Workshop 1: The Elements of Drama.

Warm-up, movement and relaxation exercises are non-verbal, but they do in fact involve considerable language work in terms of listening, comprehension and discussion. Besides, these non-verbal activities may be found to be useful preparation for a particular role-play or dramatisation.

They also serve as an introduction to drama in a non-threatening way, since they help students to gain self-confidence, as participation is not dependent solely on linguistic skills, and they can help the student to develop an awareness of the paralanguage, which is often culturally and socially based, and an awareness of their own body language. Communication exists in many forms and the way we express ourselves through facial expressions, gestures, movements is a great indicator of our feelings, thoughts, and attitudes.

Where can warm-up exercises be used? They are basically “icebreaker games” -games played at the beginning of a lesson as warm-ups or introductory activities-. Such games tend to relax the learners, make them feel at ease with each other, and willing to work together. In sum, we can say that warm-ups are used to create “readiness for learning”.

1. **Hand-catching.** This exercise helps students: (a) to get rid of nervous energy, (b) to establish a relationship, partly physical, with another person, and (c) to have fun and forget themselves in the activity. (5 minutes)
2. **Mirrors.** This exercise helps students: (a) to achieve a high degree of concentration, (b) to anticipate someone else’s body movement which is similar to the sort of anticipation demanded in verbal exchanges, and (c) to develop a high degree of eye-contact between partners. (5 minutes)

3. **Machine work.** This exercise helps students: (a) to concentrate, (b) to establish a physical relationship with other members of the group, (c) to achieve and develop group consciousness.

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<th>Sound, Rhythm and Vocal Expression</th>
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**Breathing**

1. Place hands, palms inward, on the front of the waist so that fingers are almost touching. If breathing correctly, you will feel a tensing of the diaphragm and fingers will move apart indicating correct lateral movement of the lower ribs. Do not raise shoulder blades. Gradually increase the depth of breathing.

2. Imitate a yawn. Softly and lazily say a prolonged “AH!”

3. Breathe in on the ribs and whisper the following:

   One and one are two.
   *(Breathe again)*
   Two and two are four.
   Four and four are eight.
   *(Breathe again)*
   Eight and eight are sixteen.
   Sixteen and sixteen are thirty-two.

4. Repeat the above exercise this time breathing in on the diaphragm.

**Resonance**

For developing volume and quality the chief resonators, the mouth, the throat and the nose have an important effect on voice. The sound is amplified and made fuller and richer by passing through these hollow spaces.

1. Hum in unison concentrating the sound on the back of the throat. Gradually increase volume and then let the sound fade away.

2. Hum again, this time concentrating sound directly under the dome-shape of the hard palate. Gradually increase volume and let the sound fade away. You should experience a tickling sensation on the lips.

3. Hum again and then open your mouth and sound “AH!” without losing any resonance.
Articulation

Articulation is the muscular process by means of which we modify the voice or breath with the tongue, the teeth, the lips and other speech organs to produce speech sounds. Poor articulation will render speech indistinct or inaudible. Mumbling is the fault of not opening the mouth wide enough.

Exercises for the lower jaw:

1. Open the mouth to its fullest extent. Repeat action opening and closing a number of times.
2. Open mouth, shape lips and say AH as in father. Repeat several times.
3. Open mouth, shape lips and say EE as in free. Repeat several times.
4. Say AH, EE a number of times paying attention to the up-and-down movement of the lower jaw.

Exercises for the lips

The flexibility of the lips is very important for good articulation, and vowels as well as consonants may suffer from lack of lip mobility.

1. To improve the mobility of the tongue and lips, try this exercise:
   a. The tip of the tongue, the teeth and the lips.
   b. Hot coffee in a proper copper coffee pot.
   c. She sells sea shells on the sea shore.

Inflexion

Inflexion is the rise and fall of the voice. If a voice is dull and boring, it is usually because the inflexion is monotonous. To introduce a greater variety of inflexion one needs to develop the ability to pitch the voice register above the normal key. The following exercises will give students an opportunity to experiment with inflexion and thereby increase their range.

1. Count to ten in a level pitch.
2. Repeat but this time pitch voice above normal key.
3. Repeat again pitching voice below normal key.
4. Speak the numbers beginning “one” at a low key, “two” at normal, “three” at high and so on.
5. Count to ten again but this time say every third number with:
   a) surprise
   b) impatience
   c) great pleasure
d) anger

Listen to each other and notice the different inflexions.

6. Choose a partner. Each person chooses one word. Have a friendly chat with partner just using that word. Then using the same word have an angry confrontation with partner.

**Potato in My Hand**  
**U. 5. Mk Chant**  
1 minute, 35 seconds
Little Boy was just getting into bed one night right near Halloween time. He had just pulled up the covers when he heard someone calling out from downstairs.
"I'm on the first step. Here I stand. I'm coming up the stairs with a potato in my hand."

Little Boy pulled the covers up over his head.

"I'm on the second step. Here I stand. I'm coming up the stairs with a potato in my hand."

Little Boy started shaking.

"I'm on the third step. Here I stand. I'm coming up the stairs with a potato in my hand."

"I'm on the fourth step. Here I stand. I'm coming up the stairs with a potato in my hand."

"I'm on the fifth step. Here I stand. I'm coming up the stairs with a potato in my hand."

All the way up the stairs came the voice.

Then ....

"I'm in the hall. Here I stand. I'm coming down the hall with a potato in my hand."

"I'm coming in the door. Here I stand. I'm coming in the door with a potato in my hand."

Little Boy was just quaking under those covers.

"I'm standing by the bed. Here I stand. I'm standing by the bed with a potato in my hand."

"TAKE IT!"

When Little Boy got the courage to pull down the covers and look around,
there was nothing there ...

Just a big old potato lying at the foot of his bed!

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**Movement and Dramatic Expression**

**Ways of moving** (responding to different physical conditions). The aim is to get students to concentrate and really think about what they are doing and how the physical conditions may affect the way they move.

All the group:

Move around the room very slowly.
Move very quickly.
Move around very heavily.
Move around very lightly.

Two groups:

Walking in a thick fog.
Walking in very high-heeled shoes.
Walking through mud in heavy boots.
Walking over ice.
Walking on hot stones on the beach barefoot.
Carrying full cups or glasses.
Walking along a tightrope.

Role-play (1):
A: Want a lemon sweet?
B: Don’t mind if I do.
A: Come on, take one.
B: Oh, thank you. It’s nice.
A: It’s strange, eh? You and me, and all the rest of it.