MÓDULO/MODULE: Técnicas de dramatización en el aula de lengua extranjera/Drama Techniques in Foreign Language Teaching. (3 cr. ECTS).

Workshop 2: 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. Not me!

The teacher starts the game by saying: “It’s John’s turn to buy us all a drink” The student named should respond, “Not me! It’s Peter’s turn.” “Peter then responds, “Not me! It’s Anne’s turn.” The game continues until
everyone in the class has been named. Apart from familiarising students with one another's names, this is a good way of practising the possessive case.

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.

Sound, Rhythm and Vocal Expression

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

Emotional Involvement in Acting

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!

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.

**What am I doing?/How am I moving?**

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

**What am I doing?/How am I moving?**

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.

MIME

Language teachers often use a lot of mime in their daily lessons to introduce new vocabulary, clarify and illustrate the meaning of words and expressions, indicate objects, express a wide range of emotions and attitudes, etc. Language teachers can learn a lot from the techniques mimes use to train their bodies.

Mime is known as the “art of silence”. It is silent because it uses a body to communicate, rather than a spoken word. The reason for this silence is not based on the hatred of words or just the pleasure of telling a story without words; the mime speaks what words cannot say and proclaims in a gesture what a writer would take a novel to tell. Mime searches for the gestures which communicate the essence of thought and feeling, capturing them in
time and space and then releasing them to the audience to experience anew. Mime is not the art of mimicry; it is the art of recreation.

**Exercise 1: Facial expressions.**

1. Attention: Watch out!
2. Reflection: To be or not to be
3. Aggression: You did it!
4. Dislike: Ugh! It stinks
5. Laughter: It was ever so funny!
6. Affliction: You don’t love me

**Exercise 2: Sculpting the body.**
Exercise 3: The flower & the rock.
Exercise 5: Illusion