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DIALOGUE IN DANCE PERFORMANCE

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Abstract:

Communication is the act of sharing or exchanging, ideas or feelings. It is well known that one main element for good communication is usage and delivery of the right words at the right time, which is generally termed as dialogue.

If there is a conversation happening between two performers on the stage through a non-verbal medium, will the same tone of the dialogue reach the viewers ?

Aim:

The main aim of this paper is to establish some of the prominent methods of communication and dialogue delivery in dance performances.

Keywords – verbal communication, non-verbal communication, body language, physical expression, movement

A dialogue is communication or discussion between people or groups of people. A person's need to express his or her views, desires, feelings, response, principles, strategies to another individual, is fulfilled through a dialogue.

An author has the facility to convey his/her thoughts like the personality, event, feelings, passion, sentiments, plot by scripting. However, that benefit is ruled off when it comes to theatre or performing arts.

Dialogue takes its dominance in literary work by making it exciting and dynamic. Dramaturges use the approach of dialogue to communicate significant episodes to their audience.

Dialogue unwraps character. In the manner the character delivers a dialogue, plentiful unsaid things come to light. With the usage of vernacular and dialogue delivery, the character's cultural background, psychological state, education, mannerism, emotional upbringing, social values, etc are exposed.

Dance and Dialogue :

It is commonly interpreted that a dialogue can occur only when there is verbal conversation between two or more individuals. But when the method of conveying is through a non-verbal style like dance or mime, is there a possibility for a dialogue to take place? Is it only through a verbal dialogue does an individual comprehend?

If there is a conversation happening between two performers on the stage through a non-verbal medium, will the same tone of the dialogue reach the viewers ? Or is it misinterpreted ? Or is the essence lost ?

Dance Dialogue requires the necessity for a neoteric method of expressing. The conversation happens between the performers using various aspects and one main element is body language. Is body language as loud as verbal language ?

Body language possesses equal ability to convey a dialogue. It sometimes makes a better impact than verbal communication.

In this passage, some of the known yet ignored signs of non-verbal communication will be discussed.

- Physical expression – Gestures, Facial expressions, Body postures.
 - Gestures – It is often a tendency to gesture while talking, although it goes unnoticed. Gestures are classified into two – (1) Representative Gesture, (2) Non-Representative Gesture.
 - ✓ Representative Gestures – They are gestures used to communicate a specific meaning. It often refers to a person, object, location, etc. An example of representative gesture is sleeping, welcoming (namaskaram), waving of hand.
 - ✓ Non – representative Gestures – These gestures commonly go by the name “beat gestures”. These gestures are made spontaneously. An example of beat gesture is up and down, front and back movement of hand repeatedly.
 - Facial expressions - Stating an example from our daily life – In today’s fast hi-tech world, individuals communicate using various applications like WhatsApp and Instagram. In a recent survey it was concluded that, individuals use emojis for an effective communication. What are emojis ? Emojis are virtual forms of facial expression.

Facial expressions go way back in time. They are considered as one of the best styles for expressing without the usage of words. Natyasastra an ancient encyclopaedic treatise on arts, which has its influence on music, dance and other literary forms of India which dates to 200 BCE has spoken about facial expressions.

As well known by all, the Navarasa are Shringara (erotic), Hasya (humorous), Karuna (pathetic), Raudra (anger), Veera (heroic), Bhayanaka (fear), Bhibatsa (disgust), Adbhuta (surprise), and Santha (tranquillity).

- Body posture – Posture is a technique of how we hold our body. A posture has the power to disclose emotions, attitude, and intentions. There are 6 basic postures of dance – jump, turn, travel, gesture, stretch, and stillness. How does a posture convey any dialogue in dance ? A posture sets the stage for the character. When the character demands confidence and power, the posture evidently uses briskness in the body and quick turns. Whereas when the character

possesses fluidity and softness, the posture changes itself in being gentle and sometimes even stillness.

- Practicing time – Performing arts and rhythm go hand in hand. Since dance uses more of steps and movement and less of dialogue delivery, the beats of the music and the timing in which the dance and beats are matched and delivered play a major role. Each rendition of the beats expresses each emotion. It is all about delivering the right emotion at the right time.
- Music and Dance – Does music add passion to dance ? Or is it just an accompaniment to dance ? When music and dance combine, can the usage of dialogue be eliminated ?

Music has the magic to create a combination of harmony, melody, rhythm, or a blend of expressive content. Music and Dance complement each other and when combined, there is a possibility to eliminate verbal communication.

Dance encompasses actions and facial expressions. Music on the other hand holds tempo, beats, rhythm, etc. Some examples on how emotions could be conveyed using music and dance.

- When the speed or pace of the music increases the associated emotion would be excitement or anger.
- Emotions can generally be comprehended with certain factors, and this maybe verbally or non-verbally. When the volume of the voice goes high, the associated emotions will be – anger, tension, frustration and related, similarly it can be excitement, happiness. Meanwhile when the volume of the voice stays at balance it is indication of calmness, joy, etc. When the volume of the voice is very low or sometimes not audible, it indicates – fear, sadness, etc. This same viewpoint applies to music as well. When the loudness of the music increases it is generally to show power, intensity or anger and on the other hand when the music dips to the lowest or sometimes its silent it indicates fear, doubt and sadness.
- When the music becomes a song or tune it reveals happiness, shy, relaxation, etc.

Again, as much as music and dance go hand in hand all the emotions can be delivered only with the right timing.

Dance – Creative practice of Non-verbal communication :

Unlike Verbal conversation, communicating through Dance is a bit more complex. Dance is similar to poetry. One who has the skill to decode the language and the hidden meaning or sometimes layers of meaning, enjoys it better.

Judith Lynne Hanna in one of her papers wrote, “Verbal language strings together sequence of words, and dance strings together sequence of movements”.

The spark of a dance dialogue comes out when there is progressive dance. Progressive dance – In Indian Classical Dance this kind of a progressive conversational dance is called sancharis’. The term Sanchari comes from the root word Sanchara meaning traverse. Sanchari is a dance portion which gives scope for improvisation or explanation. Sanchari bhavas have the character of transitory emotional feelings that differ from person to person. Vyabhicharibhaa is another name for Sancharibhava and they are 32 in total.

Dance Dialogue develops the space to link movement and meaning. The moment the performer enters the stage, he/she has written the character's life story on their body and becomes the character. It may seem that only the character's present is revealed, but for the characters present to be brought out, the individual must absorb the past and future as well. Every little detail the placing of the leg, the eye position, the stance, the usage of body, the amount of space utilized, and most importantly the relationship with the ground delivers the dialogue non-verbally to the audience.

Conclusion:

Through Dance dialogue, it is possible for performers and spectators to encounter and establish social and creative skills, benefitting the larger group.

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