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DEVELOPING RATIONAL THINKING THROUGH MODERN OR CONTEMPORARY DRAMA IN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Yousif KHORSHEED SAEED ¹

Abstract

This research paper discusses how rational thinking in terms of English Literature could be developed or enhanced through modern and contemporary drama. This research paper consists of the presentation to point out the areas of English Literature in which rational thinking can be developed by means of modern or contemporary drama. It also points out how literature can be used as an instrument for vocabulary build up and individual personality development. It throws light upon and draws attention to the deeds done by People in political power or those in administration Modern or contemporary Drama can alter whatever people or masses needed to change. Education has the same capacity. The imparting of the content matter of English literature through Modern or Contemporary drama keeps the population informed of the social and political issues, through the performances of these drama the people can handle problems. They can easily face challenges and develop a logical way of reacting. The masses seem empowered and aware which makes it easy to convey and implement. Modern and Contemporary drama has potential in English Literature since it reaches the masses through a convenient and conducive way. This research paper intends to

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interweave together all the features of rational thinking skills, Modern and contemporary drama in the light of English Literature.

Key Words: English Literature, Rational Thinking, Education, Modern Drama, and Contemporary Drama.

1. Introduction

The term rationality could be explained as the application of suitable co-relating terms and deploy of authentic judgment in order to prove reliance and conduct. It is a calculated, deliberate and purposeful act done by oneself through sensible thinking. People who support education in its true sense are of the doctrine that it is not only an ensemble of knowledge through facts but education derives meaning when skills of thought process as well as expansion of personality takes place. Modern Drama includes writings of Oscar Wilde, Henrik Ibsen and Tennessee Williams which belongs to the nineteenth or the twentieth century. Today we have a wide collection of writers of the present day generations who adds to the already existing collection of drama. The modern drama possesses various movements, inclinations, and popular themes. Therefore the present day English Literature is rich in various topics and different directions. It offers a wide range of study material to help learners develop rational thinking. The main purpose of education is to enhance these thinking skills which would strengthen the core and the foundation of education and would not limit the scope of education. The purpose of education should be accomplished when rational thinking is developed (Lambert, 1989: 152).

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2. Background

Drama has developed and transformed over the times depending on the preferences of the society in general. The drama has moved from naturalism, Nationalism, realism, expressionism to symbolism. Each movement had its bases in the likes of the audiences as the drama was made to please audience. Then some more attempts were put in where creativity was put in to get visual arts, music, literature and a vast transformation in the scenario of social and political change. Drama is influences as well as affected by these changes. This brings about an instant impact on the masses. Some of the drama was affected due to the war (Byron, 1986: 41).

3. Significance

Modern and contemporary dram was rather significant as earlier than this era. Drama was created only keeping in mind the lofty or the aristocratic society. The modern and contemporary drama paid more attention to the general society and the common problems that the people could face, it also gave some advice and suggestions through these performances where the general public could take an idea and act accordingly and overcome their problems. Writers like J. B. Priestly, George Bernard Shaw, Eugene O'Neil dealt with themes like disconnected to the general audience, their dramas had a sense of unfulfilled lives and their characters showed the feelings of dissatisfaction and emptiness, this was very accepted by the public as they went through the similar situations. Their drama were an expressionism of what people in general actually went through

4. Objectives:

The objectives this paper presents can be summed up as follows:

1. To explore the impact that modern and contemporary drama could have on rational thinking. Random sampling was chosen to complete this research paper. Literature Review was completed by studying the magazines, the periodicals and the internet sites related to the Modern or contemporary drama. Survey method was used to draw common conclusions about the findings.
2. To study the possibilities about the modern and contemporary drama on rational thinking in English Literature. Information is taken from the internet, blogs and learners' opinions who share their views on the matter.
3. To examine how Modern and contemporary drama play a role in English Literature. Semi-structured Interviews were conducted to make the study and draw the conclusion. Interviews through Questionnaire was done to make findings and conclusions.

5. Research Question

The current paper sheds some light on the following question:

What are the effects of Modern or contemporary drama in English literature on rational thinking?

6. Data Collection

Data was collected through detailed study in the survey method from books of drama, magazines, internet and interviews, conducted specifically for this purpose. Note-taking was done and grouping was later completed to complete the conclusion.

7. Data Analysis

The raw data was grouped into common points. Average and mean was used to take into count for the presentation.

8. Presentation

The content matter is considered for the knowledge of the rational thinking. Modern Drama usually has the themes related to the realism. They also have a sense of naturalism in which techniques and suggestions are made to deal with and overcome problems faced in the natural setting. The famous writer Henrik Ibsen initiated the theme realism in to the theatre of Modern drama. Some other writers who wrote really good acceptable plays also followed this example they were writers like, Robertson Arthur Jones, Galsworthy and G.B. Shaw. These writers put in the feel of realism into their plays which made the readers and the audience accept and relate to the plays more comfortably.

Some other writers like Stephen Phillips, John Drink water and W.B. Yeats brought out through their plays the spirit of nationalism. Their dramas mainly had a touch of history and some famous biographies (Wagner, 1989: 173).

9. Choice of Themes

Some writers like J.M Synge, T.C. Murrey, Oscar Wilde, Maugham, N. Coward, T.S. Eliot, and Christopher Fry wrote plays of Poetic Drama. These writers are of the modern Drama era. They made a change in the scenario of Drama by changing the way people viewed it. They included themes like unrest in labour and capital, the games played in the administration level, the irony and satire that was carried out within the law, the justice system and the beliefs, superstitions and the traditions within the marriage system in the society. They also gave some suggestions and recommendations of hoe to tackle problems arising in these fields (See Cebi, 1985: 122).

10. The Intention

Henrik Ibsen's play "A doll's House" Depicted problems that the society was facing in those days but did not directly confront it. In these plays the message or the idea in the theme were given more importance than the actions and the performance. All the modern or contemporary plays have a message, a meaning and a suggestion to be followed by the general public.

11. Expressionism

An important feature of Modern or contemporary drama is expressions of feelings and emotions. Here the importance is laid on the feelings and emotions of people instead of laying stress on objects or events. The modern and contemporary drama always adhered to the traditional requirements of the features of drama. The configuration has advanced features with the methods and the skills being standardized.

12. Creation of a Reformation

Some messages were intentionally taken up by these dramatists with a view to be circulated in society to bring about a change in attitude among the masses. These crucial messages were given expression and action in order to have a greater impact on the audience and population in general. Modern and contemporary drama always used this kind of approaches. Eg: Historical plays "Ceaser and Cleopatra by Shaw". "John Drink water's Abraham Lincoln and Mary Stuart" (Allen, 1981: 42).

13. Realistic view

Modern Drama gives a more practical sense to the themes. It avoids or does much consider fables, or allegory, fantasy, delusion, or misbeliefs. It maintains the reality and points to the logical reasons and the areas in which social change is in high demand. It makes people see sense and reason in everything, our environment, administration, political power and personal life problems.

14. Higher Thinking Order

The modern and contemporary drama promotes deeper understanding expressing personal feelings of psychological matters. It gives more meaning to religious beliefs. This drama is a kind of wake-up call for commoners as we get a different but practical view to situations.

15. Intellectual Touch

This drama requires an intense intellectual ability to understand its deeper sense and essence. These dramas delight and give enjoyment to the

audience but it faces certain provocations with the power of the ruling and administration.

16. Benefits

In the literature point of view Students can build up their confidence. They can develop an ability to express better. The use of new vocabulary increases the learner's communication skills. All this gives rise to the imaginative and creative side. They learn the art of co-operative role play learning and appreciate the beauty in the word formation. They perform better in other subjects like history, civics and geography.

17. Main Objective

Learning can effectively take place when the soft skills are developed, the modern and contemporary drama develops the four skills namely: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. This thereby goes further to develop the rational thinking among learners. Listening skills were enhanced through the voice intonation of dialogue delivery. Speaking skills will develop soon after the listening skills are pruned and initiated. It goes hand in hand and develops every amicably one giving way to the other. Reading is enhanced and supported with the motivation of speaking skills.

18. Effects and Recommendations

Learners of modern and contemporary drama is that learners learn to live in a society that is co-operative, has civic sense, tolerant, and getting along. Teachers and educators can include such topics which are age appropriate

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of the learners. Lead them to acknowledge the refined version of themselves that they have difficulty accepting.

Constructive sense is developed and learners experience freedom in studying light-hearted matter instead of serious subjects like Math, science and grammar. Educators could guide the learners through the maxims of teaching from simple to complex; concrete to abstract; and psychological logical.

Socializing is encouraged through emotional fulfilment. Sense of responsibility is increased among learners where they work on the basis of response to stimuli aware of what needs to be done. It is recommended to assist learners to make more application based observations to help them in their real life and inculcate in them the spirit of tolerance and aesthetic value of variety.

Learners develop ideas into actions, they learn to support each other's ideas and become more independent with a realistic point of view. Educators could encourage learners to develop rational thinking by helping them consider the reality of the world rather than the imaginative one. Thereby respecting differences amicably.

19. Conclusion

When learners participate in drama their written and verbal skills automatically improve. It helps them in continuing tasks with interest and motivation. The achievement rates in academics are higher and it keeps students thinking capacity alive thereby inducing rational thinking. It keeps learners alert aware and free from ignorance or getting bored which is a

positive outcome in Education. Learners develop a positive attitude towards themselves in building their talents and subjugating their weak points. It builds up the “self- concept and self -actualization”. Learners exercise their assimilation skills by putting together their experiences learnt in the past with their understanding level of the present situations, thereby bringing out the refined performances and new innovative perspectives. Thus leading to development rational thinking. Interest and service towards community was magnified through modern and contemporary drama. It is therefore beneficial to make it an integral part of the education curriculum.

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