THROUGH DRAMA TO CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

... the use of drama methodology in the development of positive attitudes towards Japanese culture by a select group of Australian Year Seven students studying aspects of Kabuki theatre

by

Janett Kajic Jackson

Dip. Ed. 1970, Wattle Park Teachers’ College

B. Ed. 1975, S.A.C.A.E. Magill Campus

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts (Educational Theatre) (Honours)

in

The University of Adelaide
(Department of Drama)

November 1993
This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

SIGNED........................................................................................................DATE:........................................................................
PREFACE

This research looks at the viability of using a traditional text from the Japanese culture as a basis for developing a series of lessons which can be implemented with Australian Year Seven students. The study highlights the component parts that needed to be in the lessons, the way in which the lessons were devised and the impact the lessons had on the class of students.

The main purpose of the investigation is to determine whether students’ attitudes can be influenced, in a positive direction towards the Japanese culture, through the use of drama methodology. Further to this, the influence of the chosen text, and that of the theatrical style, on the students’ own writing for performance, is examined.

Throughout the process, an evaluation is made of the clarity and depths of insight into the students’ own culture.

Acknowledgements

There are two people I must acknowledge for the help and emotional support they have given me throughout the writing of the thesis. They are my supervising lecturer, Dr. Robert Kimber and my husband Russ.

Thanks must also go to Geoff Perkins who demystified Apple computers and their relevant programs for me.

My final thanks go to my daughter, Julia. Without her comforting back rubs I might not have completed my work.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE ........................................................................................................ iii

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION: ........................................................................................... 1
  TOWARDS MULTI-CULTURAL INSIGHTS THROUGH DRAMA
    1.1 Background .......................................................................................... 1
    1.2 Choice of play ...................................................................................... 2
    1.3 Need for research ............................................................................... 4
    1.4 Importance of research ...................................................................... 5
    1.5 Evaluation .......................................................................................... 7
    1.6 Organisation of rest of thesis .............................................................. 10

II. CLASS AND TEACHER: ............................................................................... 14
  PROFILES AND AttITUDES
    2.1 Profiles of students and researcher .................................................... 14
    2.3 Attitude change ............................................................................... 18

III. DRAMA METHODOLOGY: ....................................................................... 22
  A RATIONALE FOR MY APPROACH
    3.1 Play .................................................................................................. 23
    3.2 Creativity .......................................................................................... 23
    3.3 Thinking ........................................................................................... 24
    3.4 Rapport ............................................................................................. 24
    3.5 Lesson approaches ........................................................................... 25
    3.5 Lesson format ................................................................................... 27
    3.6 Improvisation ................................................................................... 30
    3.7 Broadening elements ......................................................................... 31
    3.8 Writing ............................................................................................. 32
    3.9 Learning process ............................................................................... 34
IV. TACKLING THE PLAYSCRIPT:.............................................................. 39
SELECTION OF TOPICS AND TREATMENT IN THE CLASS
4.1 Script content.............................................................. 40
4.2 Theatrical knowledge................................................. 43
4.3 Cultural knowledge.................................................... 44
4.4 Selected topics.......................................................... 46
4.5 Playscript reading and improvisation............................ 48
4.6 Hierarchical structure.................................................. 52
4.7 Cross-cultural connections........................................... 54
4.8 Performance possibility............................................... 57
4.9 Lesson sequence........................................................ 58

V. RESULTS: WHAT THE STUDENTS ACHIEVED.......................... 61
5.1 Selected topics lessons................................................ 61
5.2 Theatrical element lessons........................................... 62
5.3 Playscript reading and improvisation lessons.................. 63
5.4 Hierarchical lessons..................................................... 65
5.5 Cross-cultural connections........................................... 77

VI. CONCLUSION: ON AN OPTIMISTIC NOTE.................................. 83
6.1 Survey results........................................................... 84
6.2 Template................................................................. 94

BIBLIOGRAPHY .............................................................................. 96

APPENDICES
Appendix A: Script of The Village School.......................... 99
Appendix B: Details of The Village School.......................... 121
Appendix C: Kabuki development....................................... 127
Appendix D: Description of kata......................................... 130
Appendix E: Students’ writing............................................. 138
Appendix F: Glossary of terms.......................................... 156