

Use of Creative Drama Method for Creating Awareness about the Cultural Alienation Phenomenon

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Abstract

The precondition for an individual to participate in societal life is to give up particular inclinations and desires for the sake of the promotion of societal order. What an individual gives up is superseded in return by the societal, and accordingly, the alienation process begins. The alienation acquired through socialization does not often reach consciousness level and is not perceived as a problem. It is necessary to break this chain at some point by illuminating individual's consciousness so as to ensure that the individual can obtain undirected thinking ability. Tempted by this need to create awareness about alienation phenomenon, the creative drama method is proposed as a useful option. This study is based on the implementation of the creative drama method in order to enhance awareness about alienation/cultural alienation. In this respect, with the participation of a group of sixteen 4th-year students of the Social Service Department of Bitlis Eren University, this study undertook a creative drama process comprised of six 3-hour sessions which were structured by the researcher based on subject titles and target accomplishments regarding cultural alienation phenomenon. Moreover, in light of the data obtained by means of measurement and evaluation tools created again by the researcher, it was observed that the participants attained a significant level of awareness about the phenomenon under consideration

Keywords: *alienation, creative drama, learning by doing, awareness.*

Introduction

The basic condition for the societal life, which seems complex and challenging in theory to be sustainable in practice, pertains to the harmonization/integration. On account of the need for reconciling different characteristics and purposes at the least common denominator even while sharing the same venue with a second person, the society bringing together much more crowded human masses is forced to be much more systematic. The system can be scientifically defined as a group of ideas and principles having rational integrity and consistency, a conglomeration comprised of interrelated and interacting parts

or a mechanism operating on the basis of certain rules (Churchman, 1968). Hence, to be the member of a society configured as a system means to have a mutually beneficial and harmonious relationship with the system itself and its parts. In this respect, although individuals have distinct characteristics and divergent priorities, it turns to be inevitable for them to undertake an integration process so as to enjoy the advantages of societal life. This process aiming at the creation of common codes to be shared with the rest of the society is also called socialization.

The socialization process accompanies the emergence of a sense of self in a period when the sense of self has not yet come into existence. In this connection, psychosocial self appears as the exterior restructuring of cognitive and genetic potential. Sometimes the socialization process can either be pathological and intense as in the case of increase in cultural corruption, criminal inclinations, anger and impulsive behaviors or be experienced as the change in the judgment of values, identification with inappropriate role models and unquestionable adoption and retention of prevailing customary behavioral patterns (Altıok, 2016, p. 56, quoted from Dubow, Huesmann & Greenwood, 2007). In a similar vein, cognitive, emotional and social development of an individual may not necessarily coincide with the societal change. In other words, the individual can find himself/herself ahead of or behind the society over time. Thus, harmonization of the individual with society can be affected depending on his/her existential position which is either being distanced from or converging with his/her societal position, and this situation leaves the individual's performance behind his/her real potential (Wegner, 1975, p. 171). It can be deduced that the state of unhappiness which overtly or latently affects today's societal life stems from this situation.

The individual's harmonization with or inclination toward the society may end up with the individual being alienated from himself/herself or the society. In social sciences, both situations are paradoxically identified with the concept of *alienation*. The concept of alienation, defined by Seeman (1959) in light of five different aspects, that is, *weakness, meaninglessness, lawlessness, societal isolation* and *self-estrangement*, refers to an overt harmonization problem whereas, in Marx's (1932/2014, p. 75) opinion, the alienation phenomenon corresponds to an inherent harmonization problem or, to put more correctly, to the harmonization being a problematic state that refers to the gradual transformation of working, the sole purpose for the existence of a human being, into a commodity production process, subsequent conversion of workers themselves into a commodity together with the enlargement of commodity production, and the resulting confrontation of worker as an independent and alien force with his/her own producer. Although the

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innate epistemological problem concerning the alienation concept is a topic of another study, the manner in which it is addressed in this current study suggests its comprehension as an inherent danger residing in the sub-consciousness.

Although alienation is likely to emerge at several distinct societal dimensions, the cultural alienation issue seems to offer the most advantageous platform for dealing with this problem, especially because cultural alienation is developed through learning in the socialization processes. For instance, being alienated from one's own act of production is a problem infiltrating the depths of societal sub-consciousness throughout history on the basis of production relations. On the other hand, it can be argued that cultural alienation exists at a point closest to the consciousness as cultural values are reproduced almost every day. In this sense, to transfer the alienation to the consciousness level, it will be more reasonable to address the cultural codes in the process of creating awareness through the reconfiguration of individual's life starting from the end.

This study intends to present a comprehensive framework for experiencing and evaluating a sociological phenomenon in a practical process and for offering solutions with respect to this phenomenon. In this regard, by going far beyond a theoretical evaluation on the problematic nature of the phenomenon, the relationship of the phenomenon with creative drama as a method was established in order to make the phenomenon tangible and observable. The primary indicators of cultural alienation phenomenon were grouped under six categories, and quasi-dramatic activities were prepared by the researcher himself in order to ensure the transformation of each category into a practical experience. Furthermore, measurement and evaluation tools were developed again by the researcher for understanding the contribution of these activities to the target accomplishments. Of these tools, "Alienation Awareness Survey", which was derived from accomplishment declarations corresponding to six categories that defined the cultural alienation phenomenon, was implemented at the end of the study. At this juncture, even though pretest-posttest analysis seemed to be more effective in terms of measurements, its implementation was not deemed appropriate considering its potential to manipulate the participants by inadvertently disclosing the goals of the study. Instead, in order to buttress the measurements, the "letter" technique was employed as a measurement tool besides "Alienation Awareness Survey" in the creative drama method. Even if it is asserted that quite a few studies performed in the area of creative drama have methodological shortcomings by virtue of the interdisciplinary nature of creative drama (Mages, 2008), it is thought that this study makes a unique contribution at fundamental level inasmuch as it

combines theory and practice in the field of sociology and in this direction it makes use of effectiveness and measurement tools developed by the researcher.

Alienation

In general, the concept of *alienation*, studied in several disciplines throughout the history, is derived from Latin word *alienus* meaning “someone else”, “stranger” (Fromm, 1941/1995a, p. 56), while in Hegel and Marx’s writings, the alienation concept is referred to as *entfremdung*, derived from the German word *fremde* (Stevens, 1999/2001, pp. 383-384). It is argued that, despite later attempts to insert an operational content to the concept of alienation over time, *alienation* was first introduced as an idea to the Western thinking in conjunction with paganism which was referred to in Old Testament. Worshipping multiple gods rather than one god is not the essence of paganism but the fact that pagan idols worshipped by humans are handcrafts produced by humans themselves (Fromm, 1961/1995b, p. 106). In this respect, it can be alleged that the alienation phenomenon in its initial form was considered a problem not yet elevated to the consciousness.

The first active use of alienation concept in philosophy took place in Hegel (1807/2011), a concept that existed in his thoughts as a given situation. In this regard, alienation happens to be the case when Absolute mind (*Geist*), which is in an existential pursuit, contradicts the nature which supplements its own existence. That being the case, the self-fulfillment process of Absolute mind corresponds to the dialectic procession of being alienated and overcoming alienation. Hereby, it is hinted that the human being who, in fact, occupies an actor position due to his/her productive capabilities, is transformed into an object along with his/her societal, cultural and physical products and so he/she is being alienated from his/her act of production. The human being tends to view himself/herself not as “a living creature that loves, feels, thinks but as an object that is remembered only with products and goods of its creation and production”. For Hegel, the concept of alienation appertains to the distance of the physical existence of a human being from his/her spiritual existence (Erkal, 1984, p. 9). Hence, in the philosophy of Hegel, alienation is a natural, inevitable and indispensable case in the self-fulfillment process of Absolute mind.

By inversely addressing the case of alienation which is embodied within the nature according to Hegel’s philosophy, Feuerbach (1841/2004) emphasizes that God Himself is a product of alienation. For Feuerbach, human being makes himself/herself a slave of God by considering God, who actually dwells only in

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his/her mind, as an absolute entity beyond and above himself/herself. In a similar vein, Fromm (1961/1995b, p. 60) comments about this more comprehensively by stating that “because a person is affectionately devoted to an object of his/her creation, worships and idolizes it, the person is no more himself/herself as he/she conveys his/her feelings and thoughts to an object beyond himself/herself and so this person has no more sense of self or identity”. Likewise, Marcuse and Mills analyze again alienation on the basis of loss of the power exercised by humankind to change and shape the earth along with human being’s feeling of helplessness about the earth of his/her creation. Marcuse (1964/2016) addressed the helplessness in terms of a relationship between labor class which had no weaponry and modern world which turned out to be one-dimensional whereas Mills defines this helplessness in terms of the manipulative power of mass media through the example of “white-collar” labor class (Tolan, 1981, p. 162).

The alienation phenomenon stems also from the existential reactions of the individual toward the nature and society. At this juncture, the line between freedom and alienation is drawn by the level of the individual’s consciousness and courage. For Nietzsche, an individual’s potential is appraised tangibly under three categories, that is, *herdsman*, *nihilist man* and *superior man*. *Herdsman* possesses neither consciousness nor the courage for questioning the values of the society that he lives in whereas *nihilist man* has the consciousness but lacks the courage, and, on the other hand, *superior man* possesses both consciousness and courage (Kuçuradi, 1997). That being the case, *herdsman* is in full conformity with the society and happy, *nihilist man* is inharmonious with the society and feels unhappy on account of failing to shape the society, and *superior man* is inharmonious with the society but relatively happy by virtue of his courageous efforts to live in conformity with values of his own creation. As for the existentialist philosophy, absolute happiness is impossible inasmuch as a human being can fulfill only the parts that he/she selected from the available existential potential and the remaining parts make the basis of alienation for himself/herself. The existentialism defined by Sartre (1946/1990, p. 80) by noting that “human being is no more than his/her own design, he/she exists inasmuch as he/she makes, fulfills himself/herself, in other words, he/she is solely made up of the sum of his/her attainments” conveys the idea of the impossibility of ultimate happiness as the self-fulfillment process of the individual encompasses an ongoing procession dependent on his/her own individual development skills and interference instruments of the society.

Beyond any doubt, the most comprehensive analysis of the concept of alienation was performed by Karl Marx. Marx added a historical materialist

perspective to the alienation concept by turning the philosophy of Hegel upside down just as in the case of formulating the ultimate meaning of dialectical method. As a matter of fact, alienation occurs as a natural phenomenon within his historical materialist philosophy. The fact that the individual is deprived of factors of production and is enslaved alongside the labor and property relationship in the context of capitalism constitutes the basis of alienation. It can be suggested that Marx addressed three different types of alienation, that is, economic, political and religious. However, of these three types, economic alienation is not only a type but also the root cause of the alienation phenomenon.

For Marx, the alienation of humankind started with the demise of their supremacy over the production process. The basis of this demise was the division of labor which distanced the individual from both his product and production process by splitting production into different parts (Marx, 2000, p. 97). For each product which a human being failed to have the ability to produce alone, human beings were forced to depend on somebody else, and this eradicated his power of disposition over the product. Furthermore, this circumstance, by dividing the production into smaller parts, adds another layer to the alienation issue in industrial society. A human being who can participate only in a small section of the manufacturing process as the manual worker loses his/her control over the entire manufacturing process and also as a consumer, he/she is distanced from goods whose manufacturing is made with unskilled work offered by him/her as a cheap source of labor. In other words, he/she is alienated from his product and so his/her own act of production. Marxism, which is based on economic determinism, designates the production process, an element of substructure, as the main determinant of superstructure represented by institutions such as politics, religions, arts, philosophy and ethics. That is why, being alienated from one's own act of production makes the basis of other types of alienation.

In the capitalist system, a human being is not only alienated from his/her own act of production and product, but also capitalism enables the bourgeoisie possessing factors of production to have a decisively powerful influence on the superstructure institutions. For instance, state apparatus, akin to that forming the basis of the theory of Social Contract by J. J. Rousseau (1762/2006), confronts the individual acting as a force which is distanced and alienated from his/her own nature. With its inheritance law, the same state apparatus paved the way for the dissolution of extended families. Designers of the inheritance law were members of the capitalist class who captured the control of state apparatus besides possessing the factors of production. Thus, again, alienation instigated alongside

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production relationships affects family institution and its members through state apparatus and state laws. Judged from this perspective, meaninglessness initiated upon being alienated from one's own act of production in view of the complex structure of capitalist system makes the most formidable obstacle to the individual to comprehend the whole. In the capitalist era, the individual who loses his/her meaningfulness, his/her actor position and so his/her power attempts to add a new meaning to his/her life, for instance, by clinging to the religion phenomenon. The reason for Marx to characterize religion as the opium pertains to the fact that religion alleviates the pains of labor class that is being alienated and enslaved by the capitalist system (Marx, 1844/1997, p. 192). In fact, religion does no more than just fostering the distorted relationship existing as a new form of alienation.

Cultural Alienation

Alienation can be experienced at several parts of the societal life. However, the place where they all are materialized is the culture. According to the generally acknowledged definition of Tylor, culture or civilization is “a complex whole including knowledge, arts, traditions, customs and talents, skills and habits which are learnt and obtained by human beings as members of the society” (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). This definition hints that alienation in culture and cultural areas encompasses all activities of humanity in such areas as economics, art, law, science, religion and covers the state of alienation in relation to these areas as humanity transfers its recurring activities to next generations by symbolizing them in cultural codes. In this conjunction, culture acts as both the means and ends of alienation. In other words, the alienation that human beings experience during cultural activities is symbolized with cultural elements and an alienated culture is transferred to the next generation. On the other hand, individuals of a new generation receive intrinsically alienated values through the socialization process without questioning them and become part of the historical process of alienation.

It is reasonable to allege that the cultural alienation phenomenon acquired a remarkable scale especially along with the globalization process. The fact of globalization, which has a distinct character imposing a common political economy and leaving no society untouched or beyond its reach, inflicts the heaviest damage on cultures. Even though various approaches about the nature of globalization such as “homogeneity thesis which argues that globalization promotes cultural convergence, polarization thesis which anticipates the emergence of cultural conflicts between Western globalization and its opponents,

and lastly hybridization or syncretism thesis which considers globalization as a mixture of several cultural repertoires created through transboundary exchanges” (Holton, 2000, pp. 140-152) are still discussed, each of these options actually serves as the basis of the destruction of cultures. On the other hand, although it is less pronounced, there is a more noteworthy thesis which argues that the process is not *globalization* but *glocalization** in which global powers of the Western world could directly exploit the local cultural values in favor of the market mechanism in cooperation with local authorities in order to undermine the nation-state model. The common point of both the globalization and glocalization theses is that the process pertains to an uneven relationship (Banerjee, 2002, p. 519) and less developed societies are weak and vulnerable to the manipulation in this process dominated by developed Western countries.

The globalization process creates new cultural codes which are spread and absorbed in a short period of time. When these codes are spread at global scale depending on the production processes and under the control of societies dominating these processes, societies at lower levels of production hierarchy can only join the process as consumers. These societies are inclined to import not only the product but also the culture configured around the product. Neglecting the fact that the culture is a superstructure element and superstructure elements are built upon substructures including production relationships, the replacement of a current superstructure element with a new superstructure element, irrespective of the substructure element which the current superstructure is built upon, will make problematic the relationship between substructure and superstructure. Thus, superstructure elements without material grounds will come into existence. For example, fez which was brought to the Ottomans as an indicator of change and innovation in the context of Westernization movement (Çakır, 2004, p. 29) was defended as a symbol of traditional values against the Hat Law which was introduced again as an innovative policy in the early modernization period of the Republic of Turkey.

Cultural alienation is a crucial societal problem for both creating a sense of self and acquiring a cultural identity. Cultural codes whose base does not exist in the societal structure are far from being comprehensible, absorbable and sustainable. A sense of self and identity structured around these codes have feeble and fragile characteristics because of not being founded on strong grounds.

* Robertson (1995), the scholar who used the concept for the first time, attributed a positive meaning to the concept of glocalization by considering it as a process enabling less developed countries to participate as actors in the creation of a common culture.

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Eventually, the cultural system created in this respect forms the Achilles' heel of the societal structure. That being the case, cultural alienation stands out as a phenomenon that needs diagnosis and treatment. However, this phenomenon is far from being a problem reaching the level of consciousness as noted before. In this sense, in order to gravitate toward the treatment, there is a need first of all for creating awareness. This is also the primary purpose of this study.

Reconfiguration of Alienation Process and Creative Drama Method

Cultural alienation has a distinct characteristic with which each individual can be involved at different levels and which ensures the continuation of its existence. Now, it can be suggested that one of the most appropriate means of ensuring a confrontation with cultural alienation by ascertaining its exact location is to have an experience that will turn life upside down and to get this life experience undergone also by others. The main reason for selecting creative drama for raising awareness about cultural alienation is its nature, which enables the production of new configurations about life. According to the definition by İnci San (1996, p. 149),

Creative drama, making use of theater or drama techniques such as improvisation, role playing etc. in a group work, is the elucidation and illustration by individuals of an occurrence, occasion, idea, sometimes an abstract concept or behavior through rearrangement of old cognitive patterns and via "quasi-dramatic" processes in which observation, experience, feelings and lives are reviewed.

Although "the rearrangement of old cognitive patterns" and "the review of observation, experience, feelings and lives" are the most fundamental issues in this process, they can supersede each other in the framework of a causal relation.

In terms of the creative drama activity,

the etymological use of the concept of "drama" as the residential area in the proximity of abundant and flowing natural spring water pertains to motion and action. Drama are action-oriented activities which extensively encompass all living conditions of one or more than one humans interacting with each other, nature or other objects. (Adıgüzel, 2016, p. 1)

Proceeding with the metaphor of flowing spring water, drama allows the start of motion afresh, but in a format different from the previous one. The freshness of motion also offers the opportunity to make observations and acquire information on the motion itself. The fact that creative drama activity is produced through reconfiguration makes it possible to return to the previous stage of the

motion and to restructure it. Thus, reproduction can be achievable through the chain reaction between living, attention, awareness, restructuring. The identification of cultural alienation as an existential problem at cognitive level will be easier and more everlasting if the experiential reconfiguration of information processes is evaluated in the company of a mentor. Creative drama workshops to be established for this purpose will have the adequate level of instrumental content.

Creative drama is essentially a process-oriented activity. This process paves the way for the participant to adopt his/her own self, to be aware of personal resources and to comprehend internal and external effects on life (Way, 1967). Participant contributes to the process with his/her experiences, creativity and reactivity and also obtains new experiences and accomplishments from the process shaped by the joint efforts of all other participants. On the other hand, through the leader's planning of target accomplishments, the process can also be implemented as a method. The methodological character of the activity is frequently used especially in the field of education. Although it is observed that creative drama is sometimes characterized differently in literature, the concepts of *creative drama*, *drama in education*, *educational drama*, *educative drama* are not necessarily distinct from each other, but identical in terms of quality, objective and coverage (Adıgüzel, 2016, p. 48). Calling attention to the structure of creative drama which enables schematic and phenomenal interpretations, Coşkun San (2009, p. 78) underlines that creative drama can be employed effectively for raising the awareness of society. In fact, creative drama as a method and tool is actively utilized in several fields where it is applicable, such as arts, culture, sports, besides education (Adıgüzel, 2016, p. 97).

The cultural alienation phenomenon is categorically in an opposing position vis-à-vis the individual, his/her actor position, willpower, creative skills and spontaneity. It encompasses comprehension and action processes not created but adopted unquestionably by the individual himself/herself. In contrast, in terms of either its structural format or methods and techniques, creative drama activity pertains to an experience that will deconstruct cultural alienation phenomenon. For example, *Warm-up* stage releases an energy which wipes out social positions occupied by participants and governing directly their social lives. As the purpose, by assuming a mission to create a uniform and common identity by completely eliminating participant positions such as *mother*, *doctor*, *director*, *teacher*, *supervisor*, *boss* etc, this process produces a situation closest to naturalness and spontaneity. Coming into play in a relatively comfortable environment upon the

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completion of the mission of *Warm-up* stage and the consequent break-up of the circumscribing atmosphere of value judgments, *Animation* stage presents the opportunity to address the reality through different perspectives and helps to configure the life anew with freer and more creative motivation. Lastly, by preparing a convenient environment for the review of the process in a non-didactical way, *Evaluation* stage encourages the participant to raise his/her awareness without being pressured by any external influence. As all stages offer an experience in which the participant can be involved without being alienated even when the stages are operated with no specified accomplishment standards, a creative drama activity in which cultural alienation occupies a central place will make a considerable contribution to the promotion of awareness about the phenomenon.

In this light, the creative drama activity offers an indispensable tool to identify the cultural alienation phenomenon as a problem by addressing the issue in a configured life experience. That being the case, this study attempted to explore the effect of creative drama activities on having university students' gain awareness about alienation.

Purpose, Scope and Limitations

The main purpose of this study is to raise awareness on the alienation phenomenon and its cultural aspect through a multidisciplinary approach. In this respect, the creative drama method is used as an instrument. The creative drama method is known to be used in the field of education as a method to convey a phenomenon, concept, or knowledge or to raise awareness about them (Hui & Lau, 2006; Pinciotti, 1993; Yassa, 1999). There are numerous studies showing that this usage extends to various areas such as future expectation (Konate & Ergin, 2018), parenting awareness (Gökbulut, 2006), time use (Tanrıseven & Aykaç, 2014), personal hygiene (Soleymani, Hemmati, Ashrafi-Rizi & Shahrzadi, 2017), and Christian awareness (Graves, 1991). On the other hand, the number of studies investigating the views of educators on the success of using creative drama as a method for these purposes is also increasing (Yılmaz, 2013; Yenigül, 2019; Taşkın & Moğol, 2016). Besides, the nature of the creative drama method, which allows learning by doing and experiencing, deconstructing, self-assessing, and reestablishing, is quite relevant to the constructivist approach (Aykaç & Ulubey, 2008).

The alienation phenomenon is a very comprehensive and multidimensional issue. In addition, there are two different conceptualizations of the phenomenon that we can refer to as “old” and “new” (Sun, 2019). These two conceptualizations bring up two very different approaches about the meaning and scope of the phenomenon. As we mentioned in the literature review section of the study, the conceptualization framing the approaches of Marx (1932), Hegel, Feuerbach (1841), Fromm (1941-1961), and Sartre (1946), which is shaped in the emergence of the phenomenon, addresses the problem as a state of unreached consciousness. However, scholars like Seeman (1959), Middleton (1963), Blauner (1964), and Kohn (1976) refer to conceptualizations as informed attitude. This study adhered to the “old” conceptualization about the alienation phenomenon, and, in this sense, the “new” conceptualization was not included. In this respect, the literature also highlights the emphasis on old conceptualization instead of presenting a broad knowledge of the phenomenon.

Finally, the current study has some methodological limitations. Creative drama is a methodologically new practice in which there is a combination of observation and construction in this method. First, to carry out a healthy creative drama process, it should be limited to a group of 16 to 24 participants. However, this number is insufficient when the qualitative studies are taken into account. On the other hand, the potentials of social science research methods can be used partly since priority must be given to the protection of natural operation of the process at the point of preparing and using the measurement tools. For instance, the pre-test technique applied in different studies using the creative drama method was not applied in this study. Instead, it was limited to the “letter” technique of creative drama method and a measurement tool used at the end of activities.

Methodology

RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a descriptive research. The research made use of a quantitative research design, namely, the descriptive survey model. The descriptive survey model is a research approach intending to describe a situation which happened to exist in the past or still exists as it actually is (Karasar, 2002, p. 77). By implementing this model, this research analyzed the views of students on the model developed by the researcher at the end of creative drama activities.

RESEARCH GROUP

This study was performed with a group of 16 participants who were enrolled as 4th-year students at the Department of Social Service of Bitlis Eren University

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and were aged 20-24 years, 6 of whom were females and 10 of whom were males. A part of the group had past experience in creative drama at basic level.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

“Alienation Awareness Survey” which was developed by the researcher was employed as the data collection tool. Prior to its implementation in its development phase, the survey was initially examined by two specialists in terms of the scope of its items and the construct validity. Upon the receipt of specialist views, the final version of the “Alienation Awareness Survey” was created.

Previously specified subject titles and accomplishments targeted under these subject titles for each workshop which was comprised of six sessions served the basis of inferences to be made from research results. “Alienation Awareness Survey” which was comprised of 25 questions contained items for the following subject titles: Roles and Positions in the Societal Life (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Items), Part-To-Whole Relationships (Meronymy) in Systemized Structures (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Items), Cultural Codes of Fairy Tales As A Means of Value Transfer (9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Items), Concepts, Values and Beliefs Being Alienated (13th, 14th, 15th and 16th Items), Creation of Cultural Values and Rituals (17th, 18th, 19th and 20th Items) and Process of Being Aware of Cultural Alienation and Overcoming It (21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th Items).

DATA ANALYSIS

SPSS (The Statistical Packet for Social Sciences) software was utilized for data analysis. The research used frequency, percentage and arithmetic mean so as to analyze participant views on the topic. As each item measured views on different situations in data analysis, descriptive statistics for each item were individually presented in the form of percentage, frequency and arithmetic mean.

Table 1. Assessment interval for scores which ranged from 1 to 5 for arithmetic means was structured as in Table 1 below:

Options	Scores	Score Intervals
I Strongly Disagree	1	1.00 – 1.79
I Disagree	2	1.80 – 2.59
I Cannot Decide	3	2.60 – 3.39
I Agree	4	3.40 – 4.19
I Strongly Agree	5	4.20 – 5.00

Implementation Process

In the form of six 3-hour sessions, the research carried out an implementation process lasting a total of 18 hours in the fall semester of 2017-2018 academic year. The first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth sessions contained activities successively on the following subject titles: “Roles and Positions in the Societal Life”, “Part-To-Whole Relationships (Meronymy) in Systemized Structures”, “Cultural Codes of Fairy Tales As A Means of Value Transfer”, “Concepts, Values and Beliefs Being Alienated”, “Creation of Cultural Values and Rituals” and “Process of Being Aware of Cultural Alienation and Overcoming It”. The configuration was structured in the creative drama workshops of the research on the basis of the staging system devised by Adıgüzel (2006), “Preparation/Warming-Up, Animation and Evaluation”.

The first workshop performed activities raising the awareness about the diversity of roles and positions assumed by each individual in the societal life, their development process, evolutionary character and making participants discern how much they were active in this process. The second workshop stressed the significance of part-to-whole relationships to systemized structures and highlighted the fact that being alienated from the whole would likely pave the way for individual and societal unhappiness. Through studies exploring the effect of fairy tales on the socialization process as of childhood period and on the formation of role and position relations and societal gender patterns, the third session discussed the contributions made to the alienation process by fairy tales acting as a force in the creation of values. The fourth session contained activities helping to enhance awareness about the role played in the reproduction of values and beliefs by concepts used in daily life with no particular reference to their meanings and origins. The fifth session attempted to promote the understanding of the essence hidden behind the forms of cultural elements through activities establishing the relations between cultural elements which were still valid today such as languages, symbols, traditions, conventions etc. and realities & needs which created these cultural elements. In the sixth and final session, activities were performed for raising awareness about the fact that the alienation phenomenon and its cultural aspect, cultural alienation, as the basis of contradiction, conflict and unhappiness creates a problem that need to be overcome in order to enhance individual and societal development.

Through evaluation and mid-term evaluation phases realized within the framework of each session, participants made contributions to the deepening of comprehension of the relationship between the activities and main goals of the

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research. In this respect, by applying the semi-constructivist method, knowledge base created during the research was reproduced by means of participant contributions which were made through mid-term briefings and question & answer sections.

Findings and their Interpretation

“Alienation Awareness Survey” was applied to the participant students at the end of the empirical research in order to assess their awareness about alienation. Scores obtained from “Alienation Awareness Survey” and their means are as a whole in Table 2 below. Besides a general evaluation on data in Table 2, data retrieved from six sessions, each of which encompassed different target accomplishments, were interpreted exclusively.

Table 2. Descriptive Findings Obtained Through Alienation Awareness Survey

No	Items	I Strongly Disagree		I Disagree		I Cannot Decide		I Agree		I Strongly Agree		Mean	Std. Dev.
	It enabled me to rethink the diversity of roles and positions occupied by each individual in the societal life.	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	37.5	10	67.5	4.62	.50
	It empowered me to discern behavioral patterns likely to be contradicting each other in relation to roles and positions occupied by each individual in the societal life.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	6	37.5	9	56.3	4.50	.63
	It encouraged me to question the harmony of behavioral patterns on roles and positions with individual's characteristics, wishes and expectations.	-	-	-	-	2	12.5	7	43.8	7	43.8	4.31	.70

	It allowed me to appraise the relationship between happiness and the identification of behavioral patterns on roles and positions by the society or individual himself/herself.	-	-	1	6.3	2	12.5	4	25	9	56.3	4.31	.94
	It helped me to reevaluate the importance of part-to-whole relationship to systemized structures.	-	-	1	6.3	1	6.3	2	12.5	12	75	4.56	.89
	It provided me with the opportunity to detect that the societal life was also a systemic arrangement based on a type of part-to-whole relationship.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	6	37.5	9	56.3	4.50	.63
	It offered me the chance to perceive the circumstances distancing us from becoming aware of the fact that we were valuable parts of the whole in terms of production relations.	-	-	-	-	2	12.5	6	37.5	8	50	4.37	.71
	It permitted me to recognize that being alienated from the whole was the reason for individual and societal unhappiness.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	6	37.5	9	56.3	4.50	.63
	It provided me with a venue to discuss the effects of fairy tales on the socialization process as of the childhood period.	-	-	1	6.3	3	18.8	5	31.3	7	43.8	4.12	.95
0	It let me reevaluate the societal values, societal gender roles, definitions of roles & positions hidden within fairy tales.	-	-	1	6.3	2	12.5	5	31.3	8	50	4.25	.93
1	It enticed me to notice that false or controversial knowledge patterns acquired during childhood had more permanent effects on the sense of self in	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	5	31.3	10	62.5	4.56	.62

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	comparison to other knowledge patterns.												
2	It empowered me to understand that unquestioned values acquired through fairy tales could be the basis of attitudes, discourses and actions alienated from nature, society and humankind.	-	-	-	-	3	18.8	2	12.5	11	68.8	4.50	.81
3	It enabled me to see that there were concepts, values and beliefs which we used even without knowing their meanings and origins in our daily lives.	-	-	1	6.3	1	6.3	6	37.5	8	50	4.31	.87
4	Proceeding with this awareness, it encouraged me to be interested in exploring what similar concepts, values and beliefs were about.	-	-	1	6.3	2	12.5	5	31.3	8	50	4.25	.93
5	It provided me with the chance to question the consistency between the manner in which these concepts, values and beliefs were used and our basic values which acted as determinants of our personality.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	8	50	7	43.8	4.37	.61
6	It encouraged me to dispute my own role in the reproduction of such concepts, values and beliefs.	-	-	-	-	3	18.8	6	37.5	7	43.8	4.25	.77
7	It urged me to think over what type of needs of the societal life were met as of the emergence of cultural elements which were still valid today such as languages, symbols, traditions, conventions etc.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	6	37.5	9	56.3.	4.50	.63
8	It enabled me to question whether these cultural elements could still meet needs today.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	10	62.5	5	31.3	4.25	.57

9	It allowed me to discuss the effect of still-existing cultural elements on individual and society.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	9	56.3	6	37.5	4.31	.60
0	It endowed me with the occasion to reevaluate the need to sustain cultural elements which had debatable effects on individual and society.	-	-	1	6.3	1	6.3	7	43.8	7	43.8	4.25	.85
1	It made possible for me to comprehend and voice different aspects of alienation phenomenon.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	7	43.8	7	43.8	4.40	.63
2	It extended the opportunity to appraise the basic attributes of cultural alienation which was an aspect of alienation.	-	-	1	6.3	2	12.5	5	31.3	8	50	4.25	.93
3	It equipped with the chance to notice that cultural alienation could be the basis of contradiction, conflict and unhappiness.	-	-	-	-	1	6.3	7	43.8	8	50	4.37	.80
4	It helped me learn that cultural alienation was a problem needed to be overcome for the promotion of individual and societal development.	-	-	-	-	3	18.8	7	43.8	6	37.5	4.18	.75
5	It equipped me with skills enabling me to express views and offer solutions for overcoming cultural alienation.	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	56.3	7	43.8	4.43	.51

Upon the review of findings in Table 2, it was observed that the mean of scores was 4.36 in relation to the whole set of declarations of accomplishment above. In other words, the mean of scores is placed close to the range of “(5) I Strongly Agree” and so it can be deduced that activities make a significant contribution to the promotion of awareness about the relevant accomplishment items. The mean of numbers of participants selecting “(5) I Strongly Agree” in the survey form and their percentage are 8 and 50.7% consecutively, the mean of numbers of participants selecting “(4) I Agree” and their percentage are 6 and 38.0%, the mean of numbers of participants selecting “(3) I Cannot Decide” and

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their percentage are 1.4 and 9.28%, the mean of numbers of participants selecting “(2) I Disagree” and their percentage are 0.3 and 2.0% whereas there was no participant selecting “(1) I Strongly Disagree”. Assuming that “(5) I Strongly Agree” and “(4) I Agree” are positive responses, it is ascertained that the mean of numbers of participants responding positively to the items in the survey form and their percentage are 14 and 88.7% respectively. It can be asserted that the research had a considerable achievement in terms of reaching its goals.

According to Table 2, the item obtaining a percentage of 100% and a mean of scores of 4.62 upon the selection by participants of “(5) I Strongly Agree” and “(4) I Agree” was the statement that read “It enabled me to rethink the diversity of roles and positions occupied by each individual in the societal life.” Convinced that activities of the first session were structured in full compliance with the relevant target accomplishment, this session can be considered as a guideline for prospective researches to be conducted in the future. On the other hand, it may be necessary to review the activities in relation to items obtaining a total percentage of 80% through the selection by participants of “(5) I Strongly Agree” and “(4) I Agree”, in other words, the 9th Item (It provided me with a venue to discuss the effects of fairy tales on the socialization process as of the childhood period.), the 10th Item (It let me reevaluate the societal values, societal gender roles, definitions of roles & positions hidden within fairy tales), the 12th Item (It empowered me to understand that unquestioned values acquired through fairy tales could be the basis of attitudes, discourses and actions alienated from nature, society and humankind), the 14th Item (Proceeding with this awareness, it encouraged me to be interested in exploring what similar concepts, values and beliefs were about.) and the 24th Item (It helped me learn that cultural alienation was a problem needed to be overcome for the promotion of individual and societal development). The fact that the 9th, 10th and 12th Items were target accomplishments appertaining to the Third Subject Title of the research, “Cultural Codes of Fairy Tales as a Means of Value Transfer”, implies that this subject title was less powerful than other subject titles in terms of creating awareness. In this respect, it will be appropriate to review and restructure the activities concerning this subject title in a manner more likely to be fitting their goals.

Upon the evaluation of subject titles and target accomplishments corresponding to each session of the research, it is observed that the results are in parallel to the general means of scores. In this regard, the mean of numbers of participants responding positively to the subject title, *Roles and Positions in the Societal Life*, are 14.4, their percentage is 91.8% and the mean of their scores is

4.43. These figures are successively 14.5, 90.6% and 4.48 for the subject title, *Part-To-Whole Relationships in Systemized Structures*, 13.2, 83.2% and 4.35 for the subject title, *Cultural Codes of Fairy Tales As A Means of Value Transfer*, 13.7, 85.9% and 4.29 for the subject title, *Concepts, Values and Beliefs Being Alienated*, 14.7, 92.2% and 4.32 for the subject title, *Creation of Cultural Values and Rituals* and 14.2, 88.8% and 4.32 for the subject title, *Process of Being Aware of Cultural Alienation and Overcoming It*.

It was previously noted that “letter” technique was implemented in the last session of the research in order to obtain qualitative data. Participants were asked to write a letter to a real or imaginary friend about prospective contribution(s) and awareness resulting from the process which was comprised of six sessions. Upon the review of letters, it is worth noting that the concept of alienation was utilized 11 times in letters although this concept was never used in the guideline for the activity. On the other hand, almost every letter included declarations in a similar vein to the below statements which approximately addressed the alienation concept although the concept was not directly mentioned:

“... actually by internalizing the things on which we are informed, or to put it more correctly, misinformed, we prefer to keep quiet or else we tend to perceive the situation through a standardized perspective. We had acquiesced to the things that failed to comply with our reasoning, accordingly our point of view on them changed.”

“From now on, I am convinced that several facts were imposed on me by you. I am aware of the fact that this incurred damage on me and on the designation of the course of my life by my decisions. Now I question the ideas that are imposed on me by you.”

“The most crucial contribution of this research to me is that I will never attach myself blindfoldedly even if the object of this attachment is supposed to be my own family. By questioning the ideas that I assume to be correct, I will follow my own path of life.”

“We recognized that certain socially accepted situations and norms were in fact weird. By reconfiguring the fairy tales into a different format, we restructured the sense of good and bad in fairy tales. We understood that we could make different inferences although we looked at exactly the same image.”

“Drama plays were both entertaining and meaningful. For instance, when the whole and its parts were viewed separately, different meanings would be emerging with respect to the stereotyped, though falsely comprehended, manners.”

“We were pursuing a life conforming to several phenomena that we observed on social media, books, TV series and movies. In fact, we desperately need ‘questioning’ in order to enjoy the life better...”

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Conclusions and recommendations

This study endeavored to make a sociological phenomenon part of a practical experience distancing it from theoretical level through the creative drama method. The main factor for the emergence of such a need pertains to the inherent danger peculiar to the alienation phenomenon which prevents it from being identified as a problem because of its being embedded at sub-levels of human consciousness. The alienation phenomenon is a condition inevitably emerging and closely attached to socialization process which continues as an indispensable condition of human life. Alienation reproduces itself on each ground where the human being's societal relations exist. In this respect, it is pertinent to talk about several types of alienation such as individual or societal, cultural or economic rather than just one case of alienation. On whatever ground alienation phenomenon comes into play, it is a problem to be diagnosed and cured only if awareness about it is raised.

When the alienation phenomenon is considered in the simplest terms as the process of creating distorted consciousness, it is initially possible to propose a process creating awareness about the existing consciousness, illustrating healthy and consistent ways offering access to knowledge pertinent to the consciousness and finally having an ideal experience through a new configuration. At this juncture, with its structure allowing the re-designation and reinterpretation of life, the creative drama method offers advantages so as to be considered as a useful option. As a matter of fact, this study devised and provided a creative drama experience structured to deal with alienation generally and cultural alienation specifically. Upon reconsidering attitudes, discourses and actions observed during the study and analyzing the data obtained through measurement tools implemented at the end of the study, it was deduced that process contributed significantly to the goal of enhancing awareness about the alienation phenomenon.

Of course, this study has an experimental characteristic at micro level. Educational systems respecting the accountability principle need to undertake research in order to corroborate the suggestions made on the positive effects of creative drama (Vitz, 1983). Target vs. accomplishment relationship should be evaluated by paying particular attention to the size of the sample analyzed in the research, duration of the research, diversity of subject titles and target accomplishments governing the sessions. However, the level of accomplishment identified in terms of the research scale indicates that more distinct and comprehensive results can be obtained starting from this research through the

revision of shortcomings, update of the content and further development of measurement tools. On the other hand, the current scale of the research can be appraised in terms of its practical uses allowing for further applications with different participants.

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Annexes

ANNEX 1: ILLUSTRATION OF THE SEATING PLAN: THIRD SESSION

DATE:

SUBJECT: Cultural codes of fairy tales as a means of value transfer

GROUP: 16 Mixed-Gender Participants Aged 20-24 Years

METHOD and TECHNIQUES: Creative Drama (Role playing, improvisation, still image), verbal lecture

TOOLS & EQUIPMENT: A4 paper, pens, mattresses, cheesecloth, balls.

TIME 180 minutes (3 hours)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS :

It discusses the effects of fairy tales on socialization process. (3, 7)

It questions how social values can be obtained through fairy tales. (7)

It discusses the effects of debatable cliché knowledge acquired during childhood period on the sense of self. (2, 3, 4)

PROCESS

Warming-Up/Preparation

1st Activity

Lecturer asks the participants to form a circle. Participants are required to utter the names in different styles (i.e. animal sound, machinery sound, deep voice, high-pitched voice, with different feelings).

2nd Activity

Lecturer asks the participants to stay at the edge of the wall. Participants will one by one go from one edge of the wall to the opposite edge and then return in a style of walking different from the one presumed to be normal.

3rd Activity

Lecturer asks the participants to sit down randomly and close their eyes. Next, the lecturer invites the students to think about their most dominant characteristic feature and to find out the land animal having this characteristic

feature. Afterwards, the lecturer asks the participants to imagine this animal and take its shape while both sitting down and standing up. The lecturer further adds that the participants are allowed to move and make sounds just like this animal. Moreover, the participants observe other participants in this process.

The common goal of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Activities is to underscore that positions and roles are not permanent but changeable, and building on this fact, given phenomena, incidents and situations can obtain a new shape or have novel interpretations different from the actual ones.

Animation

4th Activity

Lecturer says that he/she will invite two participants to the floor. The two participants nominated on a voluntary basis will be responsible for animating the case of a conflict. The topic of conflict can pertain to the increase in the house rent, allocation of car park space, claim of pocket money etc. However, volunteers are required to use solely the vowels to be given by the lecturer in the sentences they will make in the context of the conflict. For instance, superseding all vowels with “I” as in the case of “This yiir, I incriisi thi rint twinty fivi pircint...” which is actually “This year, I increase the rent twenty five percent...”

This activity intended to demonstrate the fact that getting out of conventional roles and patterns would likely pose challenges but these challenges stemmed from the habits rather than the nature of the case.

Mid-Term Evaluation:

Lecturer invites the participants to sit down in a circle, and asks whether they were challenged during the last activity, and if they report that they were challenged, lecturer further asks what the reasons can be for the challenge. Afterwards, lecturer talks to the participants about the blocking of the new knowledge acquisition by the knowledge acquired in the past. Lastly, the common cases of this situation in daily life are addressed.

5th Activity

Lecturer says to the participants that he/she wants to hear a nursery rhyme which is related to their names in a way, in which their names are stated and used. The activity is to be performed after the break and preparation period covers the break time.

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This activity intended to remind us the fact that verbal cultural products such as idioms, proverbs, nursery rhymes, poems that we used in daily life were in fact created by ourselves as a product of daily life.

BREAK

6th Activity

Five mirrors are brought to the venue of the research. The participants are supposed to wander around the mirrors following the directions of the lecturer. Endeavoring to make each participant in front of the mirror smile, the lecturer makes remarks saying exaggeratedly the opposite of the physical attributes of the participant. For instance, if the participant is a skinny person, you are such an overweight person...

Through a quasi-dramatic experience, this activity attempted to emphasize that phenomena, incidents and situations encountered in our daily lives could have differences in terms of essence and format and so it was necessary to address each of them with a critical approach.

7th Activity

Lecturer invites the participants to sit down in a circle and asks them about the fairy tales that they heard about during their childhood. Uttering the titles of some of the best-known fairy tales, the lecturer tries to learn how many of the participants read or knew about these fairy tales. Afterwards, the lecturer has a conversation with participants about the general features of fairy tales. Later, the lecturer states that they will deconstruct some well-known fairy tales in the activity. Groups will be formed and each group will be named after a well-known fairy tale. Groups will talk among themselves over the fairy tales assigned to them, identify the basic points and characteristic features of the fairy tales and reconfigure the fairy tale by changing one of these points or characteristic features. For example:

Little Red Riding Hood (Wolf is vegetarian.)

Cinderella (Prince is revolutionist.)

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (Bad-tempered)

Town Musicians of Bremen (Each animal is kicked out of the house because of its bad behavior, and there is an old couple rather than bandits in the house they find.)

The participants are given 15 minutes for preparation. At the end of 15 minutes, each group is supposed to perform its own fairy tale with its new configuration.

This activity stressed the fact that looking from different perspectives at cultural products used unquestionably by us would be necessary to ensure that we occupy the actor position and make the given cultural products healthier.

Evaluation

Lecturer provides each participant with an A4 paper and a pen. Then, the lecturer states that “Now I ask you to consider about the fairy tales that you are familiar with, to select from among these fairy tales a character that, you think, was introduced to us incorrectly and to write a letter expressing the feelings and thoughts about this situation on behalf of this character.” The participants are given 5 minutes for this purpose. Later, the letter of a volunteer is read. In the end, with no further reading, the session is terminated upon the collection of all letters.