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

Workshop 7: Sound, Rhythm and Vocal Expression & Storytelling

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.

Resonance

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

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, IU a number of times paying attention to the up-and-down movement of the lower jaw.

**Voice projection**

1. Breathing in on the diaphragm, project vowels: a, e, i, o, u.

**Inflexion**

**Dialogue A**

1. 1-2-3-4
2. who's that knocking on my door?
3. 5-6-7-8
4. birthday party don't be late
5. for the disco disco disco dancing
6. disco disco disco dancing

*(Circus of Poets: OK Gimme –Poems for Children)*

**Dialogue B**

1. Hey look at me
2. I’m a poet, poet
3. I write about sheep
4. So I know it, know it
5. I write about sheep
6. And I write about ducks
7. Hens, Cows, Sheep, Ducks
8. And I write them all down in my big new book
9. I write them all down
10. and I read them all out
11. Ducks, Sheep, Hens, cows,
12. This is what poetry’s all about.

*(John Turner, Hard Shoulders Second Home)*

**Dialogue C**

A1: Here?
B1: Here.
A1: It’s a good place.
A2: Better than any other place we’ve seen.
B2: it’s a good place all right.
A1: To pause at.
B1: To stay at.
A2: To make our own.
B2: For ever and ever.
A1: This is our place.
B1: Ours.
A2: Ours.
B2: We took long enough to find it.
A3: It was a long journey.
B3: But it was worth every day we searched.
A1: It was worth every mile we tramped.
B1: Look at it.
A2: Just look.
B2: Look here.
A3: Look there.
B3: Look.
A1: Look.

(from Double Act, ed. M. Sahckleton, 1985)

**Storytelling**

Stories, which rely so much on words, offer a major and constant source of language experience for students. Stories are motivating, rich in language experience, and inexpensive. Here are some of the most important reasons why stories should play a central role in teaching a foreign language to children.

**Motivation:** Students have a constant need for stories and they will always be willing to listen or to read, if the right moment is chosen.

**Meaning:** Students want to find meaning in stories, so they listen with a purpose. If they find meaning they are rewarded through their ability to understand, and are motivated to try to improve their ability to understand even more. This is in contrast to so many activities in foreign language learning, which have little or no intrinsic interest or value for children.

**Listening and reading fluency:** In conversations with native speakers the most important ability is to be able to understand a sustained flow of the foreign language in which there are words which are new to the listener. This ability to do this can only be built up by practice. Listening and reading fluency is based on: (a) a positive attitude to not understanding everything; (b) the skills of searching for meaning, predicting, and guessing.

**Speaking and writing fluency:** Fluency in speaking is not only essential in conversation but is, for many people, the spearhead of how they learn.
Fluency is based on a positive attitude to “having a go” with the language one knows and not being afraid of making mistakes.

Language awareness: Stories help students become aware of the general “feel” and sound of the foreign language. Stories also introduce students to language items and sentence constructions without their necessarily having to use them productively. They can build up a reservoir of language in this way. When the time comes to move the language items into their productive control, it is no great problem because the language is not new to them. An obvious example of a language point introduced and made familiar through stories before the children are expected to use it fluently themselves is the simple past tense.

Stimulus for speaking and writing: The experience of the story encourages responses through speaking and writing. It is natural to express our likes and dislikes and to exchange ideas and associations related to stories we hear or read. In this way stories can be part of a set of related activities.

Communication: Listening and reading stories and responding to them through speaking and writing, drama, music, and art develop a sense of being and having an audience and of sharing and collaborating. Learning a language is useless if we do not know how to communicate –how to listen to others and how to speak and write so that listeners and readers will want to listen and read and be able to understand. Story sharing builds up this crucial sense of awareness of others.

General curriculum: Most stories can be used to develop the students’ powers of awareness, analysis, and expression, as well as relating to other aspects of the curriculum such as cultural and social studies, geography, history, mathematics, and science.

STORYTELLING USING SOCK PUPPETS

Working plan:

- Read your story once to get general meaning and intention.
- Read your story for a second time. This time try to recreate the atmosphere with your voice. For this purpose, you will have to work hard on voice projection and modulation (please, remember to put into practice all you’ve learnt about breathing, resonance, articulation and inflexion in the drama workshops).
- Learn your story by heart.
- Make a sock puppet for each of the characters in the story.
- Make scenery out of a big card box. The box will need to be customised and it will serve to hide the puppets when the narrator tells the story, as
well as hide the narrator when the characters are in action. Think of suitable special effects to accompany characters, divide blocks, etc.

- Concentrate hard on the way you should move to play different characters.
- Now you are ready for the first rehearsal. Light and music, maestro!
HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN PUPPET

• The basics:
  ✓ A sock.
  ✓ Ping-pong balls.
  ✓ A piece of cardboard.
  ✓ Foam.
  ✓ Sellotape.
  ✓ Needle and thread.
  ✓ A pair of scissors.

• Accessories:
  ✓ Plasticine.
  ✓ Card.
  ✓ Wool.
  ✓ Wig.
  ✓ Sequins.
  ✓ Scourer.