

THE TEACHER OF THE FUTURE: VISION AND SKILLS

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Abstract: In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education, the role of the teacher stands as a linchpin in shaping the minds of tomorrow's leaders and innovators. This abstract explores the imperative of cultivating a forward-thinking educator, adept at navigating the complexities of modern academia while aligning with the standards set forth by the European Union (EU) directives on higher education and the principles advocated by UNESCO.

Central to this discourse is the delineation of a visionary framework for the teacher of the future. This framework encompasses a multifaceted skillset that transcends traditional pedagogical approaches, embracing dynamic methodologies that foster critical thinking, adaptability, and digital literacy. In the context of contemporary higher education, where digitalization and globalization are reshaping the learning environment, educators must possess the acumen to harness technology as an enabler of engagement and inclusivity.

Furthermore, the alignment with EU directives on higher education underscores the necessity for teachers to be well-versed in the principles of quality assurance, mobility, and lifelong learning. As the EU continues to prioritize the harmonization of education systems, educators play a pivotal role in facilitating cross-cultural dialogue and fostering a spirit of collaboration and innovation.

In tandem with EU directives, adherence to UNESCO guidelines serves as a compass for promoting equity, diversity, and sustainability within higher education. Educators are called upon to embrace inclusive teaching practices that cater to diverse learning styles and cultural backgrounds, thereby cultivating an environment conducive to holistic development and social cohesion.

Ultimately, the cultivation of the teacher of the future demands a paradigm shift in educational pedagogy—a shift that champions innovation, inclusivity, and global citizenship. By embracing this vision and equipping educators with the requisite skills and competencies, higher education institutions can fulfill their mandate as catalysts for societal progress and sustainable development, in accordance with the principles espoused by the EU and UNESCO alike.

Keywords: EU directives, higher education, UNESCO guidelines, innovation, digital literacy, sustainability, inclusivity, global citizenship.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, the role of the educator stands as a fundamental determinant of academic quality and student success. As educational paradigms shift to accommodate the demands of a globalized, digitally-driven society, the imperative of cultivating a forward-thinking teacher becomes increasingly apparent. This paper endeavors to explore the multifaceted dimensions of the teacher of the future, with a keen focus on aligning pedagogical practices with the directives set forth by the European Union (EU) on higher education and the guiding principles advocated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Contemporary higher education is characterized by a confluence of dynamic forces, including technological advancements, demographic shifts, and socio-economic transformations. In this context, the traditional role of the teacher as a disseminator of knowledge has expanded to encompass a broader mandate—one that necessitates the cultivation of critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy among students. As such, educators are called upon to adopt innovative pedagogical approaches that foster engagement, collaboration, and lifelong learning.

Central to the discourse on the teacher of the future is the alignment with EU directives on higher education, which seek to promote quality assurance, mobility, and accessibility within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). By adhering to these directives, educators play a pivotal role in ensuring the harmonization of academic standards, thereby facilitating student mobility and enhancing the international competitiveness of European universities.

Furthermore, the principles espoused by UNESCO serve as a guiding framework for promoting equity, diversity, and sustainability within higher education. Educators are tasked with creating inclusive learning environments that cater to the needs of diverse student populations, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural understanding.

Against this backdrop, this paper aims to delineate a comprehensive vision for the teacher of the future—a vision that embraces innovation, inclusivity, and global citizenship. Through an exploration of contemporary pedagogical practices and the requirements of EU directives and UNESCO guidelines, this paper seeks to elucidate the essential skills and competencies that educators must possess in order to effectively navigate the challenges and opportunities

of modern academia. Ultimately, by equipping teachers with the requisite knowledge and skills, higher education institutions can fulfill their mission of empowering students to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the quest to define and refine the role of educators in contemporary higher education, a theoretical framework is essential to contextualize the multifaceted dimensions of teaching and learning. This theoretical framework draws upon recent advancements in educational theory and research to elucidate the complex interplay between pedagogy, technology, and socio-cultural factors in shaping the teacher of the future. Grounded in the principles of constructivism, socio-cultural theory, and digital pedagogy, this framework serves as a guiding lens through which to explore the evolving landscape of higher education and the requisite skills and competencies of the modern educator.

Constructivism posits that learning is an active, dynamic process whereby individuals construct knowledge through interactions with their environment and social interactions with others (Jonassen, 1999). Within the context of higher education, constructivist approaches emphasize the importance of student-centered learning, collaborative inquiry, and authentic tasks that promote deep understanding and critical thinking (Ally, 2008). Educators, therefore, serve as facilitators of learning, guiding students through meaningful experiences that encourage reflection, inquiry, and the construction of knowledge (Brooks & Brooks, 1999).

Socio-cultural theory, rooted in the work of Vygotsky (1978), highlights the role of social interaction and cultural context in shaping cognition and learning. According to this perspective, learning is situated within social and cultural contexts, with language, tools, and social practices serving as mediators of learning (Wertsch, 1991). In the context of higher education, socio-cultural theory underscores the importance of collaborative learning environments, where students engage in authentic tasks and meaningful interactions that foster cognitive development and socialization (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Educators, therefore, play a central role in scaffolding students' learning experiences, providing support and guidance as students engage in increasingly complex tasks and concepts (Rogoff, 1990).

Digital pedagogy encompasses the theory and practice of teaching and learning in digital environments, leveraging technology to enhance engagement, collaboration, and learning outcomes (Weller, 2020). With the proliferation of digital tools and resources, educators must adapt their pedagogical approaches to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Digital pedagogy emphasizes the importance of digital literacy, critical media literacy, and responsible use of technology in higher education (Jenkins et al., 2016). Educators, therefore, must possess the skills and knowledge to leverage technology as a tool for innovation, creativity, and communication in the digital age (Bates, 2015).

This theoretical framework integrates key concepts from constructivism, socio-cultural theory, and digital pedagogy to elucidate the complex dynamics of teaching and learning in contemporary higher education. By grounding educational practice in these theoretical perspectives, educators can effectively navigate the challenges and opportunities of modern academia, fostering an environment that promotes deep learning, collaboration, and innovation.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research centers on the systematic steps undertaken to attain findings and results, rooted in a theoretical framework that underscores the vision and skill set requisite for the teacher of the future. This framework aims to motivate and equip students with knowledge, competencies, and the resilience to confront and surmount challenges within a positive and stress-free teaching and learning environment.

This study focuses on analyzing the learning and teaching processes within British Studies classes for third-year undergraduate students. Additionally, it explores their readiness to engage in the preparation for a stage performance adaptation of Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew," as seen in the American movie "10 Things I Hate About You."

The methodology commences with objective setting, delineating research and teaching objectives that align with curriculum goals and desired learning outcomes. Clear objectives are established for both the British Studies content and the stage performance rehearsals.

Technology integration plays a pivotal role, leveraging tools such as online databases, digital archives, multimedia resources, and virtual platforms to conduct research on British Studies topics. Furthermore, technology is integrated into stage performance rehearsals, utilizing video recording, editing software, and online collaboration tools to review and refine performances.

Active learning strategies are employed, including group discussions, debates, role-playing activities, and hands-on projects to immerse students in exploring British history, culture, and literature. These strategies extend to the stage

performance rehearsals, fostering active participation in character development, script analysis, and staging decisions.

Critical thinking and problem-solving are cultivated through challenges that prompt students to analyze primary and secondary sources, critically evaluate historical events and literary texts, and synthesize information to form their interpretations. Opportunities for creative problem-solving arise during stage performance rehearsals, such as blocking scenes, developing character motivations, and resolving conflicts.

Collaboration and communication are promoted through group research projects, collaborative writing assignments, and peer feedback sessions. Effective communication skills are honed as students present research findings, share insights, and provide constructive feedback during stage performance rehearsals.

Cultural competence and diversity awareness are fostered by exploring diverse perspectives within British history, literature, and society, alongside incorporating multicultural themes in the stage performance. Reflective practices and self-assessment opportunities are embedded throughout the research and teaching processes, encouraging students to evaluate their progress and set goals for future learning. Finally, a commitment to professional development and lifelong learning is modeled, inspiring students to pursue their interests and passions beyond the classroom.

4. DISCUSSION

Integrating research on British Studies with stage performance rehearsals offers a unique opportunity to engage students in interdisciplinary learning experiences that foster critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. By incorporating the skills required by a teacher of the future, educators can create a dynamic and immersive learning environment that prepares students for success in the 21st century.

Combining British Studies with stage performance rehearsals allows students to explore historical, cultural, and literary concepts in a hands-on and experiential way (Krajcik et al., 2008). This interdisciplinary approach encourages students to make connections across different subject areas and develop a holistic understanding of British history, literature, and society (National Research Council, 2000).

Technology plays a crucial role in facilitating both research and stage performance rehearsals (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2013). Educators can leverage technology tools such as online databases, digital archives, and multimedia resources to conduct research on British Studies topics (Wigfield & Cambria, 2010). Additionally, video recording, editing software, and online collaboration tools can enhance the stage performance rehearsals, allowing students to review and refine their performances with greater precision and efficiency (An, 2017).

Active learning strategies engage students in the learning process by encouraging them to actively participate in discussions, activities, and projects (Prince, 2004). Incorporating group discussions, role-playing activities, and hands-on projects into both the research and rehearsal process promotes deeper engagement and a more meaningful learning experience for students (Fredericks & McColskey, 2012).

Collaboration and communication skills are essential for success in both research and stage performance (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). By working collaboratively on group research projects and participating in collaborative rehearsals, students learn to communicate effectively, share ideas, and work together towards common goals (Slavin, 1995). These skills are valuable not only in academia but also in future careers and personal endeavors.

Exploring British history, literature, and culture provides students with opportunities to develop cultural competence and awareness of diversity (Gay, 2010). By examining diverse perspectives and experiences within British society, students gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and the complexities of identity (Banks, 2008). This awareness is further enhanced through the casting choices and multicultural themes explored in the stage performance.

Reflection and self-assessment are integral components of the learning process, allowing students to evaluate their progress, identify areas for improvement, and set goals for future learning (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009). By incorporating opportunities for reflection and self-assessment throughout the research and rehearsal process, educators empower students to take ownership of their learning and personal growth.

5. FINDINGS

Interdisciplinary Learning Enhancement: The integration of British Studies research with stage performance rehearsals, particularly for a stage performance adaptation of Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew," as seen in the American movie "10 Things I Hate About You," significantly enhanced students' interdisciplinary learning experiences. By exploring the original text alongside its modern adaptation, students gained insights into both historical British culture and contemporary American society, facilitating a deeper understanding of cultural continuity and change over time.

Engagement and Motivation: The incorporation of active learning strategies, such as group discussions, role-playing activities, and hands-on projects, fostered high levels of student engagement and motivation throughout the research and rehearsal process. Students were actively involved in analyzing and interpreting the themes, characters, and social dynamics presented in both the original play and its modern adaptation, demonstrating a genuine enthusiasm for the material.

Technology Integration Impact: The integration of technology tools, including online databases, digital archives, multimedia resources, and video recording/editing software, significantly enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of both the research and rehearsal phases. Students utilized digital resources to access primary and secondary source materials related to British Studies topics, while technology tools facilitated the recording, reviewing, and refining of stage performances, leading to greater overall learning outcomes.

Collaboration and Communication Skills Development: The collaborative nature of the research and rehearsal process provided students with ample opportunities to develop and strengthen their collaboration and communication skills. Through group research projects, collaborative script analysis, and joint performance rehearsals, students learned to effectively communicate their ideas, collaborate with their peers, and work together towards common goals, thereby enhancing their interpersonal and teamwork abilities.

Cultural Competence and Diversity Awareness: The exploration of British history, literature, and culture, as well as the adaptation of "The Taming of the Shrew" into a contemporary American setting, promoted cultural competence and diversity awareness among students. By examining the cultural contexts and societal norms depicted in both the original play and its modern adaptation, students gained a nuanced understanding of cultural diversity, gender roles, and social dynamics, fostering empathy, tolerance, and respect for diverse perspectives.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The integration of British Studies research with stage performance rehearsals, alongside the adaptation of classical texts like "The Taming of the Shrew" into contemporary forms such as "10 Things I Hate About You," offers a powerful means of enhancing interdisciplinary learning. By juxtaposing historical British culture with modern American society, students gain a deeper understanding of cultural continuity and change, enriching their appreciation of both literary and social contexts.

This approach fosters critical thinking skills as students analyze themes, characters, and social dynamics across different time periods and cultural settings. By engaging with complex texts and their adaptations, students are encouraged to think critically, question assumptions, and explore multiple perspectives, fostering creativity and intellectual growth.

The use of active learning strategies and technology integration promotes high levels of student engagement and motivation throughout the research and rehearsal process. Students are actively involved in collaborative discussions, hands-on projects, and multimedia presentations, fostering a sense of ownership and investment in their learning experiences.

Through collaborative rehearsals and communication exercises, students develop essential skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. They learn to collaborate effectively with peers, communicate their ideas clearly, and adapt to new challenges, preparing them for success in future academic and professional endeavors.

By exploring diverse cultural contexts and societal norms, students develop cultural competence and empathy for diverse perspectives. The adaptation of classical texts into contemporary forms encourages students to consider issues of gender, identity, and power dynamics in different cultural contexts, fostering a deeper understanding of human experiences and social dynamics.

The integration of research and performance-based learning equips students with the skills and competencies needed to thrive in the digital age and beyond. By combining traditional scholarship with creative expression, students learn to navigate complex cultural landscapes, communicate effectively across diverse audiences, and adapt to rapidly changing environments, preparing them to become lifelong learners and engaged global citizens.

In conclusion, the integration of British Studies research with stage performance rehearsals, coupled with the adaptation of classical texts for contemporary audiences, offers a transformative learning experience that fosters interdisciplinary understanding, critical thinking, creativity, and cultural competence. By embracing this innovative approach, educators can empower students to become active participants in their own learning journey, equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in a rapidly changing world.

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