

GHANAIAN PRODUCERS FOR RADIO AND STAGE--
SIMILARITIES IN TRAINING PROGRAMMES

by J. Scott Kennedy*

The object of this project is to examine the nature of a training programme for producers in Ghana and to determine the similarities and dissimilarities in such training programmes for producers of radio drama and producers of stage drama in Ghana.

The subjects of this investigation include male and female adults and make a total of thirty-two. The instruments used include intensive interviewing via interview-response sheet, autobiographical case histories, taped interviews, graded technique exercises, questionnaires, and participant observation.

This initial investigation limits itself in scope to an intensive study of three specific groups in Accra including the following:

- (1) Producers of Drama for Radio from the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation.
- (2) Producers of Drama for Stage from the Ghana Drama Studio.
- (3) Producers of Drama for Stage from the University of Ghana School of Drama students.

The approach and check includes a specific design and analysis based on the 'Tune-In' and 'Unlocking' Process. Special check-sheets,

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study-sheets, and syllabi have been designed in the areas of producing, directing, drama analysis, oral interpretation, and acting technique. Graded tests and exercises are being used in a series of production exercises.

Under focus is the process of producing, whether it be for stage or for radio. The analysis uses as a point of departure the discipline of the Professional Director, Critic, and Producer, as well as the discipline of the Specialist in Communication.

A basic rationale is included in the design and study. It is stated as follows: The producer's ability to COMMUNICATE in the basic areas of his work determines his effectiveness as a producer. The producer's ability to use language and technique determines his ability to communicate. The producer's technique is, to a large degree, determined by his use of language and communication. The producer's task is to handle the objects of his work. The major objects of his work include: (1) Play (script) (2) People (players) (3) Place (studio or stage) and (4) People (audience).

Technique is the producer's tool for the analysis, creation, interpretation, and execution of a dramatic experience (his play) through his theatrical medium (his actor). Technique enables a producer to design, interpret, and execute a production.

It follows then, that a training programme for producers must be designed to enable a producer to create theatrical life through his actors and finally communicate this experience to his audience. Moreover, the process in the training programme must design tasks that enable a producer to make theatre and to communicate this theatre via the most effective means to an audience. The participant observation phase of the 'Tune-In' and 'Unlocking' process stresses the following:

- (1) Study the subject and discover his assets and liabilities as a producer.

- (2) Study the subject and find out what technique, if any, exists.
- (3) Design tests and exercises that develop a producer's technique.
- (4) Utilize tapes, production tasks, improvisational scenes, and interpretation tasks.
- (5) Design a method that aids the producer in developing his own technique in respect to play analysis, audience analysis, and his use of verbal behaviour and communication.
- (6) See, hear, and analyze the end-product in theatrical productions.

Major aspects of the training programme include the following:

- (1) Approach to Productions
 The Process -- Method -- Objectives
- (2) Looking at Technique
- (3) The Role of the Producer
- (4) Unlocking the Artist
- (5) Research for Technique
- (6) The Script and the Actor
- (7) Basic Communication for the Ghanaian Actor
- (8) Voice and Speech Production -- Method of Approach
- (9) Criteria for Standards of Excellence in Theatre Production
- (10) Isolating Production Problems
- (11) Choice of Suitable Plays for Stage and Radio

- (12) Nature of the Dramatic Experience and the Ghanaian Audience
- (13) Looking at the Script
- (14) Opening up the Script
- (15) Opening up the Actor
- (16) Dressing the Stage or Studio
- (17) Trying to Understand the WORK as a TEAM
- (18) Discovering the ENERGY of the Dramatic Experience
- (19) Discovering the RHYTHM of the Dramatic Experience
- (20) Characterization and Communication.

II.

COMMUNICATING CULTURE THROUGH THEATRE AND THE ARTS

The object of this project is to examine the nature of 'the Ghanaian experience' in respect to the culture and life of the Ghanaian as seen through his drama, theatre, and art forms.

The subjects of this project include male students from America and Canada who have had no previous exposure to Ghana or Africa. There are six subjects. Moreover, these subjects, specializing in the areas of history and political science, have had little or no formal exposure to or discipline in the arts, either in their own country or in Africa.

The method embraces an intensive four-week course in Theatre and the Related Arts of Africa. A team-workshop approach plus the lecture method is employed which utilizes two American specialists in drama and

theatre studies, as well as Ghanaian specialists in all of the major areas of the arts and culture of Ghana. Specific tasks are designed to include seminars, trips, dialogue-confrontations, visitations, required readings, discussions, speak-outs, end-papers, and examinations, as well as autobiographical case histories.

The approach and check includes a specific design and analysis based on the 'Tune-In' and 'Unlocking' Process. Special check-sheets, study-sheets, and syllabi are designed and structured around the Theatre and the Related Arts of Africa. On the other hand, special tasks and tests are also used based on the required reading and classroom experiences in order to determine an objective picture of the knowledge, skills, and insights of the subjects in respect to Ghana and Africa.

The examiner is expected to take a critical look at the behaviour and attitudes of the subjects in respect to their learned 'Ghanaian or African experience'.



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