the target language is studied to ease the way to enter these environments, or to gain greater communicative efficiency within them.

Designing role-plays might be challenging and time consuming for the teacher, but taking into consideration the needs and the profession-specific communicative situations which our students will encounter in their future profession, this teaching technique can prove to be successful. Role plays in ESP classes must reflect the problems, situations and tasks which can occur in their professional environment. These activities can reach their purpose only if students enjoy them and participate actively in them. Techniques from the field of drama in education can be of great help in achieving these goals.
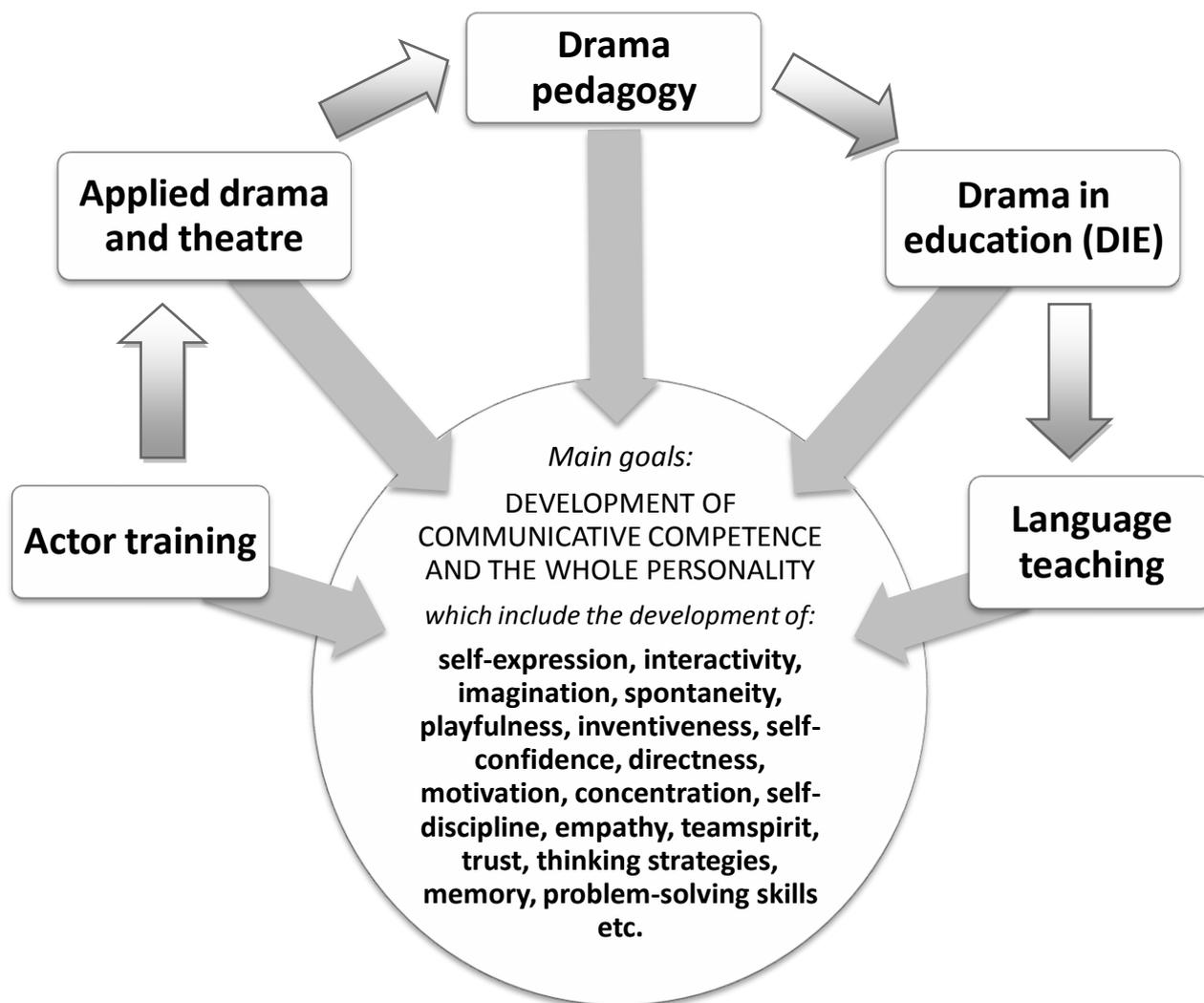
7. Conclusions

In our thesis we showed that the development of methods and techniques in actor training in the 20th century – due to the fact that they concentrate on the development of the whole personality, communicative competence and team building – have had a great influence upon the development of the methods and activity types of applied drama and theatre.

We demonstrated that drama in education and theatre in education create a bridge between the fields of applied drama and theatre and education and this can be justified by theories regarding personality development, game-theories, experiential learning, the *flow*-theory, constructivist pedagogy and Erving Goffman`s theory.

We proved that drama techniques have been present for a long time in language teaching because they are regarded as an effective alternative tool in developing communicative competence in the target language and their ability to perform certain roles in the possible "scenes" of everyday life or their future professions. We demonstrated that adult learners who study English for specific purposes are aware of the fact that role plays and simulations help them prepare for their future profession and they like these activities and find them useful.

The interdisciplinary connections demonstrated in our thesis are illustrated by the following diagram:

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              Drama
             pedagogy
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Applied drama and theatre

Drama in education (DIE)

Actor training

Language teaching

Main goals:

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AND THE WHOLE PERSONALITY

which include the development of:

self-expression, interactivity, imagination, spontaneity, playfulness, inventiveness, self-confidence, directness, motivation, concentration, self-discipline, empathy, teamspirit, trust, thinking strategies, memory, problem-solving skills etc.

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