Researching arts-based pedagogies for schools: approaches from Adelaide’s twin city in Texas

Professor Katie Dawson

Drama for Schools
The University of Texas at Austin
Arts-based pedagogies are...
Purpose of my presentation

* Overview of Drama for Schools program model and relationship between arts practice and educational research

* Teacher change in identity, pedagogy, and perception of students; teacher self-efficacy and pedagogical content knowledge

* School/campus issues of sustainability

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Relationship between education and the arts

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
The context: UT Austin

- College of Fine Arts and College of Education separated in multiple ways.
- Bridges built through:
  - Funding - co-investigators on grants and contracts with schools
  - Students - research and practice
  - Courses - Summer Institute and related course
The context: US public educational system

* Increase demands on efficacy, educational accountability by stakeholders including politicians, business leaders, educators among others (Sabol, 2013)
* Academic and performance standards, high stakes testing create rigid borders around instructional practice (Van Eman et. al, 2009)
The program: *Drama for Schools*

Professional development in drama-based instruction for K-12 schools and school districts

Interested in improving the learning culture of the classroom through the arts

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Where is our research leading us?

- La Joya, Texas (1)
- Tyler, Texas (2)
- Galena, Alaska (2)
- Victoria, Texas (6)
- McAllen, Texas (3)
- Austin, Texas (current)
- Hartland, Wisconsin (current)
To access video on Drama-Based Instruction please go to: http://www.utexas.edu/cofa/dbi/
Drama-Based Instruction

- Active Discussion Starters
- Game as Metaphor
- Image Work
- Role Play

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Drama-Based Instruction
Used in the instructional cycle helps us to...

- Create
- Analyze
- Synthesize
- Translate/Transfer
- Self
- Ideas,
- Community

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
## Theoretical Frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applied Theatre</th>
<th>Professional Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Critical Pedagogy <em>(Freire)</em></td>
<td>▪ Best Practice <em>(Guskey)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Praxis</td>
<td>▪ intentional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ identity</td>
<td>▪ ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Power</td>
<td>▪ systemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ <strong>Constructivism</strong> <em>(Vygotsky)</em></td>
<td>▪ <strong>Adult Learning</strong> <em>(Knowles)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Length</strong></th>
<th>One afternoon or day seminar</th>
<th>Multiple visits with ongoing support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format</strong></td>
<td>Didactic, lecture-based presentations</td>
<td>Interactive and inquiry-based activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of Goals</td>
<td>Top-down</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Generic context</td>
<td>Tailored to teacher context, subject area, student needs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Role</td>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Administration Role</td>
<td>Contractor with Expert</td>
<td>Advocate and participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities for Practice and Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Limited and removed from classrooms, little follow up</td>
<td>Ongoing and scaffolded, both in trainings and in classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources and Documentation</td>
<td>Binders of training curricula</td>
<td>Teacher-developed lesson plans, DVDs, websites, and teacher-led action research projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buy-in</strong></td>
<td>Completed for hours requirement</td>
<td>Completed as a partnership with colleagues; opportunities for further mentorship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Drama for Schools
Ontology

PRAXIS

Education Research
Methodology

Constructivism

Critical Pedagogy

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Outcomes are highly valued in US public schools (Donahue & Stuart, 2007; Van Eman et al., 2009)

Evaluation model at odds with constructivist/critical pedagogical methodology (see Guba, 1990; arts-based evaluation methodology see Simons and McCormack, 2007)

Arts-based research emphasize process and aesthetics, focus on subjectivity and positionality (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegsemund, 2008)

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
2009: Drama for Schools: Impact of a Drama-Based Professional Development Program on Teacher Self-Efficacy and Authentic Instruction. Youth Theatre Journal


2012: Participatory research in an arts integration professional development program. Teacher Development: An international journal of teachers' professional development

2013: Teacher Self-Efficacy and Pedagogical Conceptual Change in a Drama-Based Professional Development Program. Teaching and Teacher Education.

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
DFS in Victoria study model

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Research questions

- How did teachers conceptualize the purpose of the DFS program?

- What effects did DFS have on the relationship between teachers and students? More specifically, how did participants’ view their students, teaching and the learning culture of their classroom as a result of their participation in DFS?
## Study Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISD Teacher Participants</th>
<th>Secondary (ages 13-18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of school sites</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women (%)</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience (years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>12.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>0-34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Coded qualitative data from lesson plan evaluations and focus groups and used grounded theory approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is Drama for Schools</th>
<th>Learning techniques; Increasing student engagement and interest; new ideas and concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who are my students as learners?</td>
<td>Defending their own choices; creative; thinking critically and outside the box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I teach?</td>
<td>Use new approaches; be hands on; learn to give better cues and flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who am I as a teacher?</td>
<td>I change the course of lives; have fun teaching; continuing to learn and grow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Further discussion...

- Changes in relationship between teachers and students (engagement, increase level of noise and chaos)

- Identity mediation
  - students’ view of teacher: teacher positioned as learner
  - teachers’ view of students: DBI assumes students have valuable prior knowledge and co-create information
2013
Teacher Self-Efficacy and Pedagogical Conceptual Change in a Drama-Based Professional Development Program
## Victoria Texas Study 2008-2010

### Elementary Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Teachers</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching</td>
<td>8.75 (avg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd grade</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Secondary Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Teachers</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years Teaching</td>
<td>8.03 (avg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th/6th grade</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th grade</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th grade</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th grade</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Teacher Self-Efficacy

WHAT? an educator’s belief about her/his capacity to teach and affect student outcomes (Bandura, 1986)

WHY? self-efficacy influences student outcomes related to achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986), student beliefs (Madgeley, Feldlaufer & Eccles, 1989) and student motivation (Dembo & Gibson, 1985) among others.

HOW? Tscahnnen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy validated measure: Teacher’s Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

(1) Efficacy for instructional strategies, (2) efficacy for classroom management, and (3) efficacy for student engagement

Also, interviews/focus groups and classroom observations

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Fig. 1. Pedagogical conceptual change.
Three Hypotheses

- Elementary teachers have higher initial self-efficacy for teaching than secondary teachers.
- Teachers with higher self-efficacy have greater shifts in conceptual change than teachers with lower self-efficacy.
- Elementary teachers experience greater conceptual change than secondary teachers.
Pedagogical Conceptual Change in DFS...key findings

- Elementary teachers experienced greater pedagogical conceptual change than secondary teachers.

- Elementary teachers with lower self-efficacy had MORE of a change than more efficacious elementary teachers.

- Secondary teachers with higher self-efficacy demonstrated MORE or a change than less efficacious secondary teachers.

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
How do you sustain arts-based pedagogy in school settings?

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
From service to sustainability

- Summer Institute – Post-graduate level course in pedagogy and practice
- Trainer of trainer models
- On-line resources and virtual professional learning communities

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Welcome to Drama Based Instruction!

This website for the Drama for Schools program is designed to be your guide for integrating drama into your curriculum. It is meant to serve as a practical resource as you begin designing your own drama-based lessons. We hope this website and our professional development trainings will make you as excited as we are about bringing your curriculum alive using drama!

About DRAMA FOR SCHOOLS

As an initiative of the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Texas in Austin, Drama For Schools is part of a long and distinguished history of the University's commitment to public schools. In addition to preparing many of the state's theatre arts teachers, the Department actively partners with public schools throughout the state of Texas to provide high-quality arts and help activate the power of education through the arts.
Participants need:

- **Visual and verbal examples** to successfully apply strategies to their classroom context.

- A **compelling reason to return to our web site** for ongoing exchange of ideas.

- **Better support** to understand complex relationship between learning theory and arts practice.

---

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Create and crowdsource a series of instructional videos (strategy and theory into practice) to engage teachers in the ongoing use of DBI
Tensions in Representation

The practice...

What?

How?

...the context

Who?

Where?

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
4-Phase Process...

- Needs Assessment
- Video: Script, Film, Edit
- Website Function and Interface
- Crowdsourcing Applications
Videos by the Numbers

16 scripts

53 interviews

24 classrooms

268 students

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
See http://www.utexas.edu/cofa/dbi/ for example videos
DBI Network/Crowdsourcing Current Research Areas

- Content Development Accountability
- Reflective Practitioner Research
- Resource Exchange

Crowdsourced to Website

Defined DBI
Refined DBI
Maligned DBI

Prof. Katie Dawson, University of Texas at Austin
Questions?
For further information on the Drama for Schools program, a complete list of publications, or related sources please contact:

Professor Katie Dawson
kathryndawson@austin.utexas.edu