

The Effectiveness of Utilising Drama Performance in Enhancing Student Teachers' Engagement with Harper Lee's Novel 'To Kill A Mockingbird' (1960)

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to interrogate the effectiveness of utilizing drama performance in enhancing student teachers' engagement with the literary text 'To Kill a Mockingbird' by Harper Lee (1960). This study is based on a TESL course "Teaching of literature: Reading the word and the world" for TESL undergraduate student teachers at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Malaysia. In this study, student teachers would need to read and understand the literary text "To Kill a Mockingbird" and eventually conduct a drama workshop, where they will dramatize the text to a group of secondary school pupils. The drama performance aims to engage these student teachers on issues of racism, prejudice and discrimination as a means to utilise literary texts to help them gain insight on how they are constructed and enacted. This study was designed to be a case study with three methods of data collection namely questionnaire, student teachers' personal response and reflective essays. In this study, the student teachers reflected on the whole process of dramatization, identifying its strengths, weaknesses and suggestions on how to improve it. Generally, the participants perceived that dramatization helps them to construct meaning from the literary text and be able to examine issues of race, racism and discrimination.

Keywords: drama performance, reading engagement, literary text, literature in English, To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee

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