

Institution: University of Chester
Unit of Assessment: 35: Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
Title of case study: Drama in Schools as Cultural Intervention – Romanian Case Study
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Teaching and learning in Romanian schools is being transformed by the idea that the arts can have a cultural impact on learning and that drama can enhance everyday performativity. Thousands of students have been involved in this research, which has led to the foundation of the Educational Drama Association of Romania, an independent, sustainable and locally governed organisation whose aim is being achieved in schools across Romania. EDAR works to promote drama in education, both as an elective and extra-curricular activity, to develop critical thinking.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Professor Peter Harrop and Senior Lecturer Jane Loudon are familiar with the history of ideas reflected in the development of educational drama, applied drama and theatre for development. Their joint work in Romania has spread to Estonia, Macedonia, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia. This work falls at the interface of three defined areas of research – firstly, the meeting of performance and performativity, secondly, intercultural approaches to performance, and finally, applied drama and theatre. Harrop and Loudon have gained experience in a number of cultural settings in Ethiopia, India, Macedonia, Malawi, Romania, South Africa and the UK. In the Romanian case, both speed and spread in the achievement of impact reflects research significance and is itself deserving of further documentation and dissemination.</p> <p>Harrop engages with the anthropological and ethnographic dimension of the emergent Performance Studies and its debt to social scientific notions of performativity, while Loudon focuses on the intercultural application of the notion of ‘dialogic performance’. Both have experience of the introduction of these ideas in different cultural contexts and have developed mechanisms for a culturally neutral approach which is nevertheless cognizant of the culture in which it operates. They use the term performativity to refer to the performance of everyday social interaction and observe that, though performativity encompasses most of the ways in which we learn and teach, it is rarely foregrounded in educational curricula.</p> <p>Their research shows human performativity can be harnessed through dramatic frameworks of experiential learning in order to enliven teaching and learning. This can be applied to selected bodies of content, and particularly lends itself to educational subtexts of ‘self’, ‘difference’ and ‘change’. This interplay of ideas and practice has been summarised in <i>Performance Research</i> (Harrop 2004); <i>Research in Drama Education</i> (Loudon 2005); and in a joint paper presented at Research in Drama Education International, University of Exeter (2005). It continues to inform their current work in both performance ethnography and performance making. Both Harrop and Loudon have been employed at the University of Chester from 2001. Loudon as Senior Lecturer in Drama and Programme Leader for Drama and Theatre Studies. Harrop as Head of Performing Arts (2001 – 2004); Dean of Faculty for Arts and Media (2004 – 2009) and Pro-Vice Chancellor (2009 - date).</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p> <p>Harrop, P. ‘Performance and Civility’, <i>Performance Research</i>, 9:4, 2004, pps. 134 – 138, Routledge.</p> <p>Harrop, P. & Loudon, J. ‘Educational Drama as Cultural Intervention: A Romanian Case Study’, <i>Drama As Social Intervention</i>, 5th International Conference, Research in Drama Education, Exeter University, April 2005.</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

Loudon, J. 'The Value of Educational Drama', Joint Conference, Romanian Association of Teachers of English and the Romanian Association of Teacher Educators, University of Cluj, 2005.

Loudon, J. 'The Educational Drama Association of Romania', Keynote Address, Inaugural EDAR Conference, University of Reshita, 2007.

Harrop, P. Leading two two-week drama workshops for Romanian practitioners, and directing two further two week Romania based intercultural workshops for (largely) eastern European participants. Calimenesti, Romania (2001); Navodari, Romania (2002); Brasov, Romania (2003) and Mercurea Ciuc, Romania (2004).

Output was submitted to RAE 2008 and assessed at 2* or above.

Harrop, P., Bacova, D., Balasiu, V. & Phillips, T. Development of the Educational Drama Association of Romania. (2004). Confidential report (for the British Council). The report examined the funding relationships between the British Council, a second non-Romanian NGO, and EDAR/Romanian Ministry of Education.

Output was submitted to RAE 2008 and assessed at 2* or above.

Funding

British Council funding awarded to Peter Harrop and Jane Loudon (awarded incrementally on the strength of participant feedback, this amounted to £5,500, covering the years 2001-2006).

Quality

Harrop and Loudon co-led the 2002 British Council/EDAR summer school in Novodari, Romania, which was awarded the Best European Language Project 2002.

Peter Harrop was invited to become the director of a Hornby School in Romania in the summer of 2004. He has published in *Performance Research*, *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, *Contemporary Theatre Review*, *Folk Life* and *Popular Entertainment Studies*. His edited book *Performance and Ethnography* was published in June 2013. His earlier Ethiopian work is cited in the World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre, and the papers of the University of Hamburg Institute of African Studies. In the last five years he has delivered papers at the Universities of Aberystwyth, Bangor, Exeter, Imperial, Lancaster, Leeds, Nottingham and Sheffield. He has externally examined related PhDs at Royal Holloway, Sheffield and Warwick.

Jane Loudon has undertaken consultancy work in Drama in Education in Romania (2001 - 2010), India (2003), and Malawi (2000-2009); she has published on this work in *Research in Drama Education*, and is currently co-editing a collection of Malawian cultural tales for publication. She was the invited keynote speaker at the inaugural EDAR (Educational Drama Association in Romania) conference, at Resita in Romania in November 2007. She mentors the University of Chester graduate theatre company, *2engage*, who continue to work in Romania with EDAR. She continues to undertake theatre for development projects in Malawi and with the Tibetan community in Northern India.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Drama as an effective educational tool tends to go unrecognised in cultures where engagement with performing arts is seen as unusual, privileged and elitist – the preserve of an exceptional gift. By focusing on everyday performativity, it is possible to facilitate teaching and learning by encouraging action, reflection, analysis and re-action. This has proved particularly valuable and popular in the transition from reliance on 'chalk and talk' methods prevalent in immediate post-Ceausescu Romanian schools, to a more dialogic approach. Victoria Hlenschi, current Vice President of EDAR, notes that "the benefits of drama in an educational system still marred by the traditional methods of the communist legacy were immediately obvious. As a participant since the very beginning of this national project I have felt its positive impact both personally and

professionally, which has naturally reflected in my teaching and my students' performances".

Harrop and Loudon have disseminated a theoretically informed model of practice developed in a range of cultural settings which has led to the foundation of the Educational Drama Association of Romania which now has a membership of approximately 150 teachers, spread across the country. The organisation exists for 'promoting drama in education both as an elective and as an extra-curricular activity... to develop...critical thinking'. The organisation held its inaugural conference at the University of Resita in 2007 and is now an independent, sustainable and locally governed organisation whose aim is being achieved in schools across Romania. In addition to working with 150 Romanian teachers, Loudon, her students and the department's graduate student company have visited teachers in more than 50 schools across the country, and some four thousand pupils have taken part in workshops. Their work has impacted on teaching and learning methods in Romanian high schools. This has attracted the attention of the Romanian Ministry of Education and the Romanian media; the work has been reported in three television news interviews (reaching some 60,000 viewers in total), and in two articles in regional newspapers (reaching some 8000 readers in total).

Harrop and Loudon delivered joint summer schools in Romania in 2001 (Calimanesti), 2002 (Novadari) and 2003 (Brasov). The first of these, in Calimanesti, led directly to the establishment of the Educational Drama Association of Romania. The second (Novadari) won the European Union award for best language project. The third attracted teachers from Estonia, Macedonia, Russia, Slovakia and Slovenia. In 2004, the British Council devoted, for the first time, an international Hornby Summer School to Educational Drama and located it in Mercuria Ciuc, Romania, inviting Harrop to undertake the role of Director. In 2005, Loudon was invited to speak at a joint conference of the Romanian Association of Teachers of English and the Romanian Association of Teacher Educators at the University of Cluj. In 2007, EDAR organised its inaugural independent conference with the Romanian School Inspectorate and University of Resita. Loudon was invited to give the opening address and conduct a workshop for the participants.

In 2008, Loudon was asked to address officials of the University of Resita and participants in a non-UK Erasmus arrangement to give an overview of the University of Chester/EDAR project. Meanwhile, "the association [EDAR] managed to create a network of teachers of English ready to implement and sustain educational drama in Romania". [Hlenschi, V. EDAR Vice President, 2013.] From 2004 to 2009 Loudon travelled with groups of Drama students from the University of Chester to conduct drama workshops jointly with EDAR members in Romanian schools, offering supported experience in the drama classroom. Loudon's work mentoring a University of Chester graduate applied theatre company, *2engage*, allowed her to step back from direct involvement and pass the mantle of the work to the company, who were then supported by the increased resource and organisational capacity of EDAR. From 2009 onward the company (with the active support of the department) has continued to work with teachers and pupils in Romanian schools with further planned visits for 2014. The project has reached more than 50 schools across the country, and some four thousand pupils have taken part in workshops. This work has attracted attention from the Romanian Ministry of Education and media, including television news reports and interviews, both regional and national.

In less than a decade (from 2004 to 2013) the project has moved from a British Council supported initiative to a sustainable national project. As the Vice President of EDAR put it this year, "Drama helps both teachers and students develop their communication, problem solving and social skills, their emotional intelligence, creativity, cooperation and collaboration, self-esteem and self-confidence." [Hlenschi, V. EDAR Pice President, 2013.]. The work of Harrop and Loudon has played a crucial, determining role in bringing this valuable approach to Drama to the Romanian education system.

Impact case study (REF3b)**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

The Educational Drama Association of Romania can be accessed on <http://www.drama.ro/> with major projects listed at <http://www.drama.ro/proj.php>.

A statement from the Vice President of EDAR is held by the University and corroborates the quotations attributed to her in section 4 above.