

An Overview of the National Standards for Arts Education (Theatre Education Standards) and 51 Districts' Theatre Education Standards in the United States

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Abstract

In Taiwan, theatre educators have long emphasized on the development of theater professionals. Public schools, especially elementary and secondary schools did not have formal drama courses until 2000, the result of educational reform. With the passage of the Grade 1–9 Curriculum Guidelines, theater art is listed as a part of arts curricula. Prior research and published literature about theater standards is sparse in Taiwan. In contrast, the United States has established the National Standards for Arts Education since 1994 under the influence of Goals 2000: Educate America Act. There are thirty-one states have theater standards. The purpose of this study is to analysis the National Standards for Arts Education and 31 administrative districts' theatre standards in the United States, and the focus is on the part of elementary and secondary schools. The final goal is to suggest theater standards for Taiwanese educators.

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The theatre education in Taiwan has always been oriented toward professional education and higher education (Gu, 1992; Shih, 2002); while the theatre education of students in elementary and junior high schools is seldom mentioned. As the theatre education for elementary and junior high schools is still developing, it helps to better the development process by learning from the theatre guidelines and curriculum of other developed countries. In the United States., it has been nearly 30 years since the announcement of the National Theatre Education Project in 1987 (Chang, 2004a). Given its long history, the National Theatre Education Project may serve as a reference. However, prior to the discussion of the theatre education standards in the U.S., it is worthwhile to thoroughly review the development of the theatre education at elementary and junior high schools in Taiwan.

1. Background of the Study

The theatre education at elementary and junior high schools in the early days was mostly part of the Mandarin/Chinese literature curricula and meant to teach students how to appreciate theatre. However, the theatre education at elementary and junior high schools in Taiwan was almost 50 years late compared to the professional theatre education, which started with the establishment of Department of Film & Theatre, the Chung-Cheng Armed Forces Preparatory School in 1951. According to History of Taiwan Films and Theatre by Lu (1961), the earliest children theater in Taiwan began in May 1948 when Department of Education, Taiwan Provincial Government organized a rehearsal of a children's play in Zhongshan Hall. Since 1967, Ms Li Man-Kuei started to promote children's theatre (Lee, 1994), and children's theatre began to attract attention. In 1974, the Ministry of Education announced the "Implementation Guidelines Governing Children's Theatre at Elementary

and Junior High Schools”, stipulating that departments of education at local cities and counties should organize annual competitions for children’s theatre (Liao, 1999; Chuang, 2001). These regulations were the first scheme proposed by the Ministry of Education on theatre education at schools. It was a testimony to the emphasis on theatre education for children at that time. The Children Theatre Annual Competition started in 1977. Drama performances became an opportunity for schools to be famous. The performance by each school became a formal show on stage. However, the competitive nature prompted all the participants to perform to win. Only stellar schoolwork performers or children whose parents donated considerable sums of money to schools got to be elected to go on stage. This created many problems and ruined the original good intention to inspire creativity of students (Lee, 1994).

In 1980, the Executive Yuan released Culture, Education, and Entertainment Activity Promotion Project. In response to this project, the Ministry of Education chose six junior high schools and five elementary schools to establish dance education classes in 1981. The Act of Special Education was passed in 1984, which enabled the gifted education in music, fine arts and dance (Dai, 2000). Theatre education was not included into gifted education, let along the overall arts education curricula. The reason could be that music, fine arts and dance classes have been popular in the society, therefore, the government started to pay attention. However, theatre was always considered entertainment, rather than art.

The Arts Education Act announced by the Ministry of Education in 1997 states that performing arts are part of arts education. However, it was not until the release of Grade 1–9 Curriculum Guidelines by the Ministry of Education in 2000 that performing arts became part of the school curricula. The term “performing arts” covers a wide range of arts. However, it can be simply divided into music, dance and theatre. Music and fine arts education has long been part of the curricula of arts and humanities. Dance education was originally included as part of rhythmic gymnastics in physical education. Therefore, theatre education became the focal point of discussions of performing arts (Chang, 2000). It is worth noting that in the Grade 1–9 Curriculum Guidelines released in 2002, the domain of arts and humanities no

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longer list out individual disciplines. Rather, wording of “art creations of visual, audio and motions” was used in teaching materials (Ministry of Education, 2002).

Visual arts education and music education were incorporated into the formal curricula of elementary and junior high schools since 1942 (Hsu, 2002), and the theatre education is a new domain added to the fields of arts and humanities. Both the Curriculum Standards for Elementary Schools (1993) and Curriculum Standards for Secondary Schools (1994), state in detail the teaching goals, contents of teaching, teaching materials and hours of fine arts/crafts and music education. In addition, appropriate arrangements and adjustments were made in school curriculum for the teacher training programs (Ministry of Education, 1993, 1994). Regardless of the timeliness and effectiveness of the arts curricula in 1993 and 1994, both visual arts education and music education have a relative track record. In contrast, theatre education left so much to be done. Therefore, the definition of the theatre teaching indicators and curriculum planning at elementary and junior high schools will help teacher to grasp the hang of theatre education. It is indeed an important task to the teaching of arts and humanities. However, after reviewing all the articles, books and research projects on theatre education in Taiwan, we find that they largely discuss three areas: materials and contents of theatre teaching, teaching techniques and teaching processes, as well as surveys of current situations and opinions. Little literature addresses the issues of indicators of theatre competences. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance the discussion and researches in this area.

In contrast, the U.S. released the National Theatre Education Project in 1987 (Chang, 2004). In order to achieve “Goals 2000: Educate America Act,” National Standards for Arts Education was established in 1994. These standards were jointly developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, American Alliance for Theatre and Education, Music Educators National Conference, National Art Education Association and National Dance Association.(http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/professional_resources/standards/natstandards/index.html)

In theater part, the standards spell out what every young American should know and be able to do in theater arts from K-12.

The standards are divided into content standards and achievement standards. Content standards focus on the eight skills that students should acquire in theatre and they are script writing, acting, designing, directing, researching, comparing, analyzing and explaining, and understanding context. Achievement standards emphasize the levels of content standards, from the easiest to the deepest, that students are supposed to achieve at each stage. (http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/professional_resources/standards/natstandards/summary.html)

Under the promotion of Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the fifty states and Washington D.C. began to develop their own theatre education standards. By the end of the survey period of this research (June 2004), a total of 31 states have come up with their own theatre education standards. The purpose of this paper is to refer to the contents of theatre education national standards of the U.S. and theatre education standards of 51 administrative divisions (including Washington D.C.) as the texts of analyzing. Main focus is to examine the achievements of the 31 administrative divisions that have come up with theatre education standards and the overall situations of the administrative divisions that have not. Due to the massive volume of contents, this paper places its focus on Ohio State as an example of the 31 administrative divisions. The analysis includes the time when the standards were established, the legal base, the background, inclusion of core curricula, spirits of standards, classification and categorization methods, relativity to the national standards, achievement competences and learning skills. The reason why Ohio is chosen as a case study is because Ohio incorporated arts as part of competency-based education in 1993. It has clear philosophical considerations for arts education and a robust structure of theatre education standards. In response to the implementation of arts and humanities education in Grade 1–9 Curriculum, this paper places its emphasis on elementary and junior high schools but lists the discussion of high schools as a reference. The ultimate goal of this paper is to provide suggestions to the definition of competence indicators for theatre education in Taiwan.

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2. Literature Review and Methodology

The discussion of drama/theatre education at elementary and junior high schools (or from kindergartens to senior high schools) can be largely divided into two dimensions. One dimension is the education that delivers professional skills and knowledge related to drama/theatre. The other dimension is the application of theatre in the regular curriculum teaching, i.e. drama in education (DIE). The knowledge related to professional theatre can be classified into six types in accordance with the nature of drama and they are script writing, acting, directing, designing, administration and comparing. As David Hornbrook emphasized, theatre is the essence of teaching about drama. The process of a stage theatre performance and the improvisation at classrooms should be one thing. In other words, students should learn how to produce drama, acting and respond (Chang, 2004a).

DIE applies the skills of drama and in theatres in the form of practices, role plays, theatrical performances and drama perceptions as a way to teach and educate (Chang, 2004a). Therefore, the fundamentals of educational theatre include relevant theories in drama, theatre, psychology, anthropology and education. Among them, creative drama is the main theory for single-subject teaching (Chang, 2004a). Theatre in Education (TIE) is the introduction of community theatre groups into school activities. The following is an introduction of Creative Drama as well as TIE.

2.1. Creative Drama

Creative drama was an important trend in children theatre education in the U.S. in the 20th century. It was inspired by John Dewey, a famous scholar promoting Progressive Education. It emphasizes that education should aim to inspire the whole child. The teaching must go beyond the development of mind. More efforts should be made to enrich their experience, spiritually and emotionally. The focus of learning is not able memorization. Rather, the development of healthy individuals is through learning from experience (Lin, 1994; Chen and Chang, 2002). Scholars at that time argued that the theatre arts as an education tool can enable children to understand their own and others' situations through role playing. They can also learn how to solve

problems with creative thinking. Winifred Ward, an elementary school teacher at Evanston, Illinois, published *Creative Dramatics* in 1930. The series of theatre curriculum she developed for children later became the foundation teaching materials in theatre teaching in the U.S. (Chang, 2004a). Ward's creative drama curriculum consists of four major activities: creative playing, story dramatization, creative role playing in formal performances and the application of results of creative drama teaching in formal performances (Shih, 2002, p. 57).

To sum up, creative drama is an informal improvisation in an open and natural classroom environment. It is a theatrical form with physical movements, mime, and improvised dialogues. The instructors (usually teachers) guide the participants (usually students) to resort to the instinct of "make believe" to imagine, reflect, observe and experience the contents of human life and survival space, so that they understand they themselves are the free creators, problem solvers, experience integrators and group participants. In other words, children reconstruct their own experience in the virtual game world (Davis and Behm, 1978; Lin, 1994). In 1973, in *Collection of Chinese Children Plays* edited and published by Ms Li Man-Kuei, there was a detailed introduction of creative drama in the foreword. It can be defined as the introduction of creative drama concepts into Taiwan (Lee, 1994).

2.2. Theatre in Education (TIE)

Theatre in Education in the U.K. centers on community theater groups. In 1965, The Belgrade Theatre was established in Coventry with a focus on teaching materials at schools. It demonstrates the value of theatre education as a tool because it is the first theatre group playing as an educational theatre (Shih, 2002). Educational theatre presents important issues in the society or from the curriculum contents in the form of stage drama put together by stage workers who have the professional knowledge and performing capabilities. These performances are presented to students or group audiences at schools or in theatres (Chen and Chang, 2002). The characteristic of educational theatre is its specific educational purpose. Audience's active participation is required because the production of the theatrical program is a learning process achieved together with participants.

Members of educational theatre must understand very well teaching goals. Generally, theater groups are responsible for research and design performances which related to teaching content or regular life. Professional performances are aimed to inspire empathy from students so that they can think about and discuss the issues presented in depth. Educational theatre utilizes the theatrical elements, such as role plays, script writing, customs, stage designs and sound effects to imitate real-life situations. The roles in the plays need to learn how to make decisions (Vine, 1993; Jackson, 1993). Educational theatre usually deal with topic issues of families and societies, such as abused children, drugs, racial problems, sexism, housing, labor relations, ecology and AIDS (Huang, 1993).

The above theories regarding drama/theatre education will be used as the criteria to review the national theatre education standards of the U.S. and the theatre education standards of the 31 states. It is hoped that an induction can be made to summarize their similarities. In order to achieve the research purpose of this paper, content analysis is chosen as research methodology. Ou (1994) indicates that content analysis does not only analyze the apparent content of communication but also attempt to understand the latent content (p. 230). This paper hopes to understand, collate and induce the spirits and meanings of theatre education standards set out by individual states through reading and explaining. The major methods to collect data are the gathering of discussions on arts education standards of individual states and relevant papers from websites, the interviews with experts, scholars and related professionals in theatre education in the U.S. and Taiwan, and the collation of other relevant written documents. After the initial stage of literature review and consolidation and the translation of the theatre education standards of the 31 states, the researcher drafted the interview outlines and issued the outlines to a total of 72 professionals in theatre education throughout the 31 states via emails. These professionals include the state government officers responsible for arts education standards or theatre standards, university professors in the departments of drama, drama teachers in elementary, secondary or high schools, the persons responsible for arts education at arts councils or the chairpersons of arts or theatre education associations. These interviews intend to clarify the relationship between national

education standards and state education standards, establishment processes of standards, the philosophies and theoretic of standards, implementations of standards, curriculum hours, the coordination by schools/teachers to respond to standards and training of teachers. Due to the limitations of time, budgets and efforts, it was not possible to interview all the professionals in-depth in different states. After screening the email responses and considering the differences in locations and standards, the researcher chose to visit Ohio for the investigation. Before the interviews, the research consulted Taiwanese scholars. Totally, four Taiwanese scholars and three overseas scholars were interviewed. The researcher consolidated all the relevant papers and documents, attempted to interpret and corrected the previous contents, in order to examine the pros and cons and possible implementation scenarios of different systems. This paper is one of the very few projects in Taiwan that study theatre standards. It is hoped that this paper can serve as a reference to the education authorities and theatre professionals in the definition of indicators for theatre competences at elementary and junior high schools, as well as provide substantial assistance to teachers on the front line. Finally, this paper hopes to prompt researcher himself and the professionals in this field to develop capabilities in analysis and thinking, to gain a deep understanding of the meanings of theatre competence indicators in order to provide more consulting and assistance to arts teachers.

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3. Research Analysis

This study conducted a survey on the 51 administrative divisions of the U.S. (including the 50 states and Washington D.C., but excluding other territories such as Puerto Rico). As many as 31 states have their own individual theatre education standards. Such a large number and wide geography makes it difficult to compare standards state by state or generalize their current situations as the data is immense and complex. Therefore, this paper uses the classification of the U. S. Census Bureau, 2000, to divide the U.S. into four major blocks: Northeast Region (the lightest color), South Region (the lighter color), Midwest Region (the darker color), and West Region (the darkest color).

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The dark area in each block represents the number of the states with single theatre education standards while the light area represents the number of states with relevant arts education standards. There are a total of 15 administrative divisions without single theatre education standards. Maryland, Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska, and Idaho are the five states that no relevant arts standards are found, shown in Figure 1.

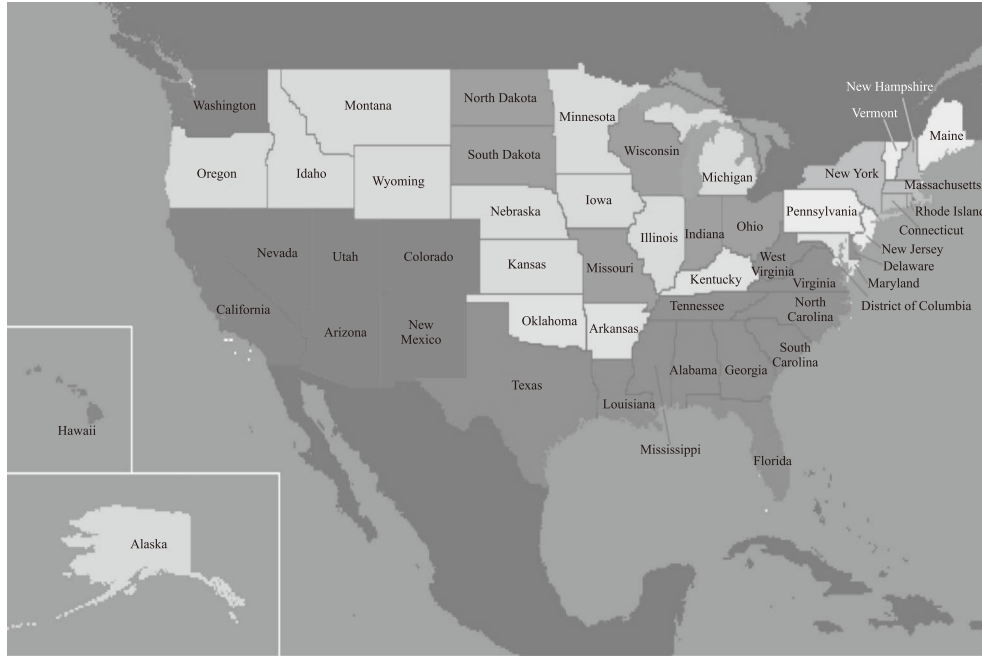


Figure 1 The States with Their Own Theatre Education Standards in the U.S.

Table 1 The States with Single Theatre Education Standards in the U.S. (Written in Italic)

Northeast Region	South Region
New England Division	South Atlantic Division
Maine, ME <i>New Hampshire, NH</i> Vermont, VT <i>Massachusetts, MA</i> <i>Rhode Island, RI</i> <i>Connecticut, CT</i>	<i>Delaware, DE</i> Maryland, MD District of Columbia, DC <i>Virginia, VA</i> <i>West Virginia, WV</i> <i>North Carolina, NC</i> <i>South Carolina, SC</i> <i>Georgia, GA</i> <i>Florida, FL</i>

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Middle Atlantic Division	East South Central Division
<i>New York, NY</i> New Jersey, NJ Pennsylvania, PA	Kentucky, KY <i>Tennessee, TN</i> <i>Alabama, AL</i> <i>Mississippi, MS</i>
Midwest Region	West South Central Division
East North Central Division	Arkansas, AR <i>Louisiana, LA</i> Oklahoma, OK <i>Texas, TX</i>
<i>Ohio, OH</i> <i>Indiana, IN</i> Illinois, IL Michigan, MI <i>Wisconsin, WI</i>	West Region
West North Central Division	Mountain Division
Minnesota, MN Iowa, IA <i>Missouri, MO</i> <i>North Dakota, ND</i> <i>South Dakota, SD</i> Nebraska, NE Kansas, KS	Montana, MT Idaho, ID Wyoming, WY <i>Colorado, CO</i> <i>New Mexico, NM</i> <i>Arizona, AZ</i> <i>Utah, UT</i> <i>Nevada, NV</i>
	Pacific Division
	<i>Washington, WA</i> Oregon, OR <i>California, CA</i> Alaska, AK <i>Hawaii, HI</i>

Northeast Region has eight states and there are five states with single theatre education standards. The percentage is around 55%. There are twelve states in Midwest Region and six states have single theatre education standards. The percentage is 50%. South Region has seventeen states and twelve states have single theatre education standards. The percentage is 70%. West Region has thirteen states and eight states have single theatre education standards. The percentage is around 60%. In terms of percentage, South Region has the highest percentage of states with individual theatre education standards; while Midwest Region reports the lowest percentage. Generally speaking, over half of the states in different regions have individual theatre

education standards. However, the percentage of Northeast Region and Midwest Region is lower than national average, 60.8%. Based on geographic location, states with single theater education standards are neighbors to each other in Northeast, South, and West Region, but are not in Midwest Region.

3.1. Analysis of the Degree of Closeness of the Theatre Education Standards of Individual Administrative Districts to the National Theatre Education Standards

The national theater education standards focus on the eight skills that students should acquire in theatre and they are script writing, acting, designing, directing, researching, comparing, analyzing and explaining, and understanding context. The main focus is similar to David Hornbrook's ideas, theatre education is the essence of teaching about drama. Students should learn how to produce a production, acting and respond. The concepts of Creative Drama and Theater in Education are all included.

The contents standards of different states reflect the spiritual elements and philosophies of the theatre education standards of individual states. The emphasized items, numbers and wording are slightly different between states. The content standards are different in four to ten items. Table 2 presents the similarity of content between the national theater education standards and individual states. Numbers in the columns means the corresponding items to national standards of individual states. The comparison between state standards and national standards leads to five categories: total similarity, high similarity (7 or 8 items are similar), medium similarity (4–6 items are similar), low similarity (1–3 items are similar) and a lack of similarity.

1. Total similarity: West Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina (three states).

2. High-level similarity: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Florida, Tennessee, Colorado and Nevada (seven states).

3. Moderate similarity: Rhode Island, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Delaware, Mississippi, Utah, California, and Hawaii (thirteen states).

4. Low-level similarity: Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana,

Texas and New Mexico (six states).

5. A complete lack of similarity: Arizona and Washington (two states).

Twenty-eight states emphasize the importance of research especially in culture and history. Twenty-seven administrative districts point out the significance of acting. Other important concepts are: designing (23 states), script writing (22 states), analyzing and explaining (20 states), directing (18 states). However, concepts related to understanding context (10 states) and comparing (8 states) are less emphasized. There are some other concepts are mentioned by other states, such as understanding career choices in theater (New Hampshire); style, technology and interdisciplinary (Massachusetts); and perception, creativity, aesthetic and so on.

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Table 2 Comparing the Theatre Education Standards of Individual Administrative

States	National Standards for Arts Education (Theater)								
	script writing	acting	designing	directing	researching	analyzing and explaining	understanding context	comparing	others
New Hampshire High-level similarity (Northeast Region)	1	2	3	4	5	8	7	6,8	9
Massachusetts High-level similarity	2	1	4,9	3	8	5	5,6		7,8,9,10
Rhode Island Moderate similarity		1	4		3	5			2
Connecticut High-level similarity	1	2	3	4	8	5,7	7		6
New York Moderate similarity	1	1	2	1	4	3			
Ohio Moderate similarity (Midwest Region)	2	2		2	1	3,5			4
Indiana Moderate similarity	3	3	3	3	1	2			4,5
Wisconsin Moderate similarity	1	2	5		3	4			
Missouri Moderate similarity	4	4		4	1	2			3
North Dakota Moderate similarity	1	2	3		4			7	5,6

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South DakotaModerate similarity	2	2	2	2	3				1_4
DelawareModerate similarity (South Region)	1	2	3	4	8	6			5_7
VirginiaLow-level similarity		1	1		2				3_4
West VirginiaTotal similarity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
North CarolinaTotal similarity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
South CarolinaTotal similarity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
GeorgiaLow-level similarity		1	1		4				2_3
FloridaHigh-level similarity	2	1	1	1	3	4	4	3	5
TennesseeHigh-level similarity	1	2	3	4	5_8	6	7	6_7_8	
AlabamaLow-level similarity			4		1				2_3
MississippiModerate similarity	1	1			3	2			4_5
LouisianaLow-level similarity					3				1_2_4
TexasLow-level similarity		2			3				1_4
ColoradoHigh-level similarity (West Region)	2	2	3	2	4_6	5	5		1
New MexicoLow-level similarity		1			6	5			2_3_4_7_8
Arizonaa complete lack of similarity									1_2_3
UtahModerate similarity	5	6	7				8		1_2_3_4
NevadaHigh-level similarity	1	2	1	1	4	3		3	5
WashingtonA complete lack of similarity									1_2_3_4
CaliforniaModerate similarity	2	2	2	2	3				1_4_5
HawaiiModerate similarity	1	3	4		5	6_7			

Districts to the National Theatre Education Standards

Figure 2 shows in different color shades the degree of closeness

of the theatre education standards of individual administrative divisions to the national theatre education standards. The darkest color represents total similarity. The lightest color represents a complete lack of similarity. The white color represents the states without individual theater education standards. The three states with total similarity are all in South Region. Northeast Region has the largest number of states with high-level similarity and three states are neighbors to each other. The six states in Midwest Region are moderately similar. South Region happens to be the region with low level similarity. The two states with a complete lack of similarity are in West Region. Except for the geographic locations and concentration, it is difficult to tell the relationship between states or between states and regions.

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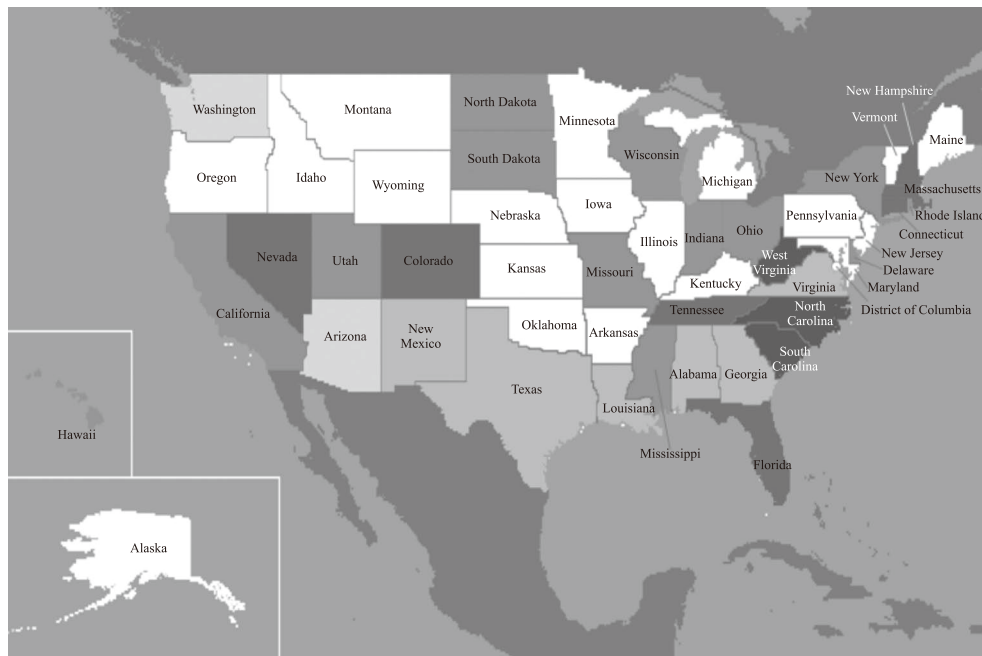


Figure 2 Closeness of Theatre Education Standards of Individual Administrative Divisions to National Theatre Education Standards

The release of the national theatre education standards in the U.S. offers a pattern for different states to refer to when it comes to their own theatre education standards. However, each state may differ in standard contents, wording and choice of items. It indicates that

the philosophies and spirits of their theatre education are different, reflecting the diversity and autonomy of states. The states with high-level similarity with the national theatre education standards focus on the nature of drama in their standards; while the states with low-level similarity define their standard structures with the “abstract capabilities” students are able to acquire. The concept of “culture and history” is the most sought after as it is the core value no matter whether the issue is addressed in abstract concepts or dramatic nature. This is an important implication that should be taken into account when it comes to the establishment of theatre education standards.

3.2. Keywords of Theater Education Standards in Each State

Keywords are the elements to construct the content standards. The content standards are the core of the theatre education standards. The researcher concludes 55 keywords form the content standards of 31 states. Among those keywords, 39 words are corresponding to the national theater education standards. Other keywords are less emphasized in national standards (See Table 3, Column 1). There are 15 keywords mentioned over 15 times. They are: history (23 times), culture (24), theater (18), analysis (17), critic (16), and production (16). It means over half of the states use those words. Theater standards of New Hampshire, Connecticut, West Virginia California, and South Carolina include all six words. Keywords are mentioned over 10 times including creativity (13times), playing (12), roles (13), drama (11), directing (12), connect (12), content/text (11), training (11), and respond (10). The more important words, the more times they appear.

Among 31 states, theater standard of West Virginia has the most keywords listed by the researcher, 27, classified into the category of total similarity. Tennessee with 24 keywords belongs to the category of high similarity. Connecticut with 22 keywords is classified to the category of high similarity. New Hampshire and Florida with 21 keywords belongs to the category of high similarity. South Carolina with 21 keywords is classified to the category of total similarity. Alabama, Arizona and Washington only with four keywords belong to the category of a lack of similarity. The more keywords appear individual states, the higher similarity to the national theater education standards.

Considering the geographic locations, except New Hampshire and Connecticut, other four states with more keywords, such as West Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee belong to South Region. In contrast, except Alabama, other two states with less keywords, such as Arizona and Washington belong to West Region. The frequency of keywords of the theatre education standards of individual administrative divisions implies the level of emphasis of certain concepts and the similarity to the national theater education standards. Table 3 presents keywords of theater education standards in each state.

N S	States Key words	N	M	R	C	N	O	I	W	M	N	S	D	V	W	N	S	G	F	T	A	M	L	T	C	N	A	U	N	W	C	H	nu mb ers		
		H	A	I	T	Y	H	N	I	O	D	D	E	A	V	C	C	A	L	N	L	S	A	X	O	M	Z	T	V	A	A	I			
1	Creation			*	*	*	*										*	*			*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*					13	
1	Heritage													*	*			*	*			*												5	
1	History	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	23
1	Imagination						*							*	*			*	*			*												6	
1	Improvisation	*			*		*					*		*	*	*	*	*	*															8	
1	Literature								*	*				*	*			*	*															6	
1	Personal experience													*	*																			2	
1	Scenes											*				*		*		*														3	
1	Script writer	*	*		*		*				*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*							*	*					12	
2	Acting	*	*		*		*		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	13
2	Character	*			*											*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	5	
3	Design	*										*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9	
3	Drama					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11
3	Environment										*					*		*		*														3	
3	Interpret	*		*	*									*				*		*		*												6	
4	Directing	*	*		*				*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12	
4	Rehearsal	*			*									*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	6	
5	Artistic choices	*			*									*																				3	
5	Culture	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	24
5	Research	*			*		*	*						*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7	
6	Art form					*					*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	8	
6	Audience			*			*			*		*																						3	
6	Compare												*	*																				2	
6	Connect	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
6	Electronic media												*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	6	
6	Film											*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	6	
6	Integrate			*							*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	

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N S	States		Key words																										nu mb ers		
	N H	M A	R I	C T	N Y	H	N I	W I	M O	N D	S D	E	V A	W V	N C	S C	G A	F L	T N	A L	M S	L A	X O	N M	A Z	U T	N V	W A		C A	H I
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6	*			*		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*			*			*		*	*	18
7	*		*	*	*	*	*	*						*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	17	
7	*			*				*						*	*				*							*				7	
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7	*		*	*				*											*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7		
7	*			*				*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	16	
8		*						*	*															*					4		
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Total accounts	21	10	15	22	63	13	14	14	8	11	15	8	27	19	21	11	22	24	4	12	18	10	8	17	47	42	14	17			

Table 3 Keywords of Theater Education Standards in Each State

Keywords are the elements to construct the content standards. The content standards are the core of the theatre education standards. The examination of keywords reveals the emphasis of each state at the establishment of their theatre education standards. The most frequently used keywords are again, culture and history. It will be considered a pity if a teacher fails to deliver culture and history when teaching

drama.

The 31 states have their specific theoretic foundations when they established their own theatre education standards. It was mentioned at interviews that some states referred to the national arts education standards and modified the standards of other states, while others developed their own standards based on the questionnaires answered by local residents, scholars and experts. Limited to space, this paper chooses to introduce theater education standards of Ohio State in depth.

3.3. Case Study: Ohio State

Drama/Theater Alignment of Benchmarks and Indicators (http://www.ode.state.oh.us/academic_content_standards/acsarts.asp) is built on Amended Substitute Senate Bill 1 (Academic Content Standards Development and Implementation Timelines, 2001). It is a part of arts academic content standards. Drama/Theater Alignment of Benchmarks and Indicators divides into five Content Standards. There are two to four Benchmarks under each content standard. Each Benchmark includes one to five Indicators. According to Standards Framework (2004), Content Standards describe the knowledge and skills that students should attain, often called the “what” of “what students should know and be able to do.” Benchmark is the specific component of the knowledge or skill identified by an academic content, performance or operational standard. Indicators can also be called as Grade-Level Indicators. They expect students to have certain knowledge and skills by that grade level. Five Content Standards and Benchmarks are as follows: (<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=336&ContentID=1388&Content=34237>)

3.3.1. Historical, Cultural and Social Contexts

Students understand and appreciate the historical, social, political and cultural contexts of drama/theatre in societies both past and present. Students identify significant contributions of playwrights, actors, designers, technicians, composers/lyricists, choreographers, directors, producing organizations and inventors to dramatic/theatrical heritage. Students analyze the social and political forces that have

influenced and do influence the function and role of drama/theatre in the lives of people.

K-4

Benchmark A: Recognize and demonstrate audience/viewer behavior appropriate for the context and style of the art form.

Benchmark B: Identify and compare similar characters and situations in stories/dramas from and about various cultures and time periods.

Benchmark C: Explain the role of writers in creating live theatre, film/video and broadcast media.

5-8

Benchmark A: Explain the style of a dramatic/theatrical work in historical or cultural context.

Benchmark B: Compare and contrast playwrights and/or screenwriters from various time periods.

9-12

Benchmark A: Determine the authenticity and effectiveness of a dramatic/theatrical work or experience in terms of style, time period, culture and theatre heritage.

Benchmark B: Discuss the place of a dramatic/theatrical writer's body of work in drama/theatre history.

3.3.2. Creative Expression and Communication

Students improvise, create, produce and perform dramatic/theatrical works. Students experiment with dramatic/theatrical processes, develop dramatic/theatrical skills and participate in drama/theatre.

K-4

Benchmark A: Sustain characters with consistency in classroom dramatization.

Benchmark B: Create places/spaces where performances can be staged.

Benchmark C: Demonstrate various ways to stage classroom dramatizations.

Benchmark D: Communicate a story through storytelling or scripted screen work.

5-8

Benchmark A: Use basic acting skills (e.g., voice, posture,

movement, language) to develop characterizations.

Benchmark B: Explain the functions and interrelated nature of scenery, props, lighting, sound, costumes and makeup to create an environment appropriate for drama.

Benchmark C: Explore the roles and responsibilities of various theatrical personnel. Benchmark D: Create scripted scenes based on personal experience and heritage.

9–12

Benchmark A: Analyze the physical, social and psychological dimensions of a character and create a believable multidimensional portrayal of that character.

Benchmark B: Effectively use technology and/or resources to mount a performance.

Benchmark C: Create an imaginative and complex script using historical, cultural and/or symbolic information and refine it so that story and meaning are conveyed to an audience.

3.3.3. Analyzing and Responding Standard

Students respond to dramatic/theatrical texts, experiences and performances by describing the distinguishing characteristics and interpreting meaning, themes and moods. Students analyze the creative techniques used in creating and performing dramatic/ theatrical works and evaluate dramatic/theatrical works using appropriate criteria.

K–4

Benchmark A: Use dramatic/theatrical vocabulary and concepts in responding to dramatic/theatrical experiences.

Benchmark B: Explain the impact of choices made by artists (e.g., playwrights, actors, directors, designers) in dramatic/theatrical works or experiences.

Benchmark C: Apply criteria for evaluating a theatrical work.

5–8

Benchmark A: Use appropriate dramatic/theatrical vocabulary, elements and principles.

Benchmark B: Discuss the collaborative nature of drama/theatre as a vehicle for the expression of idea.

Benchmark C: Articulate opinions about dramatic/theatrical work using established criteria.

9–12

Benchmark A: Incorporate specialized dramatic/theatrical terminology accurately and consistently in analyzing and responding to dramatic/theatrical experiences.

Benchmark B: Indicate the artistic techniques used in planning and performing drama/theatre work.

Benchmark C: Evaluate dramatic/theatrical works using appropriate criteria.

3.3.4. Valuing Drama/Theatre/Aesthetic Reflection

Students demonstrate an understanding of reasons why people value drama/theatre and a respect for diverse opinions regarding dramatic/theatrical preferences. Students develop personal drama/theatre philosophies and articulate the significance of drama/theatre in their lives.

K-4

Benchmark A: Apply personal criteria for evaluating drama/theatre works or experiences.

Benchmark B: Represent the diversity of personal opinions expressed in response to a drama/theatre work or experience.

5-8

Benchmark A: Defend personal responses to a drama/theatre event.

Benchmark B: Compare their personal responses to a drama/theatre event with the response of another person.

9-12

Benchmark A: Defend their responses to a drama/theatre event based on their personal drama/theatre philosophies.

Benchmark B: Respect diverse opinions regarding drama/theatre preferences.

3.3.5. Connections, Relationships and Applications

Students identify similarities and differences between drama/theatre and other art forms. Students recognize the relationship between concepts and skills learned through drama/theatre with knowledge learned in other curricular subjects, life experiences and potential careers in and outside the arts. Students recognize the benefits of lifelong learning in drama/theatre

K-4

Benchmark A: Demonstrate ways that the principles and content

of other school curricular disciplines including the arts are interrelated with those of theatre.

Benchmark B: Collaborate with classmates to plan, prepare and present dramatizations including scenes from Ohio history and various cultures.

5–8

Benchmark A: Discover the interdependence of theatre and other art forms.

Benchmark B: Explain the relationship between concepts and skills used in drama/theatre with other curricular subjects.

Benchmark C: Identify recurring drama/theatre ideas and concepts that occur across time periods and/or cultures.

Benchmark D: Discuss drama/theatre skills as a foundation for lifelong learning and potential employment.

9–12

Benchmark A: Synthesize knowledge of the arts through participation in the creation of a dramatic/ theatrical work or experience.

Benchmark B: Synthesize the relationship between concepts and skills used in drama/theatre with other curricular subjects.

Benchmark C: Explain how the arts are an index to social values and accomplishments of a civilization.

Benchmark D: Engage in activities that lead to continued involvement in theatre

Drama/Theater Alignment of Benchmarks and Indicators divides into five Content Standards and three stages (K–4, 5–8 and 9–12). There are two to four Benchmarks under each content standard. Each Benchmark includes one to five Indicators.

Drama/Theater Alignment of Benchmarks and Indicators in State of Ohio use the both words drama and theatre interchangeably. It shows that the focus is not only on literary and theoretic drama but also the operation of the whole theatre. Apparently, the standards of State of Ohio do not make classifications in accordance with the professional dimensions of theatre. Rather, the standards emphasize the abstract capabilities developed through the artistic form of drama/theatre. These abstract capabilities include creativity, expression, communication, analysis, connection, aesthetics, implications of

culture and history. In practice, the theatrical elements, techniques and vocabulary are imbedded in the teaching process. In other words, the focus is on the learning of abstract capabilities and thinking methods from practical drama contents and theatrical elements. The five major content standards clearly define the five domains of theatre education. The benchmarks and indicators are equal to achievement standards. The benchmarks are stage specific while the indicators are grade-level centric. It is one step at a time and one level on top of another. The whole curriculum standard has a clear hierarchy and robust structure. Meanwhile, the standards also emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary learning, career preparations and lifelong learning. It covers a wide scope. The classification is also in three stages, identical to the classification of the national theatre standards. The categorization is in five categories, different from the categorization of the national theatre education standards. However, the contents are quite similar with those in the national theatre education standards. The major difference is in categorization.

4. Conclusion

It has been nearly 13 years since the release of the national theatre education standards in the U.S. in 1994. Administrative divisions show significant variances in the definition or implementations of theatre education standards. In terms of percentage, South Region has the highest percentage of states with individual theatre education standards; while Midwest Region reports the lowest percentage. However, generally speaking, over half of the states in different regions have individual theatre education standards. Only 20 states are still without. Some states have arts education standards, while others do not have any standards. The situations can be largely described into the following six types: those with arts education standards, those with visual and performing arts education standards, those with visual and music education standards, those with art and humanity education standards, those with arts, language and literature education standards and those with no standards.

The contents of standards of different states reflect the spiritual

elements of the theatre education standards of individual states. The emphasized items, numbers and wording are slightly different between states. The content standards are from four to ten items. The comparison between state standards and national standards leads to five categories: total similarity, high similarity, medium similarity, low similarity and a lack of similarity. There are a total 55 frequently used keywords in content standards. Among them, 39 keywords echo the eight content standards of the national theatre education standards. The remaining 16 words are less frequently mentioned in the national standards. The frequency of keywords implies the level of emphasis of certain concepts and the directions of the theatre education standards of individual administrative divisions.

Very few elementary schools offer drama classes and a vast majority of theatre curricula are used to support the teaching of other subjects. In contrast, junior and senior high schools have more theatre classes. Many high schools have regular theatre performances each year or every semester. Most of these performances are musicals. Many theatrical events are extracurricular activities. Many administrative divisions rely on English teachers as the teachers to teach theatre, yet an increasing number of states are training theatre teachers. They offer certification systems and provide bachelor and master degrees in theatre education. However, many states cannot promote theatre education due to a lack of allocated budgets (Vance, 2004; Smithner, 2004). The reasons for such variances stem from the attention of the state government, the level of promotions and the budgets.

Reflections on Grade 1–9 Curriculum in Taiwan Arts and Humanities are the art curriculum in which humanity literature is developed through arts, such as visual art, music and performing arts. The purposes are to develop students' artistic competence, encourage them to participate in arts and cultural activities, improve their artistic assessment abilities and bring joys to their lives. In this way, students are able to develop their artistic potentials and sound characters (Ministry of Education, 2002). Under such a premise, the curricula aim to achieve “exploration and expression”, “aesthetics and understanding” and “realization and application.” It is expected that students are able to explore themselves, perceive the relationship between the environment and themselves as individuals, to utilize

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media and forms and to enrich their lives and minds. Thus, they are able to understand the values, styles and cultural heritage of all kinds of arts. They will respect and understand artistic creations and bring art to their lives (Ministry of Education, 2002). The stage indicators are also based on “exploration and expression”, “aesthetics and understanding” and “realization and application.” There are a total of four stages. The first stage is the first two years of the elementary school (as part of life curriculum), the second stage being the third and fourth grade of the elementary school, the third stage being the fifth and sixth year of the elementary school, the fourth stage being the three years of the junior high school. The abilities to “analyze, understand, criticize and reflect” are emphasized.

Compared with the national and state theatre education standards in the U.S., the indicators of competences in different stages in arts and humanity education in Taiwan are obviously more abstract. There are no detailed descriptions as to what capabilities and to what levels students should acquire or develop. The advantage is that teachers and publishers have more leeway in curriculum designs. However, to the teachers with no experience in drama teaching, it will be a daunting challenge. It also creates controversial in assessment. Therefore, if the criteria and achievement items can be described in detail when it comes to stage indicators, the continuity between stages will improve. Teachers will have a more clear idea as to their teaching targets and students will have better understanding of what they need to learn. This will also help to set up a uniform standard in assessment and evaluation.

Meanwhile, from its inception up to date, the theatre curriculum under the arts and humanity education in accordance with Grade 1–9 Curriculum in Taiwan is faced with many problems similar to those in the U.S. For example, the budgetary issue discontinued classes. There are a bigger percentage of schools at townships not able to promote theatre education than those in cities (Hsu, 2003; Lei, 2004). The training of teachers for theatre education is also another big problem. Some scholars suggest that the most ideal model is for the teachers to complete the first bachelor degrees in theater and second master degrees in drama education. These teachers will be certified after they complete their training. This will enable them to steer their

teaching at classrooms and ensure the quality of their teaching (Chang, 2004b). Finally, the central and local governments should develop a measurement mechanism and standard to gauge the implementations of theatre education and test the learning outcome of students.

Theatre education in Taiwan used to focus only on professional education. However, the good news is that theatre education at elementary and junior high schools is gradually gaining attention. Theatre education is slowly becoming a tool to inspire creativity from the previous garden-party format. Theatre education is a non-display, non-performance-oriented teaching in the arts and humanities curriculum. It focuses on the process and interactive learning. It passes down culture and history and brings arts to life. In the future, it is hoped that the aesthetics and knowledge of theatre becomes a tangible and friendly way of life within everybody's grasp. A variety of dramas, ancient and modern, western and eastern, can be introduced and incorporated in life and other learning domains.

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