

Does the Voice Uplift a Theatre Actor?: A Critical Survey of Voice-training Strategies

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The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly, this study probes into the efficacy and utility of the voice-training for a theatre actor, and secondly, it attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing voice-training exercises in Sri Lanka. Here, special focus will also be paid on Alexandrian Voice-training techniques. In addition, available voice-training strategies will also be consulted when necessary.

It is doubtless that the voice plays an integral role in the success of a theatre actor since the voice is thoroughly conducive to protect the identity of a person. Accordingly, it is a necessary to acquire a sound awareness of the diverse variations and nuances to become an accomplished theatre actor. Although a considerable amount of groundbreaking research studies as well as fully-fledged scholarly works by the occidental scholarship on this subject is available, little interest is shown to investigate this in current Sri Lankan society.

While a few literary texts and guidebooks which discuss voice-trainings in relation to a theatre actor are available in Sri Lanka, they are, in fact, not adequate to fill the required gap in voice-training. Presumably, this scarcity of relevant guidance has been a factor in the lack of knowledge on this particular phenomenon among many of theatre actors. Thus, the awareness of relevant voice training methods of many theatre actors in Sri Lanka is questionable. Therefore, this study also discusses the possibility and reliability of practical implementation of sophisticated voice training strategies that have been developed in Western countries in current Sri Lankan theatre.

Since this study is based on the performing arts, the data gathered from the primary and secondary sources related to the field of performing arts will be utilised together with appropriate practical examples using pertinent academic tools. In addition to the aforementioned sources, experiments in unpublished literary works, monographs and research articles will also be examined so as to reach more reliable conclusions. Especially, avoidance from both apologetic and polemic tendencies will be ensured when drawing conclusions.

Keywords: Theatre-actor, voice training, current Sri Lankan theatre, identity