

Theatre with Children: Harnessing Creative Thinking and Meaningful Reflection

Mumtaz Begum Aboo Backer

School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Pulau Pinang, MALAYSIA

Email: mumzie@usm.my

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ABSTRACT

This article examines theatre as a tool to foster children's creative thinking and engaging in meaningful reflection. Emphasising the term "theatre with children," this paper identifies the children involved in theatrical projects as "active participants" who are able to express their thoughts, feelings, and reason through interactive theatrical activities. This article is based on two previous research projects focusing on theatre as a performative medium to explore children's creativity in communicating their ideas and opinions, understanding and reflecting meaningfully on the issues that impact them. The pertinent question is, "How does theatre facilitate the development of creative thinking and self-reflection in children?" Building on Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory, which highlights the importance of cognitive processes, motor skills, and socio-cultural interactions, this research aims to shed light on the role of theatre as a dynamic medium through which children can enhance their learning abilities. Specifically, the study focuses on the development of (1) cognitive capabilities through knowledge acquisition and understanding, (2) motor skills via observation and imitation, and (3) socio-cultural competencies through reflective thinking and reasoning. These projects utilised qualitative research methods to assess children's creative thinking and reflective abilities. Data collection techniques included observation, group interviews, theatre and art-based activities, notes from facilitators, and entries from children's journals. Despite the challenges associated with the aforementioned methods which will also be discussed in this article, the research revealed compelling findings: (1) children displayed a keen interest in theatre activities, showing a readiness to discover and learn; (2) the exploration of theatre activities with children fostered heightened motivation to improve their task performance; and (3) theatre culminates best practices while engaging with children, offering a "safe space" for them to exercise their rights, and acknowledged as active participants with a voice. This research not only answers the initial query regarding the impact of theatre on children's creative and reflective capacities but also underscores the symbiotic relationship between educational theory and the practical application of theatre as a transformative tool for learning and development.

Keywords: *theatre with children, creative thinking and children, self-reflection and children, Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory and theatre, theatre and best practices with children*

INTRODUCTION

This article explores theatre as a conduit to foster creative thinking and nurture meaningful reflection in children. I base my study on two research projects utilising theatre and involving children as active participants contributing towards two theatrical showcase performances. The research projects positioned children as active agents, able to speak for themselves and not passive receivers; therefore, I stress the importance of the terms “working with children” and “theatre with children” rather than “research on” children. O’Kane (2000) and Mayall (2000) concur that many researchers today emphasise on working/researching “with” children because they believe that children’s opinions and views impact the research and their lives significantly.

In order to evaluate the impact of theatre on children’s development, this paper poses some pertinent questions that frame the study’s theoretical framework, further elucidating the nature and extent of the symbiotic relationship between children and theatrical engagement. What is the multifaceted relationship between theatre and children’s holistic development encompassing cognitive, physical and emotional dimensions? Does the notion children and theatre are inherently compatible entities enriching each other’s experiences hold ground? In what ways does theatre promote children’s creative thinking and foster meaningful reflection?” By framing these questions as significant inquiries in the field of research, I emphasise their relevance and potential contributions to advancing knowledge and understanding of the relationship between theatre and children’s development.

Before embarking on any research/project with children, knowing and understanding children, their rights, abilities, and life challenges is of utmost importance. Apart from these, children need to be understood cognitively, physically, psychologically, and socially. United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF n.d.) defines children not only by age number (any human being below 18 years old) but also firmly states that children have the right to be heard, protected, and to dream. It is crucial for any researcher working with children to align their projects to the best interest of the child, identify with the rights of the children to speak, make decisions concerning them, be treated fairly, be respected as respondents and active participants rather than passive receivers (Qvortrup 1994; James and Prout 1990).

While children’s theatre has found robust markets and gained significant recognition in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Europe, and Australia, the situation contrasts with the slow acknowledgement of its importance, quality, and professionalism within the Malaysian theatre industry. However, in the late 20th century, theatre practitioners, researchers, and artists began looking seriously into children’s theatre, its benefits, children’s voice and engagement in the performing arts. Malaysian theatre companies, including Five Arts Centre (established in 1984), Arts-Ed (a non-profit organisation founded in 1999), Gardner and Wife (founded in 2000), and Jumping Jelly Beans (established in 2003), along with theatre schools and faculties in higher education institutions, have placed significant emphasis on working with children through theatre and the arts, showcasing children’s theatre of good quality and aesthetics, utilising theatre as creative educational platforms for children and young people to learn about real issues and theatre as a medium to provide innovative community-based arts and culture education (ASEF 2010; Arts-Ed n.d.; Experian n.d.).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Postmodern views and the social construction of children see them as social actors in their own rights and thus, deserving to be investigated on their own (Stafford et al. 2021; O’Kane 2000; Christensen and James 2000; Llyod-Smith and Tarr 2000). According to Hedges (2022) and Bruner (1996), children can be perceived as knowledgeable, competent, and powerful members of society; hence, research must include children’s perspectives as they are capable of giving insights into their lives. Children’s voices are pivotal to identifying and understanding their abilities to communicate and express their concerns and interests (Hedges 2022; Langsted 1994; Mayall 2000; Clark and Moss 2001; Einarsdottir 2005).

Children possess multiple abilities if given the right opportunities. United Nations Children's Fund and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) recognise children's rights to speak, make decisions for themselves and become competent members of their communities by contributing diversely, including helping their parents at home and economically in some countries (UNICEF n.d.). These world organisations also believe that children have agency and should be given a supportive environment to voice their concerns. Communication is one of the most important abilities for all human beings, and it is the lifeline of research/projects involving them, in this case, children in theatre. Their social, interpersonal, and communication skills are highly influenced by the varied backgrounds or social settings and environments they are raised in, familiar with, and challenged by, as theorised by Vygotsky (Barnett 2019). Nonetheless, children develop these necessary skills as they become competent members of society, positively contributing to their knowledge and views (Hedges 2022).

Freeman (1998) states that children are further viewed as capable of conversing with their peers and adults as they learn to understand another person's feelings, speech, and emotions. He further emphasises that it is highly important for projects and studies involving children to provide access and space for them to practice their rights to express their beliefs and opinions and be taken seriously. Eluyefa (2017) echoes Freeman's (1998) emphasis on children's rights to express, underscoring the significance of theatre as a space to consider children's abilities and desires to engage in meaningful conversations. She further argues that theatre serves as a means for children to seek recognition, respect, and acknowledgement. This view is in accordance with Article 12 of the UNCRC, in that there needs to be a clear recognition of the child's rights to participate in any decision-making that affects their lives directly or indirectly. In addition, theatre as an interactive platform, facilitates children's basic relationship building, such as making new friends and strengthening friendships with peers and adults (Eluyefa 2017). These abilities further enable them to be comfortable enough to voice out in their social settings and environments. Children learn to listen, empathise, and negotiate through these processes and relationships while understanding cultural experiences.

The theatre has been an integral part of many cultures since time immemorial. Although historically, theatre's origins can be traced back to Greece during the Dionysus Festival, it is almost impossible to suggest the exact date as to when children's theatre began. However, it is believed that children's theatre began in Europe with dramatisations from folk and fairy tales in the late 19th century (Eluyefa 2017). Since its establishment in 1947, Unicorn Theatre has operated as a professional touring theatre company in London, engaging nearly 60,000 children from diverse backgrounds and age groups through comprehensive programming. Unicorn Theatre believes that children are able to expand their horizons and challenge how they see and understand each other by learning through the experiences of performing and watching the performances (Eluyefa 2017).

Caryl Jenner, the founder of Unicorn Theatre, emphasises that children's theatre must be of the same standards and quality as adults' theatre. Therefore, it is imperative to consider the aesthetic values of performances from all perspectives: writing, directing, and designing (Eluyefa 2017). In later years, another theatre company, Polka Theatre, was established in Wimbledon in 1979. Its primary aim was to provide children with a creative and imaginative space, guided by the mission "to ignite imagination and cultivate a spirit of discovery among children from diverse backgrounds" (Reason 2010; Eluyefa 2017).

Theatre, which employs storytelling techniques, makes it compelling and attractive for children to perceive learning from various domains, encompassing history, geography, literature, language and moral values (Eluyefa 2017). The theatre projects studied in this paper utilise folktales to craft expressive narratives and creatively engage children with meaningful reflections of themselves and their surroundings. Theatre that utilises storytelling approaches harnesses children's innate capacity for imaginative play and fantasy, piquing their curiosity and artistic sensibilities as they delve into narratives and enact dramatic performances. This immersion further nurtures children's development of self-understanding and a more profound comprehension of the world surrounding them. Discovering and constructing meaning is facilitated through various elements such as visual elements, mime,

gestures, vocal expression, and character portrayal, fostering the cultivation of learning strategies and critical thinking skills, including prediction and interpretation (Maguire and Schuitema 2012). The dramatisation of the narratives through performative play (theatre) significantly benefits children by improving concentration and emotional intelligence, especially empathy. Additionally, theatre lays the groundwork for activities promoting language development and enhancing cognitive and motor skills (Maguire and Schuitema 2012). Besides encouraging positive attitudes in children, theatre presents the opportunity for working with varied stories, narratives, myths, and folktales, further cultivating an appreciation for various cultures (Wood and Grant 1997).

Through the theatrical projects, the contention emerges that the children actively honed their listening skills, inculcated principles of teamwork, and developed a deeper sense of respect for others through collaborative learning and engagement (Manoharan and Mumtaz Begum 2023). In this process, the children also cultivated self-respect and greater tolerance for the perspectives of others. As children increasingly sharpened their abilities to comprehend, retell, enact, and even create their narratives, these endeavours further contributed to other positive outcomes, including heightened motivation, enhanced confidence, and the bolstering of self-esteem.

METHODS, DATA COLLECTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Children's competence as reliable participants in research have always raised doubts among critics and some scholars (Warming 2005). Their knowledge and consistency as independent informants in expressing their opinions have even been questioned (Einarsdottir 2005). However, qualitative research methodology and diverse methods, including artistic processes as methods/approaches to gathering data, have opened up many possibilities for researchers to seek children's perspectives. Research using a myriad of methods revealed that young children give valuable and useful information and, therefore, are knowledgeable informants (Evans 2000; Clark and Moss 2001; Sheridan and Samuelsson 2001; Wiltz and Klein 2001; Einarsdottir 2005; Warming 2005).

These projects were based on the belief that children are different from adults, and there needs to be a better understanding of how to use various methods to understand their lives and views (Mumtaz Begum 2023). Hence, the methods used must take into consideration of their competence, knowledge, interest, and context. The projects used qualitative research to assess children's creative thinking and reflective abilities. This paper aims to elucidate the theoretical framework that supports using theatre as a dynamic medium to facilitate children's learning, drawing upon Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory. Vygotsky's theory underscores the significance of cognitive, motoric, and social interaction in learning (Barnett 2019). Through this lens, this paper intends to put forth theatre as a potent vehicle for enabling learning experiences that encompass cognitive development, motor skill acquisition, and socio-cultural engagement.

This study examines theatre as a medium for children to engage in creative expression and meaningful self-reflection. Data collection techniques included observations, theatre-based exercises, and other art-based activities. Data were gathered from facilitator notes, group interviews, children's journal entries, and the culminating theatre performance to assess children's understanding and insights gained from the theatre activities.

Overall, we worked with 60 school-going children between eight and ten years old. Each project was limited to 30 children. Children's participation was facilitated through convenience sampling, with some individuals selected by school authorities. Prior to involvement, all children obtained parental consent and their respective schools or homes via informed consent letters. Additionally, the projects sought permission from the Ministry of Education Malaysia via the eRAS portal, an online registration platform for projects involving children in schools.

The projects were carried out consecutively, with Project 1 spanning from 2017 to 2020 and Project 2 from 2020 to 2022. Project 1 was held in schools, whereas Project 2 was conducted at the Penang Shan Children Home. The children comprised girls and boys from multi-ethnicity and varied socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. The "working duration with the children" was five months

respectively, including one month of intensive practice and rehearsals for theatrical performance. We met with the children once a week for two hours. During the intensive one month, we increased the sessions and the hours but with many short intervals and breaks in between, taking into consideration of children's concentration, fatigue, and rest time.

Five undergraduate performing arts students from School of the Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia volunteered as facilitators. Each facilitator oversaw five to six children under their care/guidance during the projects. The researchers and facilitators met and discussed the planning of the theatre and art-based activities every week to ensure children's benefits, as well as the project outcomes for theatrical performances, were met. The discussion on theatre and art-based activities as methods and processes for children's creative and reflective development draws the connection to Vygotsky's learning theory, which emphasises cognitive, motor skills and social interaction.

The projects were organised into three main phases: Phase 1 introduced and exposed theatre and art-based activities, Phase 2 focused on immersion into theatre, and Phase 3 culminated in a theatre showcase performance. In Phase 1, participants engaged in various theatre activities, including theatre games, imitation, and art-based activities such as drawing and colouring. Phase 2 deepened the experience through storytelling, role-playing, script reading and storyboarding. Phase 3 concentrated on preparing the children physically, mentally, and emotionally for their final theatre performance.

PHASE 1

Theatre Games (15–20 Minutes)

This served as a preparation phase aimed at physically, mentally, and emotionally ready participants for the upcoming activities. The significance of incorporating theatre games lay in their ability to assess various aspects of children's development: cognitively, by evaluating their familiarity with the games and comprehension of instructions; in terms of motor skills, through their active engagement in performing required tasks; and socially, by observing their interactions and responses to others. Additionally, theatre games fostered spontaneity, nurtured creativity, and instilled discipline in children.

Drawing and Colouring (15–20 Minutes)

The children worked on various themes/subjects for their drawing and colouring sessions guided by the facilitators. The themes ranged from "My Circle," "My Friend and Me," "My Family and Me," "My Likes," "My Dislikes," "My Fears," "My Happiness," "My Dreams and Hopes," "My Doubts," and "My Ambition." These self-discovery exercises were borrowed from Sue Jennings's (2017) works with children through psychodrama but altered by my team to suit the children. These exercises allowed children to explore and understand themselves cognitively. Drawing and colouring activities too aided in developing children's gross and fine motor skills with steady control. Choosing and matching colours with objects or subjects assessed children's creativity and imagination, fostering meaningful reflection.

Imitation (15–20 Minutes)

Next, children were introduced to imitation exercises. A facilitator would demonstrate an action or sound, and the children would observe before attempting to imitate it. Each child had the opportunity to act as the leader and the follower. This activity typically lasted about 20 minutes. The leader would assess whether the followers replicated the action or sound accurately and move on to the next child once satisfied. They would continue refining the imitation if improvements were needed until satisfaction was achieved.

A striking correlation arises between Vygotsky's theory and the realm of theatre, particularly in imitation activity. Vygotsky accentuates the pivotal role of imitation in the learning process, highlighting how children absorb knowledge by observing the actions of their peers, family members, and adults in their surroundings (Barnett 2019). Similarly, within the theatrical domain, imitation assumes a significant role. Actors are encouraged to keenly observe and replicate the movements of nature, animals, people, and objects, underscoring the inherent connection between the imitation process in theatre and Vygotsky's emphasis on observational learning in cognitive development. These parallels underscore the profound influence of both Vygotsky's theory and theatrical practices on shaping the mechanisms through which children acquire knowledge and skills.

PHASE 2

Storytelling and Role-playing (20 Minutes)

During these sessions, facilitators presented stories to the children, selecting narratives based on the children's preferences. The storytelling was stylised, utilising both body and voice to bring the narratives to life. Children were subsequently encouraged to engage in role-play, embodying the characters from the stories through their imaginative faculties and emotional insights. Facilitators frequently probed questions and hypothetical problems within the storylines to elicit the children's perspectives. These activities were designed to assess the children's comprehension, empathetic responses, and creative problem-solving abilities, thereby contributing to the study's exploration of the impact of theatrical engagement on cognitive development and reflection of children.

Script Reading and Storyboarding

Script reading helps children's consistency and fluency in three main areas: prosody, automaticity and accuracy (Garret and O'Connor 2010). Prosody is the ability to read with expression and emotions. Automaticity is the ability to read effortlessly, enabling the child to channel more cognitive energy towards text comprehension. Accuracy is recognising and pronouncing words without error, and it is often taught with phonics instructions. During the script reading sessions, children were asked to read the same script aloud multiple times for accuracy, prosody, and automaticity with the guidance of the facilitators. Children were paired according to their characters, read their lines and reacted to the lines/dialogues of their partners.

Storyboarding

The facilitators undertook the storyboarding process with the children. The children were given manila papers and made to draw/write the story flow they would perform. This was done according to the plot and scenes of the play.

PHASE 3

Theatre performance rehearsals and practices were held intensively throughout this phase of the project with the children and production crew. Rehearsals included costume, technical, and familiarity with space.

Group Interviews and Observation

Group interviews were conducted with children at various project stages to gather their insights and comprehension of the activities (Gollop 2000). These interviews adopted a conversational approach rather than a formal interview format. This was to ensure children's comfort, voluntarily wanting to

give feedback and not putting them in compromising obligatory or forced situations. Researchers and facilitators meticulously observed the children's behaviour, body language, and level of engagement throughout the activities. Additionally, facilitators were instructed to document their observations through notes, focusing on the children's cognitive understanding of the activities, motor skill development, and interactive behaviours.

Children's Journal

Each child was given an individual notebook designated as their journal. They were instructed to record their feedback regarding the activities in response to the questions posed by facilitators at the end of each session. These questions were designed to assess the children's comprehension, knowledge, interests, and insights pertaining to the activities. The questions were:

1. Write three things you learned today.
2. Did you enjoy your session/activity today?
3. Which activity did you like the most? Why?
4. Would you want to do it again?
5. Which activity was difficult or you didn't like? Why?
6. How can we help to make it easy or interesting for you?

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings align with the study's objectives, which aimed to investigate the efficacy of theatre as a facilitator for children's creativity and reflective capabilities. The study underscored theatre's potential to foster cognitive development, motor skills enhancement, and peer interaction, thereby enabling children to engage with issues that resonate with them on a deeper level.

The multisensory and kinaesthetic nature of theatre provided children with an immersive learning experience, encouraging active participation and understanding through various modalities. From active listening and responsive engagement during theatre games, imitation, and storytelling sessions to the culmination of a performance showcase, children demonstrated their comprehension through bodily actions, gestures, and vocal expressions. They honed their memorisation skills through repeated script readings, internalising keywords and cues from fellow actors' dialogues, thus enhancing language fluency (Bafle 2021). This process facilitated the association of actions, words, and meanings, leading to the discovery of new vocabularies and the acquisition of grammatical accuracy naturally and enjoyably (Maguire and Schuitema 2012; Bafle 2021).

At a more advanced level, engaging in theatre activities such as storytelling, role-playing, storyboarding, and thought tunnelling allowed children to delve deeper into the narratives and explore underlying issues, conflicts, or moral dilemmas (Manoharan and Mumtaz Begum 2023). This provided opportunities for children to use language beyond the confines of the story text within a structured framework and encouraged them to adopt a critical perspective, questioning rather than passively accepting information. It prompted them to weigh various perspectives, consider consequences, and devise potential solutions.

As Wood and Grant (1997) highlighted, these projects demonstrated that theatre-based approaches fostered conducive environments for collaborative work among children, enhancing teamwork, empathy, and tolerance. Through collaborative activities, children learned to actively listen, comprehend, and empathise with others' viewpoints and emotions, even in moments of disagreement. Often, children independently resolve minor conflicts or misunderstandings among themselves, with minimal intervention from adults or facilitators. Additionally, a code of handshake was developed

collaboratively with the children, signifying resolution and mutual acceptance after apologising or resolving conflicts, thereby fostering a positive atmosphere.

From a kinaesthetic standpoint, these projects demonstrated that children could articulate themselves through meticulously rehearsed and carefully choreographed movements. Observation and imitation were key to enabling children to confidently perform a movement/action/gesture. They even mustered the confidence to offer comments, suggestions, or corrections to their peers and fellow actors on stage, reflecting both growing self-assurance and making meaningful reflections through interaction. These positive developments can be attributed to the nature of theatre, which fosters an environment where participants, in this case, children, feel empowered to express themselves, provide feedback, and be responsive without fear of judgement (Dockett 1999). Over time, I observed the children becoming increasingly immersed in the theatre activities, underscoring the importance of building trust and rapport with them.

As the performance showcase approached, children became more curious, wanting to know more about their involvement, roles they played, costumes, and make-up, revealing excitement and expectations too. Most of the children showed interest in playing the main or heroic roles. On the other hand, a few children also showed enthusiasm for naughty/cheeky characters or troublemakers, as they found them more challenging. The children were taught to respect the roles given to them through casting based on their strengths. Eventually, children learned to accept their roles, understood the importance of each role and enjoyed playing them.

The ongoing challenge involves identifying and implementing best practices for engaging children in theatre. An essential component was ensuring the children understood their participant rights (Flewitt 2005). Detailed discussions were held to inform children about the nature of their involvement, the activities they would be engaged in, what was expected of them, and, importantly, their rights to express their concerns and withdraw from the project at any time. They were also assured of the confidentiality of what they shared, expressed, and spoke with us during their participation. This comprehensive briefing on their rights and expectations played a crucial role in addressing and resolving issues that emerged during the project, benefiting both the children and me as the researcher.

Continuing the discussion on best practices with children in theatre, discussion on best practices with children in theatre continues by looking at an incident that occurred during the final rehearsal of the performance, where I was put in a conflicting situation. Two children quarrelled and wanted to quit the performance. As a researcher, I was ethically bound to respect their decisions because contracts did not bind them, and I could leave the projects anytime. On the other hand, from the theatre's perspective, I had to teach the children to be responsible and respect other production team members who had worked very hard for the showcase. I sat them down, talked to them, and offered to listen to their stories. I honestly told them that I could not take sides but could be a mediator. After mediating the situation, both the children realised their mistakes and apologised to one another and the team. The show went on!

This shows that theatre provides a healthy environment to discipline children acting out or misbehaving. Theatre does not use harsh methods to discipline a child, but rather through reasoning and making the child reflect on his act and how it affects others. Situations like this could pose a dilemma for the researcher due to the obligation of the methodological problems faced if too many respondents quit (Freeman 1998). Additionally, researchers must observe the sensitivities surrounding children and non-verbal actions expressed through facial expressions and body gestures as indicators of their true feelings (Alderson 2005; Mumtaz Begum 2023).

Through the journey towards staging the final showcase, children showed a deep commitment during rehearsals and performances. We gathered some important data through group interviews and feedback in their journals. Children revealed that they felt excited and confident performing to a large audience, which included their teachers, principal, school counsellors, families, and friends. Anxiously they were curious about the audience's reaction and feedback. Naturally, children were proud and happy to receive praises, hugs, congratulatory cheers, and handshakes from their teachers, family members, and friends.

Initially, children expressed hesitancy from nervousness and self-doubt at the project's outset. However, their confidence noticeably increased as they became more accustomed to the theatre activities. Their resounding "yes" response underscored their growing comfort and enthusiasm for the theatrical endeavours when asked if they would participate again.

In conversations with the children, they conveyed a sense of accomplishment in overcoming challenges, particularly in mastering the English language via the activities and the performance. They expressed pride in their achievements and felt valued by their families and teachers. Their eagerness to engage and perform in future theatre projects indicates their appreciation for the arts and enjoyment of learning through theatrical experiences.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In concluding this paper, it is paramount to synthesise the findings with the theoretical underpinnings provided by Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory, thereby addressing the research question of how theatre serves as an enriching medium for children's creative and reflective development. The empirical evidence supports the notion that theatre, as a collaborative and immersive experience, significantly contributes to cultivating children's creative thinking and capacity for meaningful reflection. This aligns with Vygotsky's emphasis on the importance of social interaction and cultural tools in cognitive development. Furthermore, theatre, which encompasses participation and performance, reflects Vygotsky's concept of zone proximal development, where children are able to think and perform better with the guidance of other knowledgeable individuals, in this case, the facilitators (Barnett 2019).

Moreover, this article's findings also indicate positive benefits for both children and researchers. Theatre has bolstered children's creative, reflective, communication and interpersonal skills. For researchers, the study has provided profound insights into children's behaviours, world views, and cognitive processes, enriching our understanding of the pedagogical potentials of theatre. Thus, the affirmation that theatre is a powerful medium for enhancing children's learning, creativity, and reflection has been illuminated by grounding this investigation in Vygotsky's Social Learning Theory. This research not only answers the initial query regarding the impact of theatre on children's creative and reflective capacities but also underscores the symbiotic relationship between educational theory and the practical application of theatre as a transformative tool for learning and development. Based on these findings, it is recommended that educational institutions integrate theatre programmes into their curricula to foster an environment that supports creative and reflective growth, leveraging the collaborative nature of theatre to enhance children's overall development.

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