

Exploration on Emotional Expression Practice in Theatre Workshop in University

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Abstract: *Theatre workshops have been recognized in recent years as an effective approach to enhancing the comprehensive skills of non-performing arts majors, with “emotional memory” exercises being particularly crucial. This exercise requires participants to awaken and integrate their genuine emotional experiences to enhance the authenticity and emotional impact of their performances. Emotional Memory is a vital component of Stanislavsky's acting system. It represents a concrete technique within Stanislavsky's theory for eliciting genuine emotions and is regarded as the core method for achieving “authentic feeling.” Subsequently adapted by theater educators such as Viola Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang, it has been widely applied in theater workshops for non-performing arts majors. This study focused on students majoring in Broadcasting and Hosting Arts at Shandong Youth University of Political Science, all of whom lacked systematic theater exercises. Employing qualitative methods, the research documented student performance during emotional memory exercises through teacher observation and behavioral analysis. Results indicate that Emotional Memory significantly enhances students' emotional expression, stage presence, and creative thinking, while also positively impacting teamwork and self-awareness. This research demonstrates the significant value of Emotional Memory in drama education for non-performing arts majors, providing actionable pathways and insights for implementing university theatre workshops.*

Keywords: Theatre Workshop, Emotional Memory, Non-Performing Arts Major Students

1. Introduction

Theatre Workshop is an experiential drama classroom centered on “learning by doing.” It features no fixed stage and does not emphasize professional performance techniques. Instead, it guides students to learn and experience through practice using methods such as theatre games, creative drama, role-playing, and collective creation. In recent years, theatre workshops have gained widespread recognition as an effective approach to enhancing the comprehensive literacy of non-performance majors. Emotional memory serves as a core element within theatre workshops and stage practice, shaping the profound expression of human experience on stage. It refers to an individual's capacity to reactivate and relive past events and their corresponding emotions when confronted with specific stimuli or situations (Liu, 2006). Stanislavsky regarded it as the key technique for actors to access “genuine emotion.” He repeatedly emphasized: “The more intense, prominent, and precise the emotional memory, the more vivid and complete the creative experience becomes” (Stanislavsky, 1981). Through this mechanism,

actors transform personal experiences into the lifeblood of their characters, elevating performance beyond superficial mimicry to touch emotional authenticity.

In theatrical practice, actors typically revisit personal emotional experiences under the guidance of mentors or practitioners to craft authentic and compelling stage characters. Emotional memory serves as a bridge connecting life experiences to artistic expression, evoking and channeling genuine emotions to enhance the resonance and impact of performances (Ma, 2014). Through emotional memory exercises, actors gain deeper character understanding, bridging the gap between personal experiences and fictional scenarios to ultimately deliver performances that resonate profoundly with audiences (Zhang, 2005). These memory fragments, buried deep within consciousness, are often triggered by familiar stimuli like sight, sound, or scent. This allows actors to authentically access emotions such as joy, sadness, anger, and fear, establishing a direct emotional connection with the audience (Fu, 2021).

Practices involving emotional memory also help students become aware of their own emotional reserves and learn to integrate them into their performances. This is particularly true for those with limited acting experience, who often perceive emotions as external displays, relying on exaggerated gestures or facial expressions to convey them. By guiding participants to internalize a character's emotions and draw inspiration from personal experiences, drama education not only enhances the authenticity of performances but also cultivates students' perception and understanding of the subtle nuances of human emotions. When students can draw upon genuine emotional experiences, their performances feel more grounded in reality and resonate more deeply with audiences (Liu & Li, 2020). Consequently, an increasing number of drama educators recognize the training value of emotional memory techniques, extending their application beyond performance majors to specifically enhance students' capacity for emotional recall and expression.

Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang further developed and applied the concept of Emotional Memory in drama education, building upon Stanislavski's theoretical foundation. While Stanislavski emphasized that actors should draw upon personal emotions to create authentic characters, Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang developed a series of exercises suitable for non-performing arts majors—methods that are easy to implement and clearly education-oriented. For instance, Spolin's "Give Me More Emotion" theatre game requires students to greet each other while embodying specified emotions—such as joy, sadness, or anxiety—conveying emotional authenticity not only through words but also via body language, vocal tone, and micro-expressions, thereby enhancing emotional perception and improvisational skills (Spolin, 2001). Xiaohua Zhang's "Emotional Sculpture" comprises static and dynamic components: Emotional Sculpture (Static) requires students to embody a specific emotion or scenario through physical form, emphasizing the solidification and externalization of emotion within space; Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic) involves narrating an emotional progression through sequential movements and group collaboration, highlighting the fluidity and transformation of emotion over time (Zhang, 2011). These exercises stimulate students to access their emotional memories while prioritizing emotional responsiveness and creative expression within collective interaction. Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang adapted professional performance theory into a theatrical practice method suitable for non-performing arts majors. This approach helps students develop emotional expression skills, deepen self-awareness, and enhance artistic literacy within the safe, supportive environment of a theatre workshop.

Despite the significant role of emotional memory in actor practice, there remains a lack of in-depth research on how to systematically integrate it into university theatre workshops. This study involved 24 undergraduate students majoring in Broadcasting and Hosting Arts at Shandong Youth University of Political Science. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 22, with an equal gender ratio, and all participated voluntarily. By integrating emotional memory into theatre workshops, drawing upon exercises proposed by Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang, and employing teacher classroom observation methods, this study focuses on examining changes in students' emotional expression abilities, stage presence, and creative thinking. It addresses the current lack of empirical research on emotional memory in theatre education, providing theoretical foundations and practical examples to enhance the emotional authenticity and artistic impact of theatrical performance.

2. Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang's Theoretical Research and Development on Emotional Memory

The theoretical framework of this study is primarily grounded in Viola Spolin's (1986) Theatre Game Theory and Xiaohua Zhang's (2011) research on Creative Drama practices. These two theoretical approaches provide the foundational concepts for this study, guiding the exploration and understanding of emotional memory among non-performing arts major students in theatre workshops.

Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang both emphasize the importance of emotional memory in theatrical performance, noting its broad applicability even for students majoring in non-performing arts. Spolin contends that emotional memory helps performers draw authentic emotions from their personal experiences, enabled them to create believable and relatable characters. It is not merely a component of performance technique but a crucial bridge connected the actor's inner experience to their stage presence. By integrating personal experiences into their roles, actors can deepen the emotional resonance of their performances, forging powerful connections with audiences (Spolin, 2001). Furthermore, emotional memory fosters students' profound understanding of their emotional landscapes. Through revisiting and reconstructing emotional experiences, students learn to effectively process and express feelings, enhancing their emotional regulation skills. This enables them to better manage stress, cultivate empathy, and navigate complex interpersonal relationships. This process holds particular significance for non-performing arts major students, who often lack systematic experience in exploring emotions. Spolin's emphasis on self-awareness, emotional openness, and the ability to transform feelings into artistic expression provides invaluable learning pathways for such students. These competencies extend beyond theatrical contexts, translating into emotional intelligence, empathy, and communication skills that offer long-term value for both personal growth and professional development.

Spolin's Theatre Games represent one of the most influential approaches in drama education, emphasizing the cultivation of participants' emotional authenticity, creativity, and social interaction skills through spontaneity and experiential learning. By employing improvisational exercises, Theatre Games create an environment free from predetermined scripts and performance pressures, enabling students to freely express emotions and ideas (Spolin, 1999). This approach fundamentally supports the integration of emotional memories, particularly facilitating their natural consolidation by encouraging students to authentically engage emotional experiences within improvised scenarios. At the core of these Theatre Games are carefully designed improvisational activities aimed at developing participants' intuitive responses and emotional spontaneity. Through meticulously structured frameworks, these

games cultivate students' intuitive reactions and emotional spontaneity while providing a psychologically safe space for expression. Within relaxed and enjoyable activities, students' performance anxiety is alleviated and emotional openness enhanced, facilitating easier access to deep-seated emotional memories. Thus, Spolin's improvisational theater method provides an ideal theatrical environment for students without formal drama training to explore their emotions. She emphasized that improvisation not only enhances emotional sensitivity and communication skills but also strengthens teamwork and fosters understanding of diverse emotional perspectives. Through this process, non-performing arts major students can progressively develop emotional intelligence, improving their ability to recognize, interpret, and express emotions. Spolin's theory establishes a solid foundation for the educational application of emotional memory across diverse student populations.

Xiaohua Zhang's creative drama practice method also places significant emphasis on emotional memory, viewing it as a core tool for cultivating deep emotional intelligence and systematically integrating it into character development and performance training. He believes emotional memory helps students establish an emotional connection between themselves and their characters, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the character's psychological motivations (Zhang, 2006). Unlike Spolin's emphasis on spontaneous improvisation, Xiaohua Zhang stresses utilizing emotionally significant situations from personal, cultural, or historical contexts to guide students in effectively accessing and expressing emotions (Zhang, 2011). He encouraged students to recreate moments of joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness from their own lives, reflecting on both the experience and expression of these emotions. This process not only enhances their expressive performance capabilities but also deepens their awareness of their own emotions and behaviors. Xiaohua Zhang's approach fosters a safe and supportive environment where students can confront potentially suppressed or neglected emotions (Zhang, 2016). This helps overcome psychological barriers such as excessive self-consciousness and fear of judgment, thereby enhancing emotional expression and communication skills. Through this method, students not only develop emotional literacy and self-confidence but also strengthen interpersonal skills, decision-making abilities, and overall self-awareness.

Xiaohua Zhang's research further explores how drama exercises can enhance students' emotional expression, social interaction, and creative thinking (Zhang, 2004). He advocated for systematically developing students' emotional competencies through teaching interventions that integrate emotional memory and improvisational tasks, offering a contemporary educational perspective that complements Spolin's improvisational approach. He emphasizes that teachers should guide students to revisit and reconstruct personal emotional experiences within structured frameworks (Liu, 2006). Such emotional recollection activities significantly enhance the accuracy and intensity of emotional memory. Simultaneously, Xiaohua Zhang highlights the critical role of teachers in theatre workshops—requiring careful navigation of emotional boundaries, provision of emotional guidance, and offering robust support during high-intensity emotional activities (Zhang, 2011). These approaches are particularly vital for non-performing arts major students, who often face greater challenges in emotional expression within theatrical settings. Furthermore, Xiaohua Zhang's theory emphasizes the cultural relevance and adaptability of drama education, exploring how theatrical practices within specific cultural contexts influence students' emotional and social competencies, thereby expanding the cross-cultural dimensions of drama education theory.

Integrating Spolin's Theatre Game Theory with Xiaohua Zhang's Creative Drama provides a robust theoretical foundation for this study's emotional memory training with non-performing arts majors at the Theatre Workshop of Shandong Youth University of Political Science.

Spolin's theory highlights the benefits of spontaneous emotional expression, improvisation, and experiential learning methods. Meanwhile, Xiaohua Zhang's research provides crucial support for implementing emotional memory within diverse theatrical environments. This integrated theoretical framework not only enhances the theoretical understanding and practical effectiveness of emotional memory in the Theatre Workshop but also guides the exercise design for this study. Through this theoretical framework, this study aims to explore the application and development of emotional memory within theatre workshops. It seeks to provide non-performing arts major students with a novel pathway for emotional expression and self-awareness, while simultaneously offering fresh perspectives and methodologies for theatre education theory and practice.

3. Application of Emotional Memory in Drama Workshops for Non-Performing Arts Major Students

This study, grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Viola Spolin and Xiaohua Zhang, designed and implemented a series of drama exercises centered on emotional memory for non-performing arts major students. The study incorporated Spolin's "Give Me More Emotion" training program and Xiaohua Zhang's "Emotional Sculpture," aiming to cultivate students' ability to respond instinctively and authentically to emotional cues. Structured exercises were employed to foster emotional expression and teamwork. The following outlines the exercise arrangements designed for this research:

Emotional Memory - Theatre Games and Creative Drama Workshop - 2024

Emotional Memory		
Time	Content	Objective
Time 0—20mins	Give Me More Emotion Viola Spolin	Be able to make the most realistic reaction through the teacher's instructions. Greet or respond to someone through your words or actions.
Time 20mins—60mins	Emotional Sculpture (Static) - Joy, Anger, Sorrow, Happiness Xiaohua Zhang	Through the way of group static drama, engage in artistic creation activities. Watch the performance of each group and give discussion and feedback.
Time 60mins—120mins	Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic) - Joy, Anger, Sorrow, Happiness Xiaohua Zhang	Through the joint creation of the group and develop the voice and dialogue, try to divide the labor, plan and cooperation with classmates, and engage in artistic creation activities. Watch the performance of each group and give discussion and feedback.

In Theater Games for the Lone Actor, Spolin introduced the "Give Me More Emotion" exercise. Students stand in pairs back-to-back, turn around at the teacher's cue, and express specific emotional states (such as joy, anger, fear, or curiosity) through facial expressions, gestures, and speech. This exercise aims to evoke natural, profound emotional responses rather than theatrical exaggeration, fostering genuine emotional exchange. For non-performing arts students, this project effectively demystifies the performing arts by emphasizing authentic expression over mere performance. It encourages exploration of emotional nuances, providing a safe space to step outside comfort zones while cultivating emotional literacy and interpersonal skills (Spolin, 2001).

Xiaohua Zhang introduced the "Emotional Sculpture (Static)" and "Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic)" exercises in "Development and Application of Creative Drama Teaching." The "Emotional Sculpture (Static)" exercise requires students to collaborate in groups to create "frozen frames," capturing the narrative, emotional atmosphere, and character relationships of

a scene. Through static sculptures, they express various themes. This segment emphasizes the importance of physical expression and spatial awareness, teaching students how to convey complex narratives without dialogue. The exercise provides non-performance majors with opportunities to collaboratively explore emotions and body language, deepening their understanding of collective emotional communication through peer interaction while fostering teamwork and mutual support (Zhang, 2016).

The “Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic)” exercise guides students from static scenes into dynamic narratives, incorporating dialogue, movement, and the development of emotional arcs. Groups create short plays around specific themes—such as the joy of festive celebrations or the sorrow of battlefields—requiring critical reflection on the emotional trajectory of the storyline while honing improvisational skills. This segment emphasizes the interplay between memory, emotion, and creative expression, helping students internalize the importance of rhythm, body language, and tone in storytelling. It encourages them to draw from personal or shared experiences, linking emotional memory with creativity to craft meaningful and resonant performances. Simultaneously, this exercise cultivates empathy by exploring others' emotional worlds through role-playing. These carefully designed activities allow non-performing arts students to deeply appreciate the transformative power of emotional memory on stage and in life (Zhang, 2016).

4. Methodology

To comprehensively evaluate students' performance and gains in emotional memory training, this study employed the Teacher Observation method, focusing on students' development in emotional expression, creative thinking, and teamwork. The drama workshop was conducted in September 2024 at the drama rehearsal hall of Shandong Youth University of Political Science, with 24 students majoring in Broadcasting and Hosting Arts participating.

In emotional memory exercises, students demonstrated diverse reactions and challenges. Most students still felt uncomfortable with emotional transitions, particularly in the “Give Me More Emotion” exercise, where they struggled to convey emotions naturally through language, body language, and facial expressions. Some students exhibited stiff expressions due to a lack of systematic training, or resorted to defensive behaviors like “breaking character with laughter” when deep emotional portrayal was required, undermining the authenticity of their performances. However, others demonstrated strong emotional mobilization and immersion skills, quickly entering their roles through personal experiences or situational imagination to deliver more compelling performances. This variation indicates that emotional memory training helps students integrate their inner feelings with character demands, fostering more natural emotional expression.

In creative exercises, students commonly struggle with narrative structure and thematic clarity. For instance, in the “Emotional Sculpture (Static)” exercise, the piece Chinese Puppet Show appeared vague due to weak thematic awareness, while Migrant Workers Demanding Debt became cluttered with excessive plot elements. Through teacher intervention and strategic guidance, students optimized narrative structure and visual presentation while preserving original creative intent, enhancing expressive accuracy and emotional cohesion. Some students demonstrated insufficient spatial awareness on stage, resulting in issues like straying from designated performance areas or visually “breaking the frame,” which impaired the overall viewing experience. These problems primarily stemmed from limited understanding of stage layout and lack of collective performance experience. By integrating foundational principles

of stage arts and targeted exercises, students gradually mastered basic spatial application principles, enhancing the visual coherence and overall expressiveness of their performances.



Emotional Memory - Theatre Games and Creative Drama Workshop – “Emotional Sculpture (Static)” - Joy, Anger, Sorrow, Happiness - Students: Changshuo Ge, Xinruo Zhang, Jiayi Zhao, Anru Yang, Chengyao Wang, Yuxin Yang, 2024

Team collaboration and creative expression demonstrated both positive progress and existing challenges. Most groups effectively shaped characters and emotional dynamics through body language and prop usage, such as students adapting classic themes from *Journey to the West* and *Eight Immortals Cross the Sea* in their creations. Some teams still struggled to balance individual creativity with collective narrative, and their use of props did not fully serve the contextual needs. Subsequent training should emphasize the symbolic function of props and the diversity of spatial storytelling to enhance the narrative depth and visual appeal of performances. Observations from the drama workshop revealed that emotional experiences and expressive activities significantly influence the effectiveness of emotional memory exercises. Students who are more emotionally open or have prior teamwork experience (e.g., in music, sports, or other performing arts) were more likely to establish emotional connections with the training content. Conversely, students lacking such backgrounds were more prone to exhibit performance anxiety and defensive behaviors. This indicates that drama workshops must cultivate more inclusive and psychologically safe environments to support emotional exploration and expressive development across diverse student backgrounds.



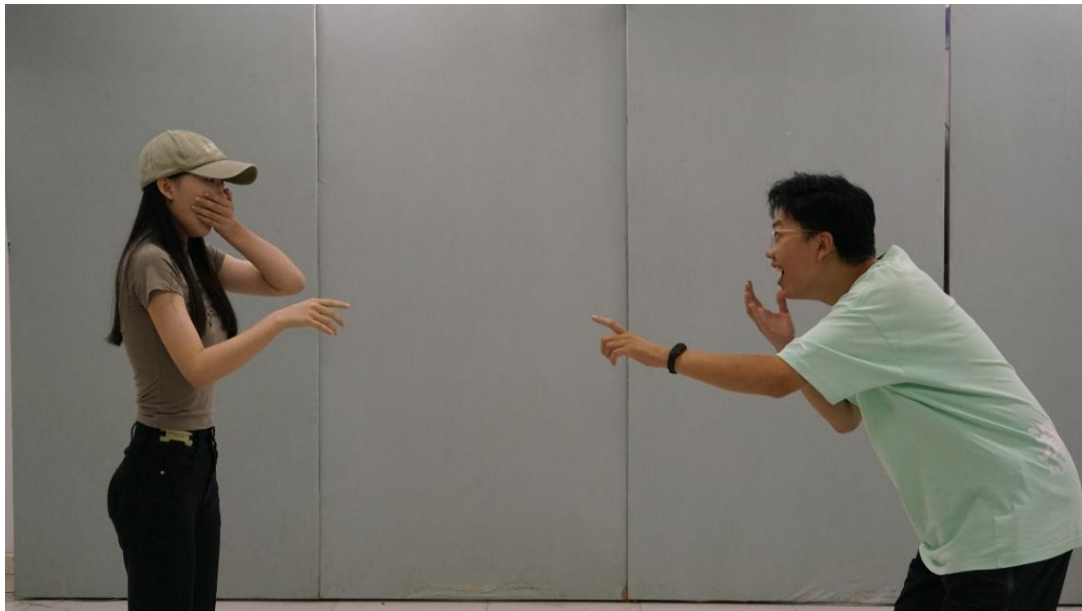
Emotional Memory - Theatre Games and Creative Drama Workshop – “Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic)” - Joy, Anger, Sorrow, Happiness - Students: Junchang Wang, Guiyi Zhu, Luyao Zhang, Guanlin Liu, Runqing Ma, 2024

In the “Emotional Sculpture (Static)” exercise, students gained deeper insight into the pivotal role of props in narrative and emotional construction. For instance, in the scene “Migrant Workers Demanding Debt Repayment,” excessive props blurred the narrative focus and created visual clutter. Conversely, the piece “Meeting on the Magpie Bridge” lacked essential props, diminishing the accuracy of character portrayal and emotional depth. Through reflection, students realized props must serve both characters and context, striking a balance between practicality and symbolism to enhance performance authenticity and impact. This insight prompted them to prioritize thoughtful prop selection in subsequent exercises, elevating both narrative depth and visual appeal in their performances.



Emotional Memory - Theatre Games and Creative Drama Workshop - “Emotional Sculpture (Static)” - Joy, Anger, Sorrow, Happiness - Students: Guiyi Zhu, Runqing Ma, Guanlin Liu, Junchang Wang, Luyao Zhang, 2024

In terms of emotional expression, students commonly face challenges with abstract emotions, particularly when portraying complex or nuanced feelings. During the “Give Me More Emotion” exercise, students tended to overact or become overly dramatic when expressing emotions like jealousy, contempt, or shyness, revealing gaps in their emotional vocabulary and performance skills. Feedback from the exercises indicates that emotions frequently experienced in daily life (e.g., happiness, nervousness) are easier to evoke and express, while abstract emotions (e.g., guilt, awe) present greater challenges. Therefore, it is necessary to design more structured training to expand students' emotional recognition and expression capabilities. Some students gradually recognized that authentic performance relies not on external exaggeration, but on the genuineness and control of internal emotions. Through practice, they began mastering more subtle, restrained expressions, enhancing the effectiveness of emotional communication. Additionally, students lacking collaborative experience exhibited heightened self-consciousness and performance anxiety during interactive segments, limiting their ability to fully immerse in emotional states. This further underscores the critical importance of establishing trust and a supportive environment for students' emotional expression and performance growth.



Emotional Memory - Theatre Games and Creative Drama Workshop – “Give Me More Emotion” - Students: Guiyi Zhu, Chentao Gao, 2024

In the “Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic)” exercise, students experienced the close connection between performing arts and life by creating works that incorporated personal experiences. For example, a student's piece titled “School Bullying,” based on real-life experiences, resonated deeply with other students present and sparked profound discussions. “Remembering the Martyrs” evoked profound sorrow by reenacting historical events. Students recognized that real-life events and emotions provide rich material for performance, lending narratives greater depth and impact. Through such exercises, students not only honed their acting skills but also cultivated empathy and emotional memory, enhancing their ability to express authenticity on stage. Character development is intrinsically linked to self-projection. Through narrative construction and role-building, students reflect on personal experiences and emotional awareness, achieving self-exploration and identity formation within artistic expression. Group collaboration facilitates the exchange of perspectives and collective reflection, enhancing the cohesion and depth of performances. Research indicates that emotional memory training

provides non-performing arts major students with a crucial pathway to bridge the gap between everyday emotional experiences and dramatic expression. Students demonstrated significant progress in emotional expression, communication skills, and teamwork. Through exercises like “Give Me More Emotion” and “Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic),” they progressively learned to evoke authentic emotional experiences and integrate them naturally into performances, showcasing more sincere and nuanced emotional expression. These practices not only enhanced students' acting abilities but also fostered their emotional intelligence and personal growth.

In terms of physical expression, students demonstrated strong imitation skills, particularly during foundational tasks (such as following instructions and warm-up activities) and group exercises (like “Emotional Sculpture (Static)”). However, they still struggled to convey complex emotions (such as conflicting feelings or a sense of awe). While most students could effectively mimic movements, their ability to create original physical expressions requires further development. Students are gradually recognizing that conveying emotions through subtle body language and vocal inflections requires avoiding excessive theatricality, which is crucial for enhancing emotional literacy and interpersonal skills. In Language Expression, students excelled in dialogue and observation, particularly in attentively observing others' performances and constructing personal narrative frameworks. However, individual variations existed in facial expression richness and imaginative storytelling. Some students demonstrated creativity by weaving compelling narratives, though innovation was limited in complex storytelling scenarios.

In the area of Voice and Expression, students generally struggled to balance natural vocal variations with emotional intensity during the “Give Me More Emotion” training, often appearing stiff or overacting. However, some students demonstrated improved vocal responsiveness by observing their peers. In Improvisation, students excelled in multisensory observation and imitation, as well as event depiction, with their improvisational skills steadily improving. However, coherence and narrative fluency remained insufficient during relay creation and story performance. The ability to integrate rhythm and objects into performances varied significantly; while some students demonstrated creativity, others fell into fixed patterns. Students emphasized the role of group practice in fostering real-time adaptation and innovation. In Drama Creation, significant ability disparities emerged, particularly in stage awareness and teamwork. While students demonstrated strong understanding of stage layout and collaborative creation of static imagery, translating abstract inspiration into coherent stage works remained challenging. Nevertheless, their capacity for dramatic conception and execution notably improved throughout the creation and refinement process.

Teamwork emerged as a highlight of this exercise, with students demonstrating strong collaboration within their groups. The “Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic)” activity underscored the importance of cooperative storytelling, with most students reporting that group work boosted their confidence and creativity. Students developed well in sharing perspectives, adapting narratives, and co-creating themes, while reflecting on how group activities fostered mutual respect and effective communication. However, balancing individual expression with group cohesion remained challenging. For instance, during the freeze-frame presentation of Emotional Sculpture, some students struggled to coordinate peers' ideas, resulting in disjointed displays. Despite minor setbacks, the vast majority of students felt teamwork not only enriched their performances but also deepened their understanding of theater's collaborative nature. Teacher classroom observations reveal that the emotional memory exercises significantly enhanced students' emotional expression, stage creation, and teamwork abilities. They also

indicate that further practice is needed in areas such as presenting complex emotions, maintaining improvisational coherence, and refining coordination mechanisms between individual and collective efforts.

5. Conclusion

This study employed the Teacher Observation method to thoroughly examine the impact of emotional memory training on non-performing arts major students. Findings indicate that emotional memory training significantly enhances students' authentic emotional expression, interpersonal empathy, and communication confidence. Participating students demonstrated notable progress in emotional expression, creative thinking, and teamwork. During the initial phase of the Theatre Workshop, many students exhibited noticeable emotional discomfort and excessive self-consciousness, often resulting in exaggerated or superficial emotional expressions. These issues gradually diminished as the workshop progressed and teachers provided targeted guidance. Through exercises like "Give Me More Emotion" and "Emotional Sculpture (Dynamic)," students progressively learned to evoke authentic emotional experiences and integrate them naturally into their performances, demonstrating more sincere and nuanced emotional expression. This transformation indicates that emotional memory exercises help students effectively merge their personal inner emotions with character demands, facilitating the natural flow of emotions and their artistic transformation.

During Theatre Workshop sessions, students generally found it easier to access simple emotions commonly experienced in daily life, such as happiness, nervousness, or sadness. However, they faced greater challenges when expressing complex emotions like guilt, awe, or romance. This indicates that emotional memory training requires differentiated practice designs tailored to the accessibility of different emotional types, supporting students in deeply exploring and accurately expressing more complex emotional experiences. Furthermore, emotional memory exercises played a positive role in collaborative learning, enhancing team cohesion and the co-creation of collective meaning. Through jointly completing theatrical tasks, students gradually learned to listen to others' emotional expressions and build emotional resonance within group interactions. The study also identified instances where some students exhibited false emotional memories or imaginative exaggeration during performance scenarios. Therefore, Theatre Workshop instructors should guide students to distinguish between authentic emotional recollections and theatrical exaggeration during training. By providing specific guidance and timely feedback, instructors can help students more accurately understand and utilize emotional memory, thereby preventing distorted or superficial emotional expression (Zhang, 2011).

In summary, emotional memory exercises in theatre workshops not only enhance the dramatic expressiveness of non-performing arts major students but also positively impact their emotional intelligence and personal growth. Through emotional memory practice and reflective learning, students deepen their emotional awareness, improve communication skills, and cultivate empathy. With continued practice and research, emotional memory holds promise to enrich the theoretical and practical resources available to theatre workshops.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study.

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