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Theatre Pedagogy News Journal

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Editorial

Gerd Bräuer

Editoril (English)

The first issue of "Korrespondenzen" for the new millennium is dedicated to a topic which may be one of the most important ones for the coming times, if we are to experience yet a third millennium in a world of increased conflict. I am referring to the ability to understand one another, for which body and language supply communicative channels complementing each other in various ways:

At the subway entrance in downtown Atlanta an Afro-American approached me with a prevalent heavy southern accent. Without a chance of understanding him, I still knew what he needed. Flickjoppe. No shoes. And the forehead a single wrinkle, as Brecht writes in his "Legende" (legend). I placed a bill in the man's hand, yet I have too little of one thing: understanding. I often get annoyed about that, but what else could be expected from someone who drives home to the green suburbs at night, and goes to sleep in a warm house?

Once a year I believe to have a little more of that understanding for the man at the subway station. That is on the fourth Thursday in November, at Thanksgiving in America, after spending hours dishing out food at a homeless shelter. Only few words pass. My body practices its hand at giving. The hurried gesture at the subway station, passing out the dollar bill, digs a path into my consciousness through the hundred-fold repetitive motion with the soup ladle. On my way home to the green suburb, I ask myself what I occupied my time with during the rest of the year? And, yet another gesture helps me understand: It is the hand of the homeless on my shoulder who, now relieved from hunger, proceeds to leave the soup kitchen.

In my understanding, the contributions to this journal create similar thought-provoking impressions, because they also practice give and take: between foreign languages and cultures, whose existence and differences are not only a question of geographic origin (Tim Collins), but equally as much of political (Nick Otty, Stephanie Kleinwegener), social (Warren Linds), cultural-aesthetic (Peter Spoerl, Eduardo Cabrera), historic-biographical (Annetta Meißner), and individual-emotional (Marla Levenstein), nature.

My gratitude goes out to the contributing American and European authors who created practice fields for dealing with these aforementioned problems of verbal and non-verbal communication in order to nurture understanding, upon which we as readers are invited to participate; After all, it takes more than dishing out food on a holiday, in a homeless shelter.

The contributions made for this special edition by drama educators from (at least) two different worlds don't only illustrate, but also embody intercultural learning - with the purpose of not only getting better acquainted with each other, but also to encourage understanding amongst one another (the contributions for this issue are in English, the summaries in German!), as well as to promote cooperation between theater and drama education in America and Europe. The following last remark refers to the photo which Arwed Messmer (Berlin) was kind enough to supply for the cover: Part of learning to understand is the feeling of losing or getting lost - in regard to someone or simply to the unknown. But we only lose until we realize a gain within the loss. After all, *picking a bone with someone* can be the result of a delicious meal together. In this sense: Enjoy your reading.

Gerd Bräuer (Atlanta)

My thanks goes also to the people who helped "behind the scene:" Kourtney Kuss and Soraya Bailey (Atlanta), Gerd Koch and Matthias Schilling (Berlin).

Vorwort (Deutsch)

Die erste Ausgabe von Korrespondenzen im neuen Jahrtausend widmet sich einem Thema, das vielleicht eines der wichtigsten des neuen Zeitalters sein wird, wenn wir in dieser immer konfliktreicher werdenden Welt auch noch ein drittes Jahrtausend erleben wollen. Ich spreche von der Fähigkeit des gegenseitigen Verstehens, wofür Körper und Sprache kommunikative Kanäle darstellen, die einander auf vielfältige Weise ergänzen: Vor dem U-Bahnschacht in Downtown Atlanta spricht mich ein Afroamerikaner im breitgeflossenen Akzent der Südstaaten an. Chancenlos; ihn zu verstehen, weiß ich trotzdem, was er braucht. Flickjoppe. Keine Schuh./Und die Stirn eine einzige Falte, schreibt Brecht in seiner „Legende“. Ich lege dem Mann einen Schein in die Hand, und habe doch von einem zu wenig: Verständnis.

Oft ärgere ich mich darüber. Wie aber könnte das auch anders sein bei einen, der abends nach Hause fährt, in die grüne Vorstadt und sich in seinem warmen Haus schlafen legt?

Einmal im Jahr meine ich, mehr von diesem Verständnis für den Mann am U-Bahnschacht zu besitzen. Das ist am vierten Donnerstag im November, Thanksgiving in Amerika, nachdem ich im Obdachlosenheim stundenlang Essen ausgegeben habe. Dabei fallen nur wenig Worte. Mein Körper übt sich im Geben. Die flüchtige

Editorial (English/German)

Geste am U-Bahnschacht, die Dollarnote in der Hand, gräbt sich durch hundertfache Wiederholung mit der Suppenkelle einen Weg in mein Bewußtsein, und wenn ich am Abend wieder in die grüne Vorstadt fahre, frage ich mich: Womit war ich eigentlich in der restlichen Zeit des Jahres beschäftigt? Und da ist noch eine Geste, die mir an diesem Tag das Verstehen erleichtert: Die Hand derer auf meiner Schulter, die, gesättigt, die Suppenküche wieder verlassen.

Die Beiträge dieses Heftes vermögen ähnliche Eindrücke herzustellen und Überlegungen zu provozieren, denn auch sie üben sich im Geben und Nehmen: zwischen fremden Sprachen und Kulturen, deren Existenz und Unterschiede nicht nur eine Frage geographischer Herkunft (Tim Collins) ist, sondern ebenso politischer (Nick Otty, Stephanie Kleinwegener), sozialer (Warren Linds), kulturell-ästhetischer (Peter Spoerl, Eduardo Cabrera), historisch-biographischer (Annetta Meißner) und individuell-emotionaler (Marla Levenstein) Natur.

Es ist den amerikanischen und europäischen AutorInnen dieser Beiträge zu danken, daß für den Umgang mit jenen Schwierigkeiten des Verstehens und das Produzieren von Verständnis Übungsfelder (z.B. Cabrera) angelegt wurden, auf denen wir Experimente mit einer Vielfalt von Handlungsmustern erleben können und eingeladen sind, davon einiges in die eigene Praxis zu übernehmen: Es braucht eben mehr als feiertägiges Essenausgeben im Obdachlosenheim.

Die hier versammelten Beiträge von TheaterpraktikerInnen aus (mindestens) zwei verschiedenen Welten bilden interkulturelles

Lernen nicht nur ab, sie verkörpern es auch (z.B. Linds, Levenstein) – mit der Absicht, einander nicht nur besser kennenzulernen, sondern auch zu verstehen (die Beiträge sind diesmal auf Englisch, die Zusammenfassungen auf Deutsch) und – längerfristig (durch Kooperation zwischen Amerika und Europa?) - für die Arbeit der Anderen Verständnis zu produzieren. Um mit dem Motiv des Fotos zu sprechen, das uns Arwed Messmer (Berlin) freundlicherweise für den Umschlag dieses Hefts zur Verfügung gestellt hat: Zum Verstehenlernen gehört auch das Gefühl des (Sich) Verlierens – an den Anderen, an das Fremde. Wir lassen Federn, bis wir im Verlust auch einen Gewinn bemerken. Oder anders gesagt: Ein Hühnchen rupfen kann schließlich der Auftakt sein für ein gemeinsames Festessen. In diesem Sinne: Viel Genuß beim Lesen!

Gerd Bräuer (Atlanta)

Herzlichen Dank auch an all diejenigen, die zur technischen Herstellung dieser Ausgabe beigetragen haben:

Kourtney Kuss und Soraya Bailey (Atlanta), Gerd Koch und Matthias Schilling (Berlin).

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FH Osnabrück bietet zum Wintersemester am Standort Lingen neue Aufbaustudienplätze an.

Lingen/Osnabrück

Zum **Wintersemester 2000/2001** bietet die Fachhochschule Osnabrück am Standort Lingen (Ems) zum dritten Mal den *Aufbaustudiengang "Theaterpädagogik"* an. Das viersemestrige Studium mit dem Abschluß "Diplom-Theaterpädagoge"/"Diplom-Theaterpädagogin" vermittelt die Grundlagen und Vertiefungen zum Darstellenden Spiel, zum Darstellenden Verhalten und zur Darstellenden Kunst.

Über die Kooperation der Fachhochschule Osnabrück mit dem Theaterpädagogischen Zentrum (TPZ) in Lingen ist dieser Studiengang von Beginn an stark praxisorientiert und vernetzt mit den bestehenden sozio-kulturellen Arbeitsfelder der Theaterpädagogik in der Region.

Das Studienangebot richtet sich in erster Linie an Hochschulabsolventen der pädagogischen Fachrichtungen.

Anmeldungen bis zum 07.07.2000 an die Fachhochschule Osnabrück, Standort Lingen, Am Wall Süd 16, 49808 Lingen, Tel.: 0591/91269-11; FAX: 0591/91269-91.

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A Personal Account of Dramatic Performance in the Foreign Language Classroom

A Personal Account of Dramatic Performance in the Foreign Language Classroom

Peter M. Spoerl

Zusammenfassung:

Peter M. Spoerl macht darauf aufmerksam, dass in den letzten Jahren im Rahmen US-amerikanischer Hochschulbildung der Begriff der *Cultural Performance* zum Schlüsselkonzept der Theorie des kulturellen Austausches geworden ist. Auch in der Lernatmosphäre des Fremdsprachenunterrichts entstehe eine solche Art der kulturellen Darstellung, eine, wie Spoerl sagt, seltsame „Bauchredkunst“, bei der Studenten ihre eigene Kultur auf den Bildschirm des Fremden projizieren. An Hand einer Studenteninszenierung von Arthur Schnitzlers „Der grüne Kakadu“ argumentiert der Autor für das enorme Potential dramatischer Methoden im Aneignungsprozeß von Fremdsprachen.

In recent years, a number of scholars working in the fields of applied linguistics and second language acquisition have focused their attention on the use of theater and dramatic techniques within the second language classroom. In many ways, this is merely one discipline's logical reflex to a broader array of conceptual re-orientations that are taking place within the intellectual climate of post-modernism. One discerns a paradigm articulation of sorts taking place within Drama departments, for example, where one distinguishes between the traditional rubric of "Theater Studies" and a study of performance more broadly construed, a re-orientation that has posed a number of questions with fascinating and far-reaching implications for the language teacher.² This owes to the particularly performative nature of the second language learning environment, where issues of subjectivity (who is the speaker and why are they speaking?), audience (how do listeners make sense of the speaker's words?), location (what is the site and how does it determine/prescribe modes of discourse or communication?) and conventionality (how are certain culturally-bound meanings produced or negotiated?) are primary considerations for the instructor. In a very real sense, the foreign language classroom is a cross-cultural theater where the students are spect-actors and the teacher a type of director. This parallel is not a mere conceit or

Rollin: Sein spielen kennen Sie den Unterschied so genau, Chevalier? (correct quote?)

Albin: Immerhin.

Rollin: Ich nicht. Und was ich hier so eigentümlich finde, ist, daß alle scheinbaren Unterschiede sozusagen aufgehoben sind. Wirklichkeit geht in Spiel über – Spiel in Wirklichkeit.

Arthur Schnitzler, „Der grüne Kakadu“¹

offshoot of the enduring trope of the *theatrum mundi*. Foreign language learners rehearse given texts and pay close attention to issues of pronunciation and intonation. They learn different linguistic registers and are assigned particular roles appropriate to given socially interactive situations. They pay close attention to non-verbal and gestural forms of communication. In short, they are asked to use their imagination to transfer their own cultural identities onto a new matrix of meanings and cultural practices.

The applicability of certain dramatic techniques to foreign language acquisition has long been recognized. Most of these revolve around psychological factors, which facilitate communication in the new language. Extemporaneous expression in the foreign language classroom resembles a type of dramatic improvisation and seems to both lower inhibitions and ameliorate the so-called "affective filter." Stagefright and *Lampenfieber* have been shown to provide the student with greater motivation to practice an utterance, and performed dialogue seems to increase interpersonal empathy.³ Surely, role-play, short skits, communicative scenarios and other forms of strategic communicative interaction are a staple of entry-level and first-year instruction. Less attention has been paid, however, to the staged production of literary and dramatic texts. Such productions seem especially well suited to upper-intermediate and advanced language learning environments.

In this paper, I will use a personal account of my recent experiences teaching a special unit of fourth semester German (upper-intermediate?) at the University of California at Berkeley to explore

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some of the unexpected pedagogical surplus of actually blocking, staging, rehearsing and then finally performing a dramatic text. My sense is that the experience of putting on a play was greatly rewarding for the students, and that performance in its more traditional sense holds great potential for sensitizing foreign language learners to the performativity involved in learning a new language in general. In particular, I would like to present performed texts as a way of creating intercultural spaces, productive interstices which allow a given text to resonate with the personal experiences of students within their own culture. Bringing the text to life encourages the students to establish linkages and correspondences between two cultures that might have otherwise remained obscured between the lines. In adopting and performing a given role within the play, students invest the text with a corporeal dimension, which enables them to inhabit the work's internal logic and literally move within its imagined structures. This has the felicitous effect of pointing to the shifty and often porous line between performance on-stage and cultural performance writ large, a process that can encourage students to view themselves as actors in a very literal sort of cultural "production."

"German 4T" has had a brief but highly successful history here at Berkeley. The course fulfills all of the departmental requirements for the major sequence and uses the same fundamental grammar texts. The main difference between it and the other sections of German 4 is the play, which serves as a sort of final project for the students. During the course of the semester, students read texts culled from a wide variety of registers and genres, but they continue throughout to rehearse and block an actual German play, which they are to perform for an audience of their relatives and peers at the end of the semester. The department provides a modest budget for the production, which is then supplemented by voluntary donations at the door.

In designing a syllabus for the course, I tried to select a variety of texts that would directly thematize the often-thin line between actors and their audience. The hope was to draw the student's attention to the performativity of communicating in a foreign language through an examination of works that in one way or another explored the dynamic of *Sein und Schein*. Allusions to the world as stage are of course a commonplace of world literature. From Shakespeare's *As you like it* through Calderon's *El gran teatro del mundo* to Genet's *Le Balcon*, numerous texts have explored the evasive

nature of performance and the unique covenant that seems to exist between actors and their audience, that particular suspension of disbelief that characterizes the attitude of whom Brecht termed the dramatic spectator. German literature is particularly rich in examples of texts that in some way foreground the performative process and problematize the relationship of actor to character. I started the semester with Gryphius' *Peter Squentz*, moved to late Romanticism with Ludwig Tieck's *Der gestiefelte Kater*, included excerpts from Thomas Mann's *Die Bekenntnisse des Hochstaplers Felix Krull* and Peter Handke's *Publikumsbeschimpfung*, and supplemented these texts with selections from Brecht's *Kleines Organon für das Theater*.

In keeping with the nature of the course, I wanted to have the students prepare a piece that would playfully address the shifty frontier between audience and ensemble. Enrollment figures for fourth semester German courses often exceed fifteen students, so I needed a piece with a large ensemble cast, preferably with fairly evenly distributed roles. There were other considerations as well. After consulting with the two graduate students who had taught the course before, I decided to look among one-acts and shorter sketches. By all accounts, the length of most three- or five-act plays was simply too ambitious for purposes of memorization. In selecting a shorter piece, I hoped to be able to put together a more polished end product and accommodate the students' busy end-of-semester schedules. The one-act has been developed by a number of German authors, and I considered works by Brecht, Dürrenmatt, Hildesheimer and Dorst. Finally, though, it seemed that the clearly indicated piece would be Arthur Schnitzler's *Der grüne Kakadu*.

Written in 1899, *Der grüne Kakadu* is an intricate and layered satirical playlet, a sort of play within a play that calls the assumed distinction between play and reality into question. It seemed particularly well suited to the sort of investigation of language's performativity that I was looking for. Set in Paris on the eve of the French Revolution, the play takes its title from the name of the cellar bar in which all of its action takes place. Prospère, former director of a theater company, is now the proprietor of the Green Cockatoo, a shady cellar tavern that is a sort of cabaret dinner theater for the nobility. Aristocrats and nobility come to sit amongst Prospère's former players, who act the roles of thieves, murderers, scoundrels, rogues, pimps and prostitutes. This peculiar and Rabelaisian arrangement allows Prospère to disguise his political convictions as farce and insult the nobil-

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ity with impunity, and at the same time affords the nobility the "pleasant tickle" of safely slumming with the lower castes. As it develops, the piece plays with the line between theater and reality and the Green Cockatoo emerges as a sort of anti-illusionist watering hole. The nobility is taken to task for their inability to regard art as anything more than sensual diversion, while the actors are gently chided for their propensity to aestheticize their own political agency, thus rendering it impotent.

The students read the play after the third week of class and were asked to consider roles that they might be interested in playing. This led to the first of many conflicts that I would encounter during the semester between my role as German teacher and my new and unaccustomed roles as director and actor. After initially telling the students that they should choose a role for themselves, I decided to exercise my executive directorial prerogative and cast the play myself. I felt that I knew the text better than most of the students, was familiar with their strengths and weaknesses from their written work and private conferences during my office hours, and was the best equipped to decide which student should be in a given role.

My hasty casting *Putsch* was met, however, with howls of protest and led to a near mutiny among the students. After two weeks of close work with the text, a number of them had developed identifications with particular characters and felt strongly about their choices. Part of my desire to cast the play myself lay in the hope of precluding conflicts and hurt feelings among the students, since I was sure that certain roles would be hotly contested. In the end, we struck a sort of compromise whereby each student picked three roles that they would be willing to play, and we were able to negotiate the distribution with a minimum of bruised pride. Only one role, that of the glamorous and disaffected *femme fatale*, had to be settled by audition, and this was accomplished by a secret ballot voted on by all of the students. The experience reminded me above all that at the end of the day I am a teacher and not a director. The success of our group venture would ultimately be judged by its pedagogical rather than artistic merits.

From early on, however, it became clear that my students had read the text more closely than I had initially given them credit for. To a large extent, the distribution of roles stood in close correlation with our classroom dynamic, which led to wonderful discussions about the affinities between character and actor and their mutual constitution. Some of these correspondences were truly delight-

ful. Prosperé was played by a young woman who was in many ways the "director" of the students, the student who always led conversations and gave input as to how to improve others' performances. And the part of Albin, a young and naïve aristocrat who is totally confused by the topsy-turvy atmosphere at the Cockatoo, was ably filled by a woman who felt somewhat challenged by "German 4" and often complained that she couldn't follow the in-class discussions. In a conference during my office hours, the student told me that she enjoyed playing the part precisely because it spoke so directly to her diffidence in speaking German. She felt she could identify with Albin because he shared the same sense of disorientation she felt when trying to form sentences in the foreign language. This became a running joke during the course of the semester. Whenever the woman felt she couldn't follow a discussion in class, she would interject one of Albin's typically frustrated lines; „Das alles verwirrt mich aufs höchste!" or „Das versteh ich absolut nicht!" This illuminated connections between the rehearsals for the play and the experience of learning a language which several of the students remarked upon in their weekly journals.

The selection of a venue for our performances occasioned an unexpected insight into the complex and deep structure of Schnitzler's text and the multiple meanings of some of its language. Since the play is set in a basement bar, and preserves all of the typically Aristotelian unities of time, character and space, we settled on the performance space of an improv theater which is housed in the basement of a local pizzeria, "The Subterranean." This turned out to be a space perfectly suited to our purposes. We had to make virtually no changes to the stage configuration; the hall we rented was a basement bar, and the setting outlined in the stage directions described the space at our disposal to an almost eerie degree.

As it turned out, however, the "Subterranean" was an apt choice for reasons that we hadn't anticipated. During one session, one of the students asked me about the genre of the play, which Schnitzler refers to as a „Groteske in einem Akt." When asked to talk about the genre of the grotesque, I replied that the designation referred to any sort of satirical or parodistic piece with a sort of revue character, usually a vehicle for social caricature. I found my initial impressions confirmed when I consulted Wahrig, which defines *eine Groteske* as „eine derbkomische, nährisch-seltsame Dichtung in Prosa oder Versen."⁴ But a closer look at the word's etymology revealed that Schnitz-

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ler may have had more in mind with his choice of setting. Deriving from the Italian "ottesco," and shortened to "Grotte," the word is closely related to the modern English "grotto" and originally referred to the wall paintings found in the caves of ancient Roman burial sites. At several points in the play, Prospère is referred to as the "Spelunkenwirt" and his establishment as "eine Höhle." It appears that Schnitzler, aware of his genre's etymological heritage, put his grotesque in a cave for very deliberate and playful purposes. That we had picked out one of Berkeley's dingiest dives to stage our production only contributed to the cross-cultural irony of the experience, and gave an added resonance to several references within the work that were lost on neither students nor audience. At one point during the play, for example, one of Prospère's troop surveys his surroundings and declares "Hier ist ja doch nur eine Schmiere", whereupon several members of the audience, surrounded by bits of stale pizza crusts and beer glasses half-full of tepid Budweiser, could only giggle in assent.

One of the more productive aspects of the students' extended involvement with the text was the extent to which the play could be instrumentalized for different pedagogical purposes. The student's close familiarity with the text permitted me to design a number of exercises and assignments that addressed all components of foreign language acquisition; reading, writing, speaking, listening comprehension and grammar. For their second essay, I had the students write an extended analysis of their own character, and gave them the option of couching the piece in a language and style appropriate to that character's voice. This led to productive discussions about the different types of language present in the play and sensitized the students to the linguistic pluralism of the different social castes represented.

As the students became more familiar with their roles, we staged a series of scenarios where the students had to improvise dialogues based on how they thought their character might react to a given situation. This provided them with an opportunity to practice extemporaneous communication while refining their understanding of the characters, their motivations and their station within the dynamic of the text. And perhaps one of the most unexpected benefits was the play's utility as an incidental source for discussions of grammatical constructions. In committing their lines to memory, students were provided with indelible templates of complex syntactical constructions, a process that was particularly useful for issues of

declension and word order. I tried to take advantage of this by incorporating examples culled from the text at appropriate points during our weekly grammar discussions.

Recent theories of second language acquisition have placed a premium on a sort of corporeal investment with the foreign language. Particularly in first and second semester curricula, the method of so-called "Total Physical Response" or TPR, as developed by the linguist James Asher, has assumed a central position in the prevailing approach to foreign language instruction. Thus students of German 1, before even learning the alphabet, learn to respond to a series of commands and stand up, jump, run in place and pick up their pencils. In this way, the students are encouraged to associate words and phrases with physical movements and are able literally to "incorporate" the new language into their own physical memory. As students move through the language sequence, however, there is less and less emphasis placed on the physical or gestural components of culturally specified conventions.

In many ways, dramatic productions present instructors with a sort of upper-division analog to this very physical methodology. The inherently physical and corporeal nature of the theater requires the student to examine the interaction of speech and gesture, and draws their attention to the interdependency of speech and physical carriage. The student thus explores some of the non-verbal aspects of communicative competence and the extent to which certain phrases or locutions are accompanied by given physical gestures or postures which can be every bit as culturally determined as the language itself. To enact a physical routine inculcates a sense of what Brecht has termed the *Gestus*, that array of quotidian and habitual regiments of the body which expose the socially over-determined nature of particular behaviors and actions. In rehearsing and reciting their lines over and over again, students became aware not only of the nearly endless number of ways to read a given text, but also of the different ways such utterances can be supplemented and rendered more comprehensible by mimicry and gesture.

During the course of our countless read-throughs and rehearsals, I began to realize that in many cases, learner's motivation in studying a foreign language comes not from a desire to master communicative competence but rather from a purely aesthetic and expressive pleasure in the physical experience of giving voice to exotic sounds. This is a largely ignored aspect of the experience of

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students who, in the words of applied linguist Claire Kramsch, "take intense physical pleasure in acquiring a language, thrill in trespassing someone else's territory, becoming a foreigner on their own turf, becoming both invisible and differently visible."⁶

Students took great joy in reciting particular sentences not because of their potential for communication but for the subjective and personal resonances that they evoked for the speaker. This enabled a type of personalized expression, which resulted in a number of private smiles among my actors. In a scene late in the play, a group of nobility enters the bar and is greeted by a hail of curses and maledictions from Prospère's group. One of the students, a woman with natty, dreadlocked hair and pronounced anti-authoritarian sensibilities, took an obvious delight in shouting out her interjection "Tod den Richtern!" At the end of one of our rehearsals a spontaneous chorus of these shouted slogans erupted amongst the students; "Es lebe die Freiheit!" "Tod den Richtern!" "Nieder mit den Wucherern von Frankreich!" This rose to a fever pitch, and the cries continued into the night as the students left the building. This seemed to point to a sort of visceral delight in the physical experience of recited text, a satisfaction that derived not from a desire to communicate effectively but rather from the unique pleasure of cultural ventriloquism. Without wishing to diminish the importance of communicative approaches to language learning, I would maintain that the experience seems to point to the potential benefits of memorizing and performing prose and verse texts. As the performances neared, the sense of cultural multivalency and correspondences between text and reality grew daily. As the foppish poet Rollin explains to the Marquise near the end of the play, "Überall blitzt etwas Wirkliches durch."⁷ As we inhabited it, the Cockatoo became a sort of liminal space between reality and performance, and the comic ironies became too numerous to count. In the beginning of the play, one of the revolutionaries remarks on the "leiser Donner" of the Revolution that is taking place on the streets. This was well provided for in our chosen venue, located as it was directly underneath the rattling pinball machines and video games of the pizzeria. When Prospère first meets Grain, a shady street urchin whom he initially mistakes for one of his troop, he pulls on his wildly tangled hair and then realizes that it is not a wig, exclaiming "Donnerwetter – das ist ja echt!"⁸ Grain was of course played by the aforementioned hirsute hippie, eliciting great laughter from the audience. One of the most hysterical

moments came to pass during our final performance, when one of the rogues accosts Albin and grabs him by his shirt ruffles. The actress grabbed too hard on the lapels and the entire shirt came out from under the jacket, touching off a helpless set of giggles. As it turned out, however, the episode meshed perfectly with the script; moments later, the Herzog, indicating the rabble on the streets, opines that "Sie werden unheimlich witzig, diese Leute."⁹

One of the most rewarding aspects of the experience was my inclusion in the cast. With 23 characters and only 18 students enrolled in the class, we were compelled to recruit students from other sections and at the students' request, I overtook the part of the Herzog von Cadignan, a flamboyant and charismatic aristocrat who is one of the most beloved of Prospère's guests. After some initial reluctance, I soon realized that my participation allowed for a more collaborative and cooperative production, and had the effect of democratizing the process of direction. It didn't hurt that at the end of the play, my character is slain by a jealous rival in an act that is stylized as a sort of heroic political murder. The students obviously took great pleasure in their nightly license to assassinate the teacher in the name of art.

In bringing Schnitzler's rich text to life, my students gained an insight into the performative and recitative nature of language itself, one that might well have been lost had we merely read the play in class. In their final essays, several students drew comparisons between the experience of overcoming their stagefright and overcoming their fear of speaking a foreign language. While some felt that the dual burden of a dramatic debut coupled with native speakers in the audience inhibited their performances, several students remarked that the simultaneous experience of acting and doing so in a foreign tongue somehow diverted their attention. They focused so intensely on the language and on producing comprehensible German that they forgot that they were in a dramatic production, or, vice versa, they were so preoccupied with stagefright and curtain nerves that they were unaware of the German issuing from their mouths. This is an experience alluded to in Thomas Mann's *Zauberberg*, when in the pivotal scene between Claudia Chauchat and Hans Castorp, the young engineer describes his use of French as somehow dreamlike: "...car pour moi, parler français, c'est parler sans parler, en quelque manière- sans responsabilité, ou comme nous parlons en rêve."¹⁰ One of my students made a similar observation in her weekly journal: "Wenn wir proben, ist es oft,

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als wenn ich traumte (sic). Die Wörter kommen aus meinem Mund und ich schaue sie hilflos an. Immer wenn ich Deutsch spreche, ist es sowieso eine Aufführung."

Her insightful observation speaks directly to the pedagogical promise of the poetic and recitative function of language. In animating and giving voice to written texts, upper-division language learners can be sensitized to the performative nature of second language acquisition in general. While exploring the depths of Schnitzler's "cave," my students accessed the resonances of their dream-like cultural associations and discovered that the line between theatrical and cultural performance is porous indeed.

Notes

¹ Schnitzler, Arthur. *„Der grüne Kakadu.“* Stuttgart: Reclam, 1970: 140-141.

² See Auslander, Philip. *From Acting to Performance. Essays in Modernism and Postmodernism* London:

Routledge, 1997, in particular the Introduction and Chapters 2-4.

³ See Richard-Amato, Patricia A. *Making it Happen. Interaction in the Second Language Classroom: From Theory to Practice.* New York: Longman, 1988: especially pp. 128-147.

⁴ "Grotteske," *Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch* 1997 ed.

⁵ Schnitzler, op cit, 124.

⁶ Kramsch, Claire. "The Privilege of the Nonnative Speaker," *PMLA* 112, 3 (May 1997): 365.

⁷ Schnitzler, op cit, 144.

⁸ Schnitzler, *ibid.*, 120.

⁹ Schnitzler, *ibid.*, 132.

¹⁰ Mann, Thomas. *Der Zauberberg.* Fischer: Frankfurt, 1993: 462. ("...since for me, speaking in French is to speak without speaking, in a sense- without responsibility, as we speak in a dream.")

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Nick Otty

Zusammenfassung:

Nick Otty erinnert an den politischen Charakter von Lehren und Lernen und beschreibt in diesem Zusammenhang den Charakter aktueller Hochschulbildung als insofern widersprüchlich, daß Lehrenden und Studierenden durch scheindemokratische institutionelle Strukturen autonomes Handeln versagt bleibt. Produktive Ansätze im Umgang mit diesem Widerspruch findet Otty in Bertolt Brechts Lehrstücktheorie und Paulo Freires Pädagogik der Unterdrückten. Um beide Quellen für eine veränderte Praxis des Lehrens und Lernens an der Universität weiter aufzuschließen, ergründet Otty die philosophischen Wurzeln von Brecht und Freire, die er in den Arbeiten von Korsch, Kosik und Marx entdeckt.

1.

'For me... the educational practice of a progressive option will never be anything but an adventure in unveiling. It will always be an experiment in bringing out the truth. Because this is the way I have always

thought, there are those who dispute whether or not I am an educator. It happened recently in a meeting at UNESCO in Paris - someone who was there has told me. Latin American representatives refused to ascribe me the standing of educator... they criticised me for what seemed to them to be my exaggerated "politicisation".

They failed to perceive that, in denying me the status of educator for being "too political," they were being as political as I. "Neutral" they were not, nor could ever be.'

(Freire 1994, p.7)

My interest in teaching is political. It is my work, and that is a vital connexion with the political realities, the contradictions of the time in which I live. Indeed if we follow Karel Kosik's formulation, work is the 'elementary model of the dialectic'. (Kosik 1988, p.131). It has a fundamental epistemological function. Teaching in the humanities has the potential to be politically radical. It can func-

tion at deep structural levels, which alter the lived perceptions and therefore the behaviour of teachers and learners. Of course, as Freire was profoundly aware, there are many who wish to deny this. And as he always insisted, their denial and the praxis it generates have their own political effects.

What has always concerned, and indeed shocked me, is that so many students in Higher Education remain so little changed by their three years of apparently intensive 'education'. To pick just one example of what I mean, their first piece of assessed work gains a mark of say 54%, and for three whole years the marks of the large majority hover within two or three percentage points of that figure. This has the effect (a mathematically inevitable consequence of numerical grades) of consigning the majority of the students to a categorisation of mediocrity. The very inevitability of the process helps these students to internalise a perception of 'natural' hierarchical ordering, which then turns into an acceptance of the 'inevitability' of vertical power structures, which in turn seem to me to be problematic for the further development of truly democratic politics.

Of course the contradictory situation I have selected here is only one of many. It exemplifies very consistently Barthes' sixth rhetorical form of the language of myth, *The Quantification of Quality* which as he puts it, 'economises intelligence; it understands reality more cheaply.' (Barthes, 1976, p.153-4) To paraphrase his observations, which he originally focuses on the example of theatre:

On the one hand 'education' and 'learning' are *essences*, which transform the heart and soul, (for materialists, the *body*) as well as the mind (for materialists, also the body; it is part of the function of myth to force these oppositions upon our perception!). From the quality of being, in this sense, *essential* the state of 'being educated' achieves an 'irritable dignity'. (It is a crime of 'lese-essence' to remove this auratic element by a de-bunking analysis.) On the other hand, all that goes into an essay, an experiment, a calculation is immediately quantified into a percentage. After three, or thirty-three years of transforming *work* towards a degree, the result is encapsulated (in Great Britain) in the enigmatic figures: 1; 2, i; 2,ii or 3. (Mysterious transformations of 70+; 60-70; 50-60 and 40-50). Without examining them in the same detail, I propose the following schematically presented contradictions, which mark the experience of those in Higher Education under the present dispensation:

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1. Higher education is available to all those with the necessary qualifications...

But

It is much more comfortably, and therefore effectively, available to those whose parents can send them off to university with a car and an allowance.

2. Students have freely chosen their area of study, therefore they love the work...

But

Students have in, the main, chosen their principal area of study by reference to the success (measured quantitatively) they have attained in that area in the past. This is not necessarily an indication of *love of the work* in that area.

3. Learning is a great and pleasurable adventure...

But

Learning is mostly either boring or humiliating and, for the majority, it culminates in a depressing categorisation.

4. Learning is a voyage of exploration...

But

The student's experience is bounded by a pre-existent syllabus and is controlled by the assessment process.

5. Learning can only proceed by the acknowledgement of ignorance: it is in the students' interest to admit their own ignorance...

But

To acknowledge ignorance leads to humiliation and negative assessment: it is in the students' interest to conceal their ignorance.

6. Any active pedagogy, which is concerned to 'unveil' reality, must concern itself with these contradictions as part of its praxis...

But

The contradictions embodied in the institutions and practices of education are usually either off-limits, or invisible to both students and teachers.

It is clear that these contradictions (with the exception of number 6) are structured by a contrast between what we might call the official description of the state of affairs (the first term) and the actual experience of the students and teachers (the second term). Put another way, therefore, the second term puts the body back into the equation. Early in my career as a teacher at University level, these contradictions came to feel insupportable to me. At the same time I was struck by the fact that Brecht's list of the differences between 'Dramatic' and 'Epic' theatre (Brecht 1978, p.37.) contained a number of items which could be readily transposed to the field of pedagogy. For the purposes of

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the comparison I substitute the categories 'Traditional' and 'Epic' pedagogy.

| Traditional Pedagogy | Epic Pedagogy |
|---|---|
| • Wears down the 'students' capacity for action. | Arouses his capacity for action |
| • Instinctive feelings are preserved.(Appealed to). | Instinctive feelings are brought to the point of recognition. |
| • The human being is taken for granted | The human being is the object of the inquiry. |
| • Human being is unalterable | ...is alterable and able to alter. |
| • Eyes on the finish (assessment). | Eyes on the course (process). |
| • One scene (lecture, seminar) makes another. | Each scene (event) for itself |
| • Evolutionary determinism. | Jumps |
| • Man as a fixed point | Man as a process. |
| • Thought determines being. | Social being determines thought. |

To these I added several which applied more particularly to education:

| | |
|---|---|
| • Has a fixed curriculum | Is open. |
| • Has a fixed location. | Can go anywhere |
| • Has a fixed duration | Takes the time required |
| • Emphasises the individual social. | Emphasises the collective, |
| • Is marked by vertical authority relations | Marked by horizontal authority relations. |

(The last two categories will be recognisable to readers of Freire. See for example Freire 1972, chapter 3.)

In these oppositions, too, I detect a firm tendency for the categories of 'traditional' pedagogy to exclude, or to seek to regulate the functioning of the bodies of the students. This should in no way surprise us, and yet it continues to come to me as a shock! It was also with a shock (as of an unveiling), when Paulo Freire told me that his wife, Ana Maria AraÚjo's doctoral thesis (so far untranslated from the Brazilian) made clear a fundamental reality of Brazilian history: that the indigenous peasant population had been excluded from the benefits of literacy because, in their teaching methods, the Portuguese missionaries were so ruthless in their exclusion of the body. I submit that in our

own universities a similar distinction operates between those who are comfortable from the outset with levels of abstraction which amount to a concealed philosophical dualism, and those who live in the awareness that they *are* in fact bodies. My response to this situation was to use a form of drama or theatre course, not as a way of teaching theatre or drama, but as a process, whereby students could interrogate themes of interest and concern to them through the medium of theatre. The impulse came from Freire, who had made it clear to me that any progressive educational provision had to begin with the perceptions and concerns of the educatees. In the process I had naively stumbled into a version of *das Lehrstück* long before I had the benefit of the researches of Reiner Steinweg.

For both Brecht and Freire the theoretical underpinning for their versions of pedagogy is to be found in the writings of neo-marxian philosophers. In Brecht's case it is to be found in Karl Korsch's *Marxism and Philosophy*. This was a pioneering attempt to rescue intellectual production from the reductive description of it by the Second International. According to Korsch these epigones had succeeded in promulgating an approved version of Marxism in which

All philosophical ideas and speculations are... shown to be unreal – vacuous fantasies which still haunt a few minds as a kind of superstition, which the ruling class has a concrete interest in preserving.

(Korsch 1970, p.64.)

He went so far as to accuse the Second International of a 'basically metaphysical dualism' (p.71.) which has certainly given comfort to many in education who are afraid to admit that the processes they are involved in may in, the end, turn out to be a function of a material body. On the contrary, Korsch asserts that

Man must prove the truth – that is the reality, the power and the immanence of his thought, in practice. The dispute about the reality or unreality of thought – thought isolated from practice – is purely scholastic...

(p.82.)

And, we may add that 'practice' means the material involvement of the body.

The thinker who is at the roots of Freire's reading of Marx is the Czech philosopher Karel Kosik. For Kosik,

Work is a process which brings about a metamorphosis or dialectical mediation. This dialectical mediation is a metamorphosis which results in an innova-

tion; it gives birth to something qualitatively new. In the very act of this mediation, where the human is born from animality and human desire distinguishes itself from animal instinct, the three-dimensional nature of time is also brought into existence.

(Kosik, 1988, p.132.¹)

Thus work, this active, material, bodily transformation of reality, is seen as a species-differentiating characteristic at the root of Marxist thought. It is also seen as an epistemological activity:

Human praxis is not practical activity by opposition to theory, but is the definition of human existence as the elaboration [in the sense, I think, of 'working up' or 'constructing'] of reality.

(p.143.)

The implications of this in educational terms are very profound. Kosik is arguing that human praxis produces essential facts, which are true in themselves, in that they have ontological significance and are not symbols of other things. The creation of oppressive relations in the educational process, then, does not simply lead to error, but leads to the creation, or re-affirmation of real relations of oppression.

It is difficult to document this aspect in the terms available to a learned journal, but I think it is possible to detect it in the students' responses to the insistent (incessant) demand to produce written evidence of their progress. My colleagues, both in staff meetings and at times in articles and reports are given to bemoan the lack of mastery of the native language in their students. They are apt to use the description 'functional illiteracy' to designate the problem they are identifying. Consider the following examples:

- The structure of the extract is formal in style.
- The style of this extract promotes a Realist mode of writing. This is apparent within the whole subject of the poem.
- The style, content, language and imagery all reflect a sad yet pious poem.
- As a realistic development of expressiveness the poem reinforces this view.
- My main aim currently is to decide on a title which will be centred around the characters in the plays apposed [sic] to simple constructs of society and archetypes which were widely produced in plays previously and in some cases at the same time as Ibsen's realistic plays..

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At first sight it is not that easy to pinpoint what is going wrong in these formulations. Or rather what it is that these formulations have wrong *in common*. It is, after all, possible to extract some meaning from them. But they all show a certain stiff, pretentious elevation of tone, which in my view arises from an almost superstitious use of language. The words 'style', 'structure', 'content', 'realist' are felt to be appropriate, not as bearers of meaning, but rather as placators of the reader. Words, which, in the mouth of the teacher, were "emptied of their concreteness and have become a hollow, alienated and alienating verbosity," now emerge from the pens of the students in the form of silent prayers for satisfactory grades (Freire, 1972, p.45).

The more humble words that mediate the relationships between these signifiers of grace also partake of a certain elevation. Something must not 'be seen in' but must 'be apparent within'. Things must be 'promoted', 'reflected', 'reinforced'. But the students who produced this nonsense can talk normally, sensibly, even incisively about their own affairs, their own reading and writing. In my view, the failures of these forms of language are therefore not to do with such categories as literacy or linguistic competence. Rather, they reflect a state of alienation. I have described this elsewhere in the following terms:

Just as the factory worker hands over his or her body to become an adjunct of the machine, so the student, in a practice which may be even more oppressive, hands over his/her mind to do the thinking s/he has, (often mistakenly) identified as appropriate to the moment. There is one level where this produces gobbledegook which it is hoped will satisfy the tutor/ assessor. There is another at which it produces meaningful discourse which is not what the author would be saying if s/he were not being assessed. Students often assert that they have to 'suss out' what a particular tutor wants in order to get the best possible marks from them.

(Otty, 1995 p.97)

Since writing the above I have found the following in the early *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of Marx. It seems to me to be as applicable to a large majority of the work of a large majority of students today, as it was to the labour force in the 1840s.

What does the externalisation of labour consist of then? Firstly, that labour is exterior to the worker, that is, it does not belong to his essence. Therefore he does not confirm himself in his work, he denies himself, feels miserable instead of happy, deploys no free physical and intellectual energy, but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. Thus the worker only feels a stranger. He is at home when he is not working and when he works he is not at home.

(Marx K. 1977, p.80)

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I'm sure that we could all confirm this observation by means of anecdotes from our teaching experience. I include here some quotations from essays written this year by students on our drama courses.

Uni's OK, but it's hardly stimulating, is it? I don't need a bit of paper telling me I'm bright, along with all the other people with exactly the same bit of paper but with a completely different brain...

What have I done to show that I'm bright? I've written a series of 2,000 word arguments, sometimes on books I've not read. Got 60% for them and forgotten it all. That's not bright. That's being able to manipulate the system.

(Second year student. UWE 1999.)

...I have always been told what to learn, what I must achieve and how I must achieve it - perhaps it has not even occurred to me that learning is a part of my own experience.

(First year student. UWE 1999.)

Of course neither of these students would even have had the opportunity to raise these questions on the normal lecture/seminar courses, or certainly not as a part of their assessed writing. To this extent the quotations confirm that in these drama courses, at least, the contradiction number 6 (above) is being resolved; the contradictions are being made evident to the students as part of the praxis of the course.

It is my contention that it is a necessary, but not sufficient condition of this praxis, that the body should be involved. It is a further essential condition that this involvement of the body should be an act of theatre. An aerobic exercise class certainly involves the body, but it is rarely an act of theatre. It is interesting that Kosik's formulation of the steps required for unveiling reality can readily be translated into a description of an act of theatre.

The destruction of the pseudo-concrete [false versions of reality] is realised as follows: 1) the praxis of revolutionary criticism of human life, which is the process of becoming more human, the 'humanisation of mankind' of which the decisive stages are the various social revolutions; 2) dialectical thought which dissolves the fetishised world of appearances so as to attain reality and the 'thing in itself'; 3) ontogenetic process by which human reality is created and the truth thereby made evident, because for each individual the truth is their own spiritual creation in that they are historical and social individuals. All individuals must make their own culture for themselves and live their own lives in a personal manner and without handing over that responsibility to somebody else.

(Kosik 1988. P.9)

Of course this is not intended to sanction all personal and particular versions of reality as being equally valid. What is being enunciated here is that the process of learning is in fact an act of

creation, a production or a re-production of the knowledge, *by the learner*. It reminds me of a remark Paulo Freire made to me in 1994:

For me, I am so radical in my understanding of education and its relation with the arts that I don't even speak about education through art. I say that education is already art.

The formulation also reveals the liberal inadequacy of a concept such as 'student-centred' learning. For all learning, according to this view, is the creation of the learner, including the learning of the most self-oppressive versions of reality. This fact is at the heart of Paulo Freire's writings about pedagogy, and is one that needs urgently to be incorporated into our praxis of teaching.

The oppressed, having internalised the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would oblige them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest and not by gift. It must be pursued constantly and responsibly. Freedom is not located outside of man; nor is it an idea that becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion.

(Freire. 1972 pp.24-5)

As one of my students put it, the task of creating theatre as a way of articulating ideas about an issue 'would inevitably involve, heaven help us, *thinking for ourselves!*'

It may be helpful at this stage to consider in tabular form a summary of the positions articulated by Brecht on theatre (seen as a form of pedagogy), and Freire on pedagogy (seen as a form of art).

(See the following table on the right)

For the purposes of my work in Higher Education, I identify the following conclusions from these similarities and differences:

- 1) Essential to the role of radical intellectual production will be the 'criticism in theory and the overthrow in practice' of the 'spiritual structure of bourgeois society'. (Korsch 1970 p. 84.) Central to this is the dissolution of the mind/body contradiction which (dialectical) theatre can and does address.
- 2) That the problem of authority/consent is at the centre of all discourse about oppression and about radical pedagogy.
- 3) That there are levels of this project that are inscribed in the native language, the 'mother

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tongue' itself, which mediates at a somatic level the development of individual and social consciousness.

- 4) There is something inexplicit, even in the theory of Freire and Brecht, but which could take account of the intimate material and bodily complexity of the relationship between language and personal development, motivation and insertion into the social and historical context.²
- 5) There are certain characteristics of theatre which make it very powerful in implementing these concerns:
 - a) It is explicitly social and collective. This is the only appropriate context for the generation of human meaning. Indeed it is the only possible context. (The pretence that it can be otherwise is an ideological distortion linked with and supportive of ideologies of private property). Theatre makes this fact almost inescapably clear.
 - b) It is concrete. It is essentially corporeal. The action of theatre is in part to 'make thought visible' (Boal). This is an excellent corrective to the tendency of language to permit impossible and misleading abstractions, to lead towards philosophical idealism, and to permit the individual to avoid the implications of given particular concrete meanings.
 - c) It nevertheless has the virtue of being virtual! The fact that it is in some sense 'play' permits the participants to propose and dispose of models which are more committed than words (they are collective, concrete, embodied) they are 'lived-through' in some sense) but whose insertion into history has a different status from the institutions of social organisation

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BRECHT

- Existing models of theatre seen as oppressive and conservative.
- 'Committed' theatre no answer.
- It simply alters the 'content'.
- Relaxed, critical spectators. Actors have double role of presenting and observing their presentation,
- Spectator incited to find the ordinary inexplicable as a step to interventionist criticism.
- In *Lehrtheater* the means of production to be placed in the control of the users of theatre.
- Authority structures *within* the work
- not explored explicitly. However all *Lehrtheater* grounded in the problem of 'consent'.

FREIRE

- Existing educational provision perpetuates existing oppressive political models.
- 'Depositing' communiqués with different messages and no answer.
- Student-teacher, teacher-student.
- Horizontal authority relations
- Learner and teacher re-create, in a joint process, a reading of reality which 'unveils' it.
- Means of production of knowledge in the possession of the learner.
- Destruction of existing authority structures essential to the work.

Notes

¹ All translations from Kosik are my own. Italics are in the original.

² These concerns are, of course, elaborated in projects such as those of Barthes, Foucault, Volosinov, Vygotski and Raymond Williams. There is no space to do them justice in this article.

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The Use of Emotional Aesthetics in 'Drama in Education'

The Use of Emotional Aesthetics in 'Drama in Education'

Marla Levenstein

Zusammenfassung:

Marla Levenstein stellt ihre Arbeit als "Drama Educator" mit deutschen SchülerInnen und LehrerInnen vor. Sie beschreibt dafür die Besonderheiten des Schulsystems in Deutschland im Vergleich mit dem in Nordamerika und verweist gleichzeitig auf Notwendigkeiten theaterpädagogischer Arbeit für diesen Bereich. Levenstein definiert auf der Grundlage von Daniel Golemans Theorie der emotionalen Intelligenz ihren „emotional-ästhetischen“ Ansatz und beschreibt dessen praktische Umsetzung im Unterricht.

In this article I will explain how I use 'Drama in Education' in Germany where I now work; what the term 'emotional aesthetics' means; and how I integrate emotional aesthetics in drama in education with children and teachers. I am assuming that the term 'Drama in Education' is sufficiently understood by readers of this journal that it needs no further definition here. First I will describe how the German school system is different from the North American, then I will define the term 'emotional aesthetics' and describe how I use it. In Germany, after the fourth grade children are recommended for and channeled to, one of three different types of schools. *Gymnasium*, where students are prepared for the University and then become, for example, doctors, lawyers, or academics; *Realschule* where students are prepared for technical colleges and then become, for example, a shop foreman; *Hauptschule* where students are prepared for the more practical jobs where they will have later an apprenticeship and learn to become, for example, a baker or shoemaker, or perhaps, a bricklayer.

These schools are quite separate and each type of school has its own curriculum. If a student gets good grades and wants to further his/her education it is possible to upgrade, either from *Hauptschule* to *Realschule* or from *Realschule* to *Gymnasium*. There is a small movement against this system but most of the *Gesamtschule* (schools combining the three kinds) are in the Northern part of Germany. There are also private schools but not so many as there are in North America.

The German school system is based solely on grades for academic performance, and a focus on

A boy once said to me after he continually disturbed the lesson

"What do feelings have to do with my free time?"

social learning is missing. Generally, social skills are not taught nor learned as a part of the school curriculum, they are mainly acquired at home. Neither are students in school as long, on a daily basis, as their North American counterparts. School is from 8:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. then the students usually go home for lunch. Once or twice a week they might have afternoon classes and sometimes there are extra-curricula activities such as Theater, Art, or Cooking, but other than socializing is something children do outside of school time.

I find this has a great influence on how I teach here in Germany. I try to integrate social learning into my theater work with children and I do it by bringing theater directly in the classroom. My work is different here because I have to be able to change my focus depending on the school system. Neither the students, nor the teachers are used to Drama or Theater as a method of learning, but I try to bring Drama in Education into every school system, but, as I mentioned before, under each circumstance my focus is different. For example, I can and often do, bring an English-speaking role drama into the *Gymnasium*, but I can't do that in a *Hauptschule* because the students are mostly foreigners and they have difficulties speaking German let alone English. I work primarily in the *Hauptschule* because students and teachers are more willing to work on social skills and they also have more time.

I usually begin working with the students starting from fifth grade. I see the students once a week for a double session (90 minutes). Most of them in the *Hauptschule* are foreigners; there is a very low percent of German students. In a class of between twenty-five to thirty students maybe two or three are German, the rest coming from Turkey, Albania, Serbia, Bosnia, Greece, Africa and Italy. The classes are very multicultural and students have little experience of theater, therefore, I need to go very slowly with them. On the other hand, they are very spontaneous and open. The focus in the

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Hauptschule is not so much on getting good grades as getting along with each other since there seems to be a lot more violence. That is why I am often asked to do Theater/Drama work with the students. Maybe on that point North America and Germany have something in common – they are beginning to realize that Theater/Drama can be used as a tool to help students have positive outlets in dealing with their emotions.

To clarify what I actually am – I market myself as a Drama/Theater Educator. I work with all ages – kindergarten, grade school, teenagers and adults but most of the time I am asked to work from Grades 4-7 (ages 10-13). I always work with a teacher present. S/he usually participates when I do warm-ups but doesn't actively participate in role play or role drama. Sometimes though, if the teacher has experience and is motivated s/he can/will participate. Sometimes the teacher deepens the themes used in the lesson by allowing the children to write or draw their thoughts afterwards. In a classroom situation where Drama is used, teacher, students, and drama educator are all active participants in creating a dramatic process that involves everybody's input. Therefore, before anyone can use role play, all must be comfortable with each other which is where 'warm-up' and getting-to-know-each-other games are not only valuable but necessary for the groups' process and development. As John O'Toole states:

"If the role play is to be genuinely part of the dramatic process of personal and social discovery, then the participants must make it their own, and find out whatever they can about the role to relate it to their own experience and feelings. This complex management of the role entails experiment, and a trusting and not over-demanding environment."

(O'Toole 1992, p.120)

The first time I enter a classroom my presentation is what is important. I have to be quite clear as to what I want from the students, and the first lesson has to be fun and include everyone. I have to get to know the children, and they have to get to know me. So what are my options? Talking or doing? I tend to *do* rather than to talk. In this sense I use my own emotional aesthetics. I have to create a safe, warm, and caring environment while setting limits and introducing myself and why I am there. Warm-ups are a good place to start because they help students loosen up and give them a positive impression of drama. They are great for bringing the group together and creating a concentrated environment without chaos. Most of all they pro-

vide a solid structure that gives an immediate sense of security that is helpful when beginning a session. Using the same opening game or exercise each time, a sense of ritual is developed which can be very supportive in stressful situations.

Trust exercises allow students to experience what it means to be responsible for someone else and how it feels to be dependent on someone else for their own safety. Trust exercises provide a basis for the experience of all their senses such as hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, and feeling. I use many trust exercises and try to build one exercise upon another. If I omit the 'warming-up' step the students tend to laugh and not take the role play or role drama seriously. If I find the students are not ready to fully participate, I continue to do more trust exercises and begin to provide exercises that use some of the techniques that role drama needs. Once I have the concentration and full participation of the students, I slowly introduce the idea of role play/role drama in the classroom.

One example of a role drama that includes everyone, is the sports club meeting for members. All students are enrolled as members of a soccer club, most are parents, some board members (president, treasurer etc.) or players. They decide among themselves who they are and how the room should be set up for a special meeting. I tell them I will leave the room, and when I come back I will be in a different role and the drama will begin. When I return I wear a scarf over my hair (I may be a mother or the secretary) and I present a problem that the students-in-role must solve: A parent wants her disabled daughter to play on the team. What should we do?

The students begin to discuss the situation, and sometimes they vote on what to do. What happens often is that the usual class talkers tend to take over, therefore, I switch to 'teacher' role to allow all to have a say. I freeze the action and tap in to each player asking the key question, "As (e.g. a parent, or a player etc.) do you believe that this girl should be allowed on the team?" The constraint is that when someone is tapped there are no comments allowed from other members of the club. To conclude the drama, I ask each of them to write in role – which means writing down the thoughts of the character the students are playing at the time. Here are some of their comments (translated from German to English):

(Karl, finance manager for the team, aged 12) I like the theme we played, even though I laughed (well a little bit). I was still for the girl.

(Katarina, leader of the Parents' Association, aged 13) I think the daughter should have the same rights as all other children. Perhaps she will find

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new friends. I think she should be accepted into the group. It wouldn't be fair if she wasn't allowed to play. On the team.

At the beginning of a role drama I always ask the children if they want to participate. This time three refused, and I gave them the option to be journalists to observe and document everything that went on at the meeting. They were very excited about that alternative. This is what they wrote:

This sports club is twenty years old. Until today there were no problems. One day there was a special meeting for the members of the soccer team because of a Dis-abled, 'other-abled' girl (She has no arms.) named Linda. Linda and her Mother have a special wish that Linda could play soccer with the rest of the team. Linda is 13 years old and takes medicine for her illness. The coach is against Linda participating on the team. The President is not against it. Linda's mother is very confused. The members decide to vote. 17 for Linda to play on the team and 4 not to play. The coach says that 'Linda can play the next time the team meets. She will probably be laughed at and not accepted right away from the other teammates. (6th grade Hauptschule).

Most of the time the children don't want to stop playing even after they write in role. Sometimes after doing this drama, we play short scenes about how it is to have a disability and what kind of prejudices we have against disabled people. The drama makes a good springboard for getting children to create their own drama and for me to see where their interests lie.

Asking questions is my main technique when I work with groups of people. These questions are real in their character, and, therefore, require real, but not prefabricated answers that the students know will please me. I am also not interested in yes/no answers. It is through questioning that I get my ideas of what I will do in that particular class. I usually ask questions, in German or English, like, "What are you learning?" "What do you know about this subject?" "What do you want to know more about?" And with this knowledge I try to integrate their responses to create new scenes and develop them further. I ask 'feeling questions' like, "Why did you like/dislike this exercise?" It is not enough to not like something or to say it was boring. They have to give *real* reasons why they like or dislike something. It is important for me to not only know what works and what doesn't, but also why, and to find out whether the students are emotionally involved in the subject. That is why emotional aesthetics plays a very important role in my work.

Emotional Aesthetics

What is emotional aesthetics and why is it important in the schools?

"Aesthetic education is perceiving through the intellect and the senses. It is experiencing the intuitive and the irrational. It is understanding that though these may be impossible to symbolize in words, they have a significant place in the way we go about building other symbol systems for interpreting and refining human understanding. It is experiencing the expression of meaning which impresses, satisfies, and delight. (the intelligence of the intellect). Co-operative learning, social skills, self-esteem, languaging, critical thinking, problem solving, are all components in the dramatic process but they are not all there is to it. To put it simply: aesthetic education provides opportunities for recognizing the play between feeling and intellect and the congruent fusing of meaning with form".

(Saxton, J.M. unpublished paper)

I find this to be a very clear and precise definition of what aesthetic education is but I tend to shy away from the word 'aesthetics,' because the word is difficult to explain holding so many meanings and interpretations. It is not the meaning of the word 'aesthetics' that is unclear. It is the *idea* of what aesthetics *is* that is confusing. Therefore, I am going to take this definition a step further, to introduce the idea of an emotional aesthetics because this is the aesthetics I can relate to and understand.

At a recent conference on Theater in Education in Germany, I talked to a woman about what we each do in schools. I noticed that she described her work by explaining it through the use of pictures and metaphors. I commented to her that "you seem to be very artistic and aesthetic, something I am not," whereupon she replies, "But you *have* an aesthetics, an emotional aesthetics."

It was in this moment that I decided to write about emotional aesthetics, not because I am a particularly emotional person but because the concept of emotional aesthetics is something that deeply relates to my work in schools.

Daniel Goleman in his book, *Emotional Intelligence*, gives me a clear definition of emotion.

"I take emotion to refer to a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states⁷ and range of propensities to act. There are hundreds of

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emotions, along with their blends, variations, mutations, and nuances. Indeed, there are many more subtleties of emotion than we have words for.

(Goleman, 1996, p.57)

Goleman's book promotes the necessity of *having* an emotional intelligence and how important emotional intelligence is not only in our schools, but in our everyday lives. He points out the distinction between IQ and EQ and that both are needed in creating a whole person, but he also makes clear that traditional education stills seems to focus mostly on intellectual intelligence. Most of the work I do with students is emotionally based. I ask students, "What are the main feelings a person could have?" Most of the time the answer is love (with lots of giggles), anger, fear, enjoyment, and sadness. Then I say, "Show me *when you* are angry, happy, sad," or, "Show me *a situation* when someone is angry, sad, or happy. Show me a still picture (a tableau)..." Once I have these pictures and situations from the students, I continue from there. All the ideas come from the students. I give impulses, and my job is to get the students emotionally involved in the task. When I have that, work is easy because the students have a commitment to themselves and to each other.

Showing emotions is not really important for many people. Just recently a boy said to his teacher after having disturbed a lesson I was conducting, "I don't know what this stuff about feelings has to do with my free time?" In other words, he wondered what feelings have to do with him and why are they important to talk about it in school time. Emotions lie at the base of all theater and drama work as they do in our real lives. When children are not able to feel emotion, they are lacking in social skills. Therefore, talking about feelings and playing situations that show different feelings is valuable and necessary in the classroom. Writing a poem about love, knowing what it means to be responsible for and care for someone else as well as for oneself, belongs to everyday experience and should be incorporated within children's general learning. Children need to have positive ways of expressing their feelings and 'Drama in Education' provides an outlet for that.

When children make a tableau that shows sadness, either their own or that of someone else, they usually have their head down so that no one can see their eyes. They don't show their face, their shoulders are hunched and they seem to have no bodily energy. I try to allow each student to experience this feeling for him/herself. When I notice

them going into clichés, I ask the question, "Why would someone feel sad?" or "When or why do you feel sad?" The answers come quickly: "When I feel alone," or, "When someone has died," or, "When I get bad grades in Math," or, "When my friend doesn't want to play with me any more." Not all of them answer the question, and I don't push them because they need to protect themselves. Nevertheless, I encourage them to experience their boundaries. I always ask them to play out the scenes afterwards. Most of the time they do, because they are protected by the role they take on, even if the role is similar to themselves. The children don't have to share their deepest emotions with me. I accept what comes.

Sometimes I want to know more. Of course, I wait for my 'teachable moment.' An example: Three girls are playing together, a fourth is alone. She tries to get into the group, but all three girls say no and walk away. This scene is often played, with variations, but the theme is always the same - being left out. Sometimes the students find their own resolution, such as trying to integrate the girl into the group. Other times we might talk about how the girl feels and whether or not the scene was played truthfully. Sometimes a group will play the same situation but the feeling generated then is anger. This leads us into discussion about feelings or playing more scenes about why and when people feel sad or angry, which brings us to talking about problems students have outside or inside the classroom and what we can do about them. I notice the students are very interested in acting out these situations. They begin to share themselves by opening up and introducing scenes that show their own experiences). This all becomes possible because I provide a trusting environment where everybody is equal. Through the emotional aesthetic setup, the students do not feel threatened. Everyone has the opportunity to get in touch with feelings, their own and those of others; they try out different kinds. Sometimes I even get the class 'bully' to show sadness, and when this happens the starts to see him in a very different light. Those rare moments make me think that expressing and showing feelings in the classroom is important. Students like to express their issues, and when a scene is played well, everyone can relate to the feelings expressed. This way, students also learn a bit about acting and how to be truthful on stage - I gain two goals here at once. I notice that, in some classes, after doing this kind of work, some students are able to verbalize their feelings better. It makes life easier for them when there are conflicts outside and inside the classroom. A third-

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grade class said to me once, "Can't we play feelings again today?"

I feel that emotional aesthetics is very important because it is the basis of learning social skills, building self-esteem, forming trusting relationships, and developing honesty in the classroom. Emotional aesthetics has to do with personal engagement with oneself and others. It has to do with how do I *feel* in a particular situation, and not how I act or how I am received by others when being on stage. Emotional aesthetics is about looking inside oneself, and, through drama, turning what is inside out: bringing the personal into the public. I would say that my work is therapeutic, but not therapy. One does not necessarily need therapy to express feelings. That is why I see this type of work necessary for schools because students have less and less outlets where they can be with their feelings in a positive and nurturing way. 'Drama in Education' helps to build self-esteem, and, like aesthetic education, helps to reinforce social skills and collaboration. Through 'Drama in Education' students begin to trust themselves and others. I feel that this way of learning enhances their creativity, intelligence, and emotional well-being, not only for now but perhaps in adult life as well.

"I feel that I don't like something."
 "No," Martin replies,
 "I don't mean that. The feeling comes from inside.
 Not from your head,
 not where you think,
 but somewhere else where you don't think,
 where you just feel."

Windsor, 1995 p.87.

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Note

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About the author

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University Theater: Mise en scene of El premio flaco (The Meager Prize) by Héctor Quintero; Production with Pedagogical Goals in the Spanish Class

University Theater: Mise en scene of El premio flaco (The Meager Prize) by Héctor Quintero;

Production with Pedagogical Goals in the Spanish Class

Eduardo Cabrera

Zusammenfassung:

Eduardo Cabrera stellt mit zunehmend fremdsprachiger Theaterarbeit einen positiven Trend für die (Hochschul-) Bildung Nordamerikas vor. Er bestimmt diese Entwicklung näher im Kontext wachsender Bedeutung ästhetisch-praktischer Aneignung von Literatur (*Theater Studies*) als wichtige Ergänzung traditioneller Rezeption gedruckter Texte (*Literary Criticism*). Was hinzu kommt, definiert Cabrera als Raum und Zeit *erlebter* ästhetischer Repräsentation, in deren Grenzen sich Lernprozesse entfalten. Cabrera analysiert anhand einer Stückproduktion mit Spanisch-StudentInnen in Texas die theoretischen Grundlagen, die Theaterarbeit in einen Ort interkulturellen Lernens verwandeln.

In the last few decades, in academic settings, there has been a greater emphasis on studying theater in a way that is much more ample than traditional approaches, a way that takes into account not only the dramatic text but also the *performance text*. Concerning the traditional approach, Domingo Adame criticizes the fact that "studies related to the dramatic text have been realized, in the majority, from the perspective of literary criticism. Rare are the studies that use a proper theatrical approach." (11)

Fortunately, the situation that Adame describes is changing rapidly. Julian Hilton has synthesized well the nature of this change in the following manner:

In the past ten years, Theatre Studies has experienced remarkable international growth, students seeing in its marriage of the practical and the intellectual a creative and rewarding discipline. Some countries are now opening school and degree programs in Theatre Studies for the first time; others are having to accommodate to the fact that a popular subject attracting large numbers of highly motivated students has to be given greater attention than hitherto. (vi)

Already in 1963, Raúl Castagnino had signaled in his *Sociología del teatro argentino (Sociology of Argentine Theater)* (citing Elmer Rice) that "without the art of theater, there would be no dramatic art;" and he adds, "The text converts into a theatrical artifact when its interpreters represent it before the community. Jean Doat was right when he said in *Entrée du public* that 'theater was born out of a community's need to express itself.'" (11) Later, in *Teoría del teatro (Theory of Theater)*, Castagnino insisted:

While a dramatic work remains in a book, it lacks theatrical life. (...) A work of theater is such only when it is embodied in the three-dimensional space of a stage and unfolds in the fourth dimension of time. Space and time, in reality or in the fiction of art, integrate their vital atmosphere. Also in this drama differs from other literary forms...

(21)

One of the ways university students can be conscious of the diverse dimensions of theater is through theatrical productions. In spite of this evident fact, there are not many educational institutions that promote theatrical productions in a foreign language, at least not consistently. The Department of Classic and Modern Languages and Literature of Texas Tech University, of Lubbock, has undertaken the difficult task of producing theatrical works annually. The impulse to have university theater requires much more than good will; to sustain constant support at the logistical level, there must exist an adequate infrastructure, from the existence of a "practicum of theater" in the course catalog to an appropriate quantity of economic resources that would see the production through its completion.

This essay considers not only the elements that mediated the production of the play but also its intended audience as a constructor of meaning.¹ In accord with Susan Bennett, "The two elements of production and reception cannot be separated, and a key area for further research is the relationship between the two for specific cultural environments, for specific types of theatre, and so on." (106) Obviously, for this production, one has especially to take into account the type of receptor:

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high school and university students and people of the Hispanic community.

Patrice Pavis, following the conceptualization of Carlos Tindemans, has insisted on the relevance of considering in the analysis of the performance not only the phenomenological image of the staging process, but also the intention of people involved in the production and the resulting effect on the audience. To this end, according to Pavis, it is essential to analyze: (1) the preparation of the spectacle; (2) the phenomenological image of the staging process; and (3) the effects on the audience. He explains:

The understanding of the preparation of the spectacle (1) is only interesting if it casts light on the phenomenon produced, that is the mise en scene (2). This we can understand only if we can evaluate the way in which the spectator is moved and influenced (3).

(Puesta en escena 41-42)

Due to the fact there is a scarcity of Latin American theater in the United States (and scarcer still the number of plays actually performed in Spanish), and considering the interest people of this country have in Hispanic culture and theater, this type of project could be considered indispensable within the academic community. In this vein, Ethel Pitts-Walker asserts:

Many institutions consider themselves multicultural and nontraditional in their approach to theatre simply by casting people of color or the disabled or females in roles normally not given to members of these groups. However, how many institutions include works by playwrights from underrepresented groups? (...) How many institutions would be daring enough to produce a whole season of diverse works?

(8)

It follows that the production of works by Hispanic authors in Spanish constitutes an element that could fill a vacuum not only in the academic



body of students in the United States but also in the development of the Hispanic community. For the students that participate in this artistic experience, there are multiple benefits, among which are: they learn to value theater as a spectacle, not just as a written product; they have a direct experience of diverse aspects of Hispanic culture; they learn to employ the language in a more profound sense, internalizing important techniques of communication. In sum, theater is a medium that serves the students, and not the reverse, and because theater can be an activity integral to their formation, all students are welcome to participate in it. Meaning that there is no selection of actors according to an inclination towards acting because no one can put limits on what a student with no acting experience might accomplish. Furthermore, it is not the intention to produce a drama of professional quality, but instead, to experiment with diverse theatrical aesthetics.

The works selected for this type of class must have numerous parts, with the idea that many students may act. While the primary responsibility of the students is to perform their roles, they still must participate in other aspects of the production: setting, lighting, costume, make-up, marketing, etc. One of the principal intended effects (which is obtained in a relatively short time) is the sense of cooperation and solidarity within the group. Essentially, students not only strive so that all aspects of the production will be completed successfully, but because they desire that each actor develops in his or her role to the greatest possible extent. The combination of graduates and undergraduates means that the former, with their greater experience and knowledge of the language, can assist those in the latter group who are striving to improve their language abilities. In addition, the many meetings that students hold outside of scheduled class times establishes strong ties within the group.

Just as there are numerous benefits for the students of this class, so do exist many positive consequences for the audience that attends the performances. One of the principal aims of this type of production is to attract to the theater not only university students but also high school students who desire to learn more about the Spanish language and Hispanic culture. Another fundamental objective is to establish a bridge between the university and the Hispanic community. In many cities of the United States, a large portion of those that speak Spanish in their daily lives do not have the opportunity to attend performances in Spanish, the result being that when there is an event in Spanish, many people attend with a great desire to

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participate actively. This bridge created between the university and the Hispanic community also serves to bring the campus nearer to people who have experienced a separation or lack of invitation from the university.

The first work selected by Texas Tech students was *El premio flaco* (*The Meager Prize*), written by the Cuban playwright Héctor Quintero. This play describes the social situation in Cuba shortly before the revolution of Fidel Castro. The protagonist experiences a circular change of fortune, from being a very poor woman, an inhabitant of a neighborhood of people with scant resources, to being a homeowner, to returning once again to her original misery. The play deals with important themes, from the condition of the poor in Cuba – especially the problematic situation of women – to the manipulation that the people suffer through the media. Although the action takes place in Cuba, the social conditions presented can be interpreted like that of any other country in Latin America.

The play has many parts, which meant that the sixteen students that registered for the class (five graduates and eleven undergraduates) could each perform a role. As happens frequently, several of the "rookie actors," who before the classes began had asked for small roles, quickly changed their opinion and asked for more important parts. Psychological factors also came into play in a favorable manner: at times, those students who manifested timidity were those who acted with the greatest enthusiasm. Eventually, they realized that lack of experience or theater know-how did not mean they could not do well onstage.

One of the first aspects of production was securing a stage for the performances. Because the venues of the Department of Theater were not available, we proceeded to reserve the Allen Theater of the University Center. Due to patronage by the Sigma Delta Pi honor society, use of the theater was free of charge. However, two stage technicians, responsible for the lighting and sound, had to be paid, and money for necessary materials for make-up was also needed. The Student Activity Center of the University assumed responsibility for publicity and program costs, as well as securing police and security detachments for both performances. Because we had no workshop to build a set, we tried to use to the maximum what we had at our disposal and obtained props through thrift and contribution. The primary expense for the set was the rental fee for a smoke machine, a device fundamental to the staging of the play and which was used to create a surrealistic atmosphere in two scenes.

Another pre-production task was the adaptation of the play. The elements that had to be taken into account were the following:

1. The elimination of Cuban idioms or expressions that were considered to be difficult for the general public to understand;
2. The elimination of lengthy scenes that contained redundancies unnecessary for the development of the dramatic action;
3. The privileging of scenes that possessed a grand theatricality – much stage movement and character interaction – and, consequently, the diminishment of the importance of parts with excessive dialogue;
4. The reduction of the play from three acts to one;
5. The changing of the names Mariano and Azucena to Bill and Monica to make them more contemporary and accessible to an American audience;
6. The inclusion of an opening circus scene which served to augment the surrealistic atmosphere, diminish the level of tragedy, and suggest more of the pre-history of the play so that the audience could witness how those events affected the protagonist;
7. The addition of various pieces of music and special effects, including a speech by Fidel Castro, mixed with circus music, at the end of the play to suggest the advent of a new government (without emphasis on the detail of the speech's content).

The adaptation was accomplished taking into account and respecting what the playwright wished to express. The extreme poverty during the Batista regime, the lack of solidarity amongst the people, and the hope that might exist in the younger generation are elements central to Héctor Quintero's dramatization of life in Cuba and became quite clear in the staging of the play. However, it was not intended that a mere *illustration* of the original play be presented; on the contrary, the actors creatively sought to manifest these themes within the parameters established by the director.

The methodology used in the direction and staging of the play was based on diverse theoretical foundations, fundamentally on the method of Constantin Stanislavsky and techniques of Jerzy Grotowski and Vsevolod Meyerhold. Prior to beginning the work specific to characters and concrete dramatic situations, the students participated in diverse dramatic exercises and games, which allowed a confidence to grow within the group and created a friendly and cordial atmosphere. In addition, the students had the opportunity to perform various vocal exercises, with the objective of improving their articulation (to be better "understood" by the audience) and volume (to be better "heard"). In these areas, the progress of the actors was heterogeneous, dependent on the dedi-

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cation that each student gave to the exercises on their own time.

The direction of the actors took into account the principal fundamentals of Stanislavsky's method.² First, actors maintained the "fourth wall." The objective of maintaining "illusion" during the majority of the play, searching for a sense of "truth" (consistent with Stanislavsky), was to obtain the complicity of the audience. The actors wanted the spectators to identify with the characters, who would be presented as actual people. The fourth wall guaranteed the creation onstage of a separate reality (that of Cuba, distinct from that of Texas). The director emphasized that the actors should never break the fourth wall by looking at the audience, the result being that the spectators could feel immersed in the separate reality created before them.

To enhance the identification of the audience with the characters, the actors had to *feel* the emotions of the characters. The student-actors were instructed in how to utilize their own emotions augmenting those proper to each character. To experience sincerely these emotions, the students learned Stanislavsky's technique of "emotive memory," which consists in remembering some event in one's life to "relive" genuinely a particular emotion. Prior to using this technique, students had performed "sense memory" exercises. (For example, in the first few rehearsals, students practiced the classic "coffee" exercise, whereby they evoked in their senses the heat of the mug, the taste of the coffee, etc.) The results of such exercises were diverse, again depending on how diligently students practiced them on their own time and on whether the individual was consciously or unconsciously resistant to the acting out of emotions.

Within the proposed method, each actor was instructed to learn the "antecedent of the character"

(another important concept of Stanislavsky), with an emphasis on understanding the concrete history of the character, including aspects relative to his or her status, education, personality, environs, etc. This investigation helped students define the characters more realistically and its effect was evident, allowing students to experience the complexity of the characters and add this knowledge to their presentations. Exploring the history of a character was not a task performed and completed; on the contrary, it was information used in the unfolding of the emotions and actions of each character.

Another acting concept employed was learning "the motive of each character in each scene." For example, in the scene in which Iluminada and Octavio argue about the tent, each actor worked on maintaining the proper objective in mind during the entire scene: Iluminada wants to get rid of the tent, and Octavio wants to bring it to their new home. Remaining conscious of these objectives throughout the whole scene resulted in realistic and convincing acting.

In each rehearsal, and in nearly every scene, there was an emphasis on action. The director attempted to create not only characters but interesting situations. To succeed in that, it was necessary to invent various interesting movements and actions. One of the goals was to stimulate audience imagination. Not having a set rich in color nor props the public had to have the possibility of visualizing a lot of things. For example, the tent was an item of fundamental importance to the play. In order for the audience to imagine it, the actors had to "visualize" it in great detail.

The group also worked on many distinct facets of the production. With respect to the set, it was decided to use a "black camera" effect, which allowed various symbolic elements to be highlighted over others through the manipulation of the lighting. Consistent with Grotowsky's "poor theater," the set design was limited to a single rope, which functioned as a clothesline, that ran from one side of the stage to the other.³ The hanging clothes symbolized the poverty of the community, but at the same time, Juana, who washed clothes for a living, utilized the clothes to perform her daily laundry duties. Therefore, the set design was both functional and symbolic.

Another effect of working within Grotowsky's theory was that it allowed the focus of the play to be on the action of the actors. Regarding the use of props, the actors also limited their use as much as possible, employing those props which were either functional or symbolic. An example of a functional element was Monica using a small plas-

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tic tub to wash her hands, which she was doing when she discovered the lucky soap that contained a hidden slip of paper announcing the prize: a house. So that no attention would be drawn to the tub, it was brought onto the stage by a student dressed in black, who did not stand out due to the existence of the "black camera." An example of a symbolic element was the use of smoke to create a surrealistic atmosphere. With the smoke, the circus scene took on a dream-like quality which could be interpreted in various ways.

Other props were utilized that had both functional and symbolic characteristics. For example, the wheelbarrow constituted a symbol for homeless persons. At the same time, it was used to move and carry other important items as the action required (like the bucket Juana carried around for Luis to use as a toilet); similarly, it was used to transport one of her children. The clothesline with drying clothes also had a functional/symbolic character.

The costumes were created by considering two basic concepts: the circus and day-to-day dress. The importance of the circus costumes was rooted in helping to create the aforementioned dream-like atmosphere. Hence, the actors sought out colorful clothes and costumes that corresponded with typical circus performers: clowns, jugglers, a lion-tamer, a trapeze artist, etc. The day-to-day dress also had to feature certain characteristics. For example, the character of Bill, friend/agent of the "artist" Monica, used a black leather jacket while the rest of the cast was directed to wear nothing having black, white, or red in it. Black was avoided due to the black camera; white, because it is too strong a contrast to the backdrop; and red, because it is a color that calls too much attention to itself, thus distracting the audience unnecessarily. Bill's wearing black intentionally violated these principles to draw attention to his negative personality.

In the *mise en scene* was intended that acting be the central focus of the spectacle. With the limited set design and diminished use of props, the objective was for the audience to focus its attention on the actors. Given the relevance of previously mentioned ideas, the staging of the play was conceived with didactic ends.

One could surmise that even though fundamental Stanislavskian concepts and techniques were employed, the performance have resulted far afield of the naturalism desired by Stanislavsky. On the contrary, the company left many elements to the imagination of the audience. Coinciding with the conceptualization of Meyerhold, the intent was to avoid passivity on the part of the spectator:

Nowadays, every production is designed to induce audience participation: modern dramatists and directors rely not only on the efforts of the actors and the facilities afforded by the stage machinery but on the efforts of the audience as well. We produce every play on the assumption that it will be still unfinished when it appears on the stage. We do this consciously because we realize that the crucial revision of a production is that which is made by the spectator.

(Braun 256)

Under an eclectic conception, mixing diverse aesthetics and theatrical methods, the company look for the creation of fundamental contradictions. For example, the actress that played the protagonist had to perform her character in a completely natural way, seeking to "feel" and "live" her role in a way that allowed the audience to identify with her (consistent with Stanislavsky's method). This contrasted sharply with the expressionistic elements of the staging, and resulted in the protagonist's personality being exhibited distinctly. One of the basic motives which the director incorporated in his direction consisted of the intention to maintain the enthusiasm of the whole group despite the difficulty of the task at hand. This meant postponing when necessary certain tasks fundamental to the staging of the play. Because of that, rehearsals commenced with the most dynamic scene instead of the beginning scene: the moment when the newsreporter interviews the protagonist. Everyone participated in this scene, including a model from the soap company and a group of gossipy women. Essentially, beginning in this way built up the enthusiasm of each student by allowing them to feel a part of the drama and fostered the group cohesion intended by the director.

An important aim of the production was to reactivate the relationship between the audience and the spectacle of theater, which made it necessary to include ideas, events, or characters with whom the public could identify. If Cuba and its people, the revolution of 1959, or the arch-conservative government of Batista were things unrelated to the daily reality of the Texan audience, the production of *El premio flaco* sought points of contact with the reality of life in the United States. For example, the characters' names were changed (e.g., Mariano and Azucena to Bill and Monica) to bring the spectators within a familiar historical context.⁴ In this way, the events onstage had a multiple historic, social, and political contextualization: that of Batista's Cuba and that of Fidel Castro's Cuba and the present-day United States. The director did not seek to transmit an obviously moral or didactic message but to insinuate that the audience might reevaluate its preconceptions when

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faced with the confluence of these multiple realities. Without discounting that there can be a realistic theme to the play, the production left its audience open to the possibility of multiple interpretations.

Another important part of the production was its publicity campaign, which involved diverse mediums: newspapers, radio and television stations, community bulletin boards, and other platforms. One complementary marketing event was the class's participation in a banquet commemorating the *Hispanic Student Society Cultural Awareness Week*, at which the class performed a scene involving the entire group, full of the dynamic and playful action and music. Also, to anticipate the performance, a lecture and slide show over the distinct elements of Cuba was presented one week before the production.

Prior to the first performance, the director reminded the actors about basic ideas that should not be forgotten:

1. Speak loudly: performing in a theater with a 1000 person capacity required that the actors speak much more loudly than in normal situations;
2. Do not look at the audience: they were reminded to maintain the illusion of reality – in this case, the reality of daily life in Cuba, distinct from life in Texas – by respecting the “fourth wall” and not for one moment looking at the audience;
3. Do not turn your back on the audience: they were reminded that it is necessary that the audience can see the face – the eyes and expressions – of every actor;
4. Do not block other actors from the audience's view: performing on a stage of huge dimensions required special attention in every scene;
5. Keep character in every moment onstage: actors were reminded that they are the character to the audience at all times, not just when they are speaking;
6. Concentrate in every moment: actors were reminded to not forget their entrances and exits, etc;
7. Keep the conversation fluid: it is not necessary to wait until an actor finishes his line, and it is important to maintain a natural rhythm of dialogue.
8. Everyone is responsible for his own costumes and props.

Both performances were showed before full houses. Nearly two thousand spectators attended the production of *El premio flaco*. For the participating students, the experience was both a formative and unforgettable experience. In addition to the learning experience – both academic and personal – that this production provided the students, another concrete result was the interest in taking

more classes in Spanish, literature, and especially theater. Several undergraduates registered in classes of Latin American theater, not practicums but classes of traditional pedagogical method that involve analysis of plays and learning theory. The same happened among the graduates, some of whom are now considering Latin American theater as a possible dissertation topic. For many of the spectators that attended, it was their first contact with the University; for others, their first experience of theater.

Regarding the audience as a constructor of meaning, the feedback from spectators demonstrated numerous possibilities of interpretation. In the final scene, in which the protagonist is obligated to assume the role of a circus performer in the streets, playing a trumpet while wearing a bathing suit, there appears a new character: a teenaged boy, the only one in the town who does not laugh at the protagonist. The public's interpretation of his appearance varied significantly, from the most literal and realistic to the most profoundly symbolic. This diversity of opinion produced discussion which enriched the level of understanding, allowing the audience to approach the heart of the play. At the same time, these discussions augmented the enthusiasm of the public, and many spectators manifested their interest in attending future productions of theater in Spanish.

This type of university theater can constitute, in the future, a level of activity with a far wider radius of influence. In this initial phase, these productions will naturally be limited to the university, but in a future stage of development, one can envision performances presented in venues beyond the university grounds. Without doubt, this inaugural production of theater in Spanish at Texas Tech University has left an indelible impression on both the students who participated and the community of Lubbock, who supported this valuable educational activity with its attendance.

Many of the spectators were students of high schools from various communities of Texas, traveling several hours to see the play. This was the value that these students and teachers of Spanish placed on the performance. Obviously, those teenagers that wish to learn Spanish found in the play a valuable contribution to their learning: the audiences were very attentive for the entire hour and a half, indicating the effort they were making to improve their listening comprehension. Furthermore, the teachers can incorporate discussions of the social, political, and economic situation of Cuba, like the struggle of women or the psychosocial elements of the characters' cruelty, into their curriculum after the play.

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The production of *El premio flaco* demonstrates how the theater can affect a large influence in different levels of the student population, from pedagogical results to motivating students for their learning. For university students, new horizons of study emerged at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional level. For the high school students, the university can be perceived, not as a place for the elite, but as campus open to those who wish to advance in their education; in addition, the study of Spanish is converted into a "living" thing, connected to their lives, not just a course limited to the classroom.

Several of the students who participated have expressed a desire to register for the next production, expressing an awakened enthusiasm in their studies. Another positive effect has been the genuine friendship that emerged amongst the participants, many of whom have continued their relationships, which are profound and enduring. This is the magic of theater; more than a simple art, theater puts into play the feelings of all who come within its circle, leaving its indelible mark. In truth, it is more than a subject; it's an experience integral to one's formation.

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Notes

¹ Patrice Pavis' article, "Problemas de semiótica teatral. La relación espectáculo-espectador" in *Gestos* 11-23, contains a broader elaboration of this theme.

² For a comprehensive description of Stanislavsky's method, see *Un actor se prepara* and *Manual del actor*.

³ For a synthesis of the principles of the "poor theatre," consult Grotowsky's *Hacia un teatro pobre*.

⁴ This reference corresponds to the President Bill Clinton-Monica Lewinsky affair.

Socio-Cultural Activities in a Cross-Generation Theatre Project

Socio-Cultural Activities in a Cross-Generation Theatre Project

Annetta Meißner (Berlin), translated by Sandra Menker

Zusammenfassung:

Annetta Meißner stellt ihr "Drama Projekt 99" vor, mit dem sie angesichts der Tendenz eines immer stärkeren Auseinanderlebens der Generationen zu besserem Verstehen zwischen Kindern und Pensionierten vom Prenzlauer Berg (Berlin) anzuregen versuchte. Der Weg dorthin über Phasen des Kennenlernens, der Auseinandersetzung mit gegenseitigen Vorurteilen und gemeinsamem ästhetischen Handeln wird von Meißner inhaltlich detailliert beschrieben, theaterpädagogisch aufbereitet und im Rahmen praktischer Sozialarbeit ausführlich reflektiert.

I. Cross-Generation Work

The relationship between generations has always included misunderstandings, prejudices, and conflicts. As the number of older people will grow over the next decades, it will be more important than ever to promote dialogue between generations. Such a dialogue can have a positive effect on their coexistence.

In these times of individualization in Germany, few close family ties which permit the natural interaction between young and old, can be found. As a result, cross-generation work in institutions and projects is becoming increasingly important. In social work as well, cross-generation work is necessary and possible. Drama education as a field of socio-cultural activities offers the potential to bring together old and young. Through attending the same drama group, they actively get to know the world of the other generation. A dialogue in this setting can bring about an understanding of ways to deal with one another. Cross-generation work offers the possibility of contact, of getting to know the potential of the other group. Cross-generation projects can also decrease the loneliness of seniors and children. Old and young can learn a lot from each other and can also teach each other many things.

As I found out in my experiences with the "Drama Projekt 99," the topic of "old and young" serves especially well to develop intensive contact between the participants.

II. The "Drama Project 99"

1. Basic Conditions

The "Drama Project 99" was created by my fellow student Markus Ponick and myself in the context of the 5th semester block placement at the university of Applied Sciences, "Alice-Salomon" in Berlin. The name "Drama Projekt 99" stands for people who are at heart children, aged 9 to 99, who want to do theatre together in a cross-generation group.

In September and October 1997, we began with the search for participants by publicizing our project in the newspaper as well as in retirement homes and children institutions in the Berlin district of the Prenzlauer Berg. Our objective was to work with seniors and with children of ages between 6 and 12.

On November 5th 1997, rehearsals began. In the first phase, rehearsals took place once a week on Wednesdays from three to six p.m. We practiced in small groups on two weekends during the main rehearsal period, but in the last week before the first performance we even met every day. The culmination of the "Drama Projekt 99" were the premier, which took place on April 30th, 1998, as well as two additional performances a few days later.

The participants were ten children and two seniors. Since the youngest child was seven years old and the oldest participant was 77, the "Drama Projekt 99" was in reality a "Drama Projekt 77."

2. Objectives

The goal of the project was to create, in response to the lack of daily contact and exchange between generations, a forum for seniors and children where they could meet through mutual activity. They were supposed to be given the opportunity to get to know each other, and, perhaps, to come to appreciate each other. We held the hope that this contact would reduce prejudices, thereby creating a lasting beneficial impact on their relationship. Our intention included not only this integrative

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approach, but also the idea of fostering individual competencies through acting.

Acting offers, besides an aesthetic experience, a chance for creative and personal expression for each participant. The sensorial perception of the body, the realization and translation of fantasies, the experience of individual abilities in the performance and embodiment of new roles – all this offers the opportunity to enrich the personality of young and old alike.

The project was not meant to be solely a process. In the end we had to have a product. The play was developed from the material of a fairy tale, created by the directing team: The story deals with the change of roles of young and old. The task was to practice and perform this play.

III. Methodology

The "Drama Project 99" was divided into three phases: a "process-oriented phase," a "process-product oriented phase," and a "product-oriented phase."

1. The Process-Oriented Phase: Enabling the Participants to Act

In this initial phase, the participants of both generations were meant to make their first contact and to get to know each other better. This phase was supported by the application of methods to foster group dynamics such as interactive games and group acting. By familiarizing the participants with different methods of drama education, the joy of acting was supposed to be awakened and fear reduced. Through role playing and improvisational exercises, the actors were given the opportunity to put themselves into other people's shoes and to empathize with the other generation. Enabling the Participants to Act in the "Drama Project 99" means:

1. Inhibitions to act and fears had to be reduced. Both threats to drama work were group-specific and generation-specific. People are only able to act when they feel confident and safe within the group. Especially older people sometimes perform strong inhibitions that need to be reduced.
2. The group had to be prepared to take over certain roles. They had to be playfully warmed-up. Only those who have a low level of fear of acting are able to improvise freely and to play role games.
3. The content of the fairy tale had to be familiar to the actors in order to have an intensive, creative work process. The material for the

drama should contain the topic of "young and old," which is supposed to make the actors more sensitive for one another.

Playful and Creative Work Process with the Topic "Old and Young"

From the beginning, the topic "old and young" played an important role in our work. Games designed to get to know each other, warm-up games, and improvisation exercises, all dealt with the principal subject of the project. The playful exchange of age and roles between young and old was important for the theatrical process as well as for the development of the production content. Special attention, therefore, was given to the instruction and understanding of the topic. Structured conversation and exchange between participants as well as individual observations, interactive games, improvisational exercises, and role play, all this helped in the process of sensitization.

A lively exchange among the members of the group about interests and life histories was initiated through *discussions*. Pictures from the childhood of the elders, their grandchildren, and photos of the young participants' grandparents helped to stimulate this exchange. The actors were instructed to closely observe old and young people in every-day situations and were encouraged to share their *observations* during the meetings.

Preparing Play and Content

A large part of the rehearsal time was spent for getting to know the "Fairy Tale of the Stolen Time," (this is the title of the epic form) and the story adapted for the production. Long before the first scene was developed, the group had worked with the fairy tale material. This took place in different ways. The fairy tale was read out loud, and, at a different time, recounted by the whole group. A large part of the improvisation exercises had to do with the content of the fairy tale. Even the warm-up games and oral exercises referred to the content. The playful work process with the fairy tale included all its characters, objects, animals and situations. In the performing games, even the water of the lake, the magic wand, trees and enchantment were treated theatrically. After weeks of learning the content and thread of action of the "Fairy Tale of the Stolen Time" and after the pleasure of acting was clearly awakened in all participants, the motivation of everybody to begin the production was extremely high. After this eight-week phase, which was intended to prepare for the actual rehearsal and production development, our work on the play began.

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2. The Process-Product Oriented Phase: Developing the Play

In this process-oriented phase, group formation, encouragement of acting and character improvisations stood in the foreground. Next, the "Drama Project 99" entered a more process-product oriented phase. This phase still was process-oriented as skill development and improvisation were still important. Nevertheless, it also had product-oriented elements such as the development and improvisation that now took place more purposefully with regard to the actual play production. In the process-oriented phase the group had learned to ad-lib, to improvise and to role-play. Now the group was faced with the task of using what they had learned and experienced to actually produce a drama. The idea was to develop a new play based on the "Fairy Tale of the Stolen Time" which the group had already intensively worked on during the initial phase of the project.

It has to be said that the production of the play "The Enchanted Forest Pleases Children and Adults Alike" (following a German TV-advertisement for sweets – the translator) was created jointly by the entire group. Text and characters were created by the actors and, if necessary, supported with ideas by the directors. The actors improvised, as best they could, their roles, and the directors clarified and explained the framework of the scene being rehearsed. The interpretation of the roles and the portrayal of a character on stage were not determined by a director alone but by the whole group. The ideas by the children and seniors were discussed and tried out on stage. When deemed to be good, these ideas were integrated into the plot. In the development of the scenes we worked systematically and chronologically. To create transitions from one scene to the next and in order to clarify the context, we had the actors repeat the already improvised material over and over while adding newly improvised scenes to the body of the play. The rehearsals were video taped and the developed text and plot were evaluated by the team of the directors. This way, the manuscript of the play grew from rehearsal to rehearsal and could be used as a screenplay.

Shaping Roles

The exchange of roles in the play was, on the one hand, supposed to serve as an artistic means for the production, and, on the other hand, work on the topic "Young and Old" during the developing phase of the play. The latter required empathy in circumstances of life, and in the abilities and deficits of young and old people. The actors who per-

formed the role-exchange on stage shared their experiences and observations regularly, looked for possibilities off portrayal on stage and partly imitated each other. Here the greatest empathy towards the situation and behavior of young and old in the project could be observed. This not only took place on stage, but during breaks as the children reflected and verbalized their role behavior: "I am not as fast (while playing tag), I am a granny." In the following section the development of scenes and text will be presented from a cross-generation point of view.

The Development of Scenes

For the development of scenes we offered short summaries of plots which were to be improvised by the group. The scenes were discussed briefly as most of the content was already known to the actors through the intensive work with the fairy tale material in the preparatory phase. Quite often the children supported the seniors to remember the plot and helped when questions arose. The development of scenes asked the group to find improvisations that could physically and mentally be carried out by everyone. After having performed these plots, they were evaluated and discussed with regard to their workability.

The children's idea for the seniors to play "horse and driver" with a skipping rope was rejected for reasons of embarrassment on the side of the elders. A compromise was found that only one senior should do the skipping. This constant negotiating of possible and impossible ideas required acceptance of the other person. The creation of alternatives indicated the willingness for cooperation between the generations in the project. Situations between old and young during the breaks, outside of the improvisations, were discussed as part of the play development, evaluated and integrated into the plot.

Development of the Script

The creation of the script demanded self-reflection and cooperation from each of the generations in the group. They were asked to help each other, which was of great importance especially for those actors who had to perform the age exchange. Old and young depended on each other. In the beginning of the project it was difficult for the children to develop texts for the adults, as they could not fall back upon already made experiences, as could the seniors who had been young once. In the course of the project, however, an increasing ability to improvise could be observed as a result of the close cooperation with the seniors and the imitation of their behavior. The four actors exchanged ideas in

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different scenes and helped each other develop the texts. They asked: "How would you express that as a child?" They took on spontaneous and natural reactions of the other generation and integrated them into their role play. Some text ideas, though, were not accepted by the seniors. For example, they explained that they would feel embarrassed using strong language in public.

An interesting discussion developed over the choice of an old song that should be sung in the play.

Two children began to argue whether the song "Alle meine Entchen" ("All my ducklings") was an old or a new song, or even a baby song. One senior solved the problem by recounting that she had sung this song as a child.

Here is another example of how it was possible to "translate" the dialogue between the generations into a dialogue of the play. The seriously meant exclamation of one senior, "In an instant I will stick a tape over your mouth," was played by a child in an improvisation. The senior was obviously embarrassed and reacted in a startled manner in the role of the child. The possibility of role exchange in this example shows how one's own behavior can be reflected. It demonstrates how the senior was able to imagine herself in the role of the child. This kind of reversal is possible in a cross-generation drama group. The reflection of one's own behavior and the opportunity to view its effect on others can lead to critical self-reflection and to behavior change.

3. The Product-Oriented Phase: Rehearsing the Play

Working on and rehearsing the play, which was developed by the group, took a large part of the project time. In order to run through the entire play before it was performed on April 26th 1998, we had eleven meetings including extra meetings in the intensive rehearsal week before the opening night. After the so far more process-oriented work, product-oriented activities now began to dominate. All participants, including the children, had the commonly shared goal of a successful performance in mind. Together we came up with a name for the play, "The Enchanted Forest Pleases Children and Grown-Ups Alike – a Play Based on the Life of Young and Old." As soon as the jointly created and loved "baby" had a name, the work turned rather serious. The approaching premier put a lot of pressure on the actors but also motivated them tremendously to rehearse well. Thus the project took absolute priority in the lives of all participants during the main rehearsing week and led to daily meetings on stage for quite some

hours. In order to be best prepared for the "big day" rehearsal was done in costumes, makeup, with props and lighting, all in the finished scenery of the play. The group was very concentrated and the discipline of the children was better than ever before. Markus and Annetta, known to everyone as the team leaders, began to take over the role of directors. Following the finished script and a blocking plan, created during the developing phase and including all stage movements, special attention was given to the text, expression, and movement of the actors. In the developing stage newly improvised scenes were added to finished scenes in order to gain routine. Now we had them act the entire play and interrupted only when something had to be improved. The actors were asked to make use of newly learned details, to follow the script, wait for their entrance, give the cues, wait for their own cues, and pay attention to the lighting. To maintain all these rules required an enormously high concentration, good memory and strong self-confidence of each actor. The children met these requirements much better than the oldest senior who was pushed to the limits of her memory. The children had to learn to show consideration for her slips and to individually react as necessary.

4. The Performance: The Enchanted Forest Pleases Everyone

After month of rehearsal, the play "The Enchanted Forest Pleases Children and Grown-ups Alike – a Play Based on the Life of Young and Old" had its premier on April 26th 1998 at six p.m. The premier was sold out. The audience, which was also across generations, included parents, grandparents, children and other guests who learned of the play through newspaper articles which had reported on the project. the Drama Project 99, therefore, had served in many ways to integrate entire families of different generations.

The actors were very concentrated. They paid attention to each other's acting, did not interrupt each other, and covered up minor slips. No one abandoned his/her role, and, under pressure, they all got really excited. Thus, the premier proved to be an absolute success. The audience laughed a lot and thanked the group with vigorous applause. The effort had been worth it. We all were overjoyed and very proud.

5. Finish: Strawberry Cake and Crisps

The end of "Drama Project 99" was celebrated in the theatre with a two-hour farewell party following the last performance. Markus and I had pre-

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pared something to drink and a few group members brought food. Liselotte (one of the seniors) contributed mince rolls (a Northern German specialty of raw minced meat on rolls – the translator), assuming self-assured that children nowadays would still eat something like that. A youth, Theresa, brought crisps for the children and diet strawberry cake for the seniors, commenting: "They don't eat crisps nor sugar, do they?" These two examples clearly show once again what had been observed during the entire group process: The generations perceived each other as being different from each other, however, they nevertheless integrated each other into the group. They opened up to the preferences and situations of the other person and acted accordingly.

IV. Conclusion

The "Drama Project 99" succeeded in bringing together seniors and children through theatre. Despite the differences between the generations and the conflicts which developed later on, it was possible to unite the group through process- and product-oriented work. This convergence made possible an intensive exchange between young and old. It can be assumed that the group process had a positive effect on the images and stereotypes the generations had of each other. The seniors proved to be cooperative and to be able to take the children in their work seriously and to accept them as

someone equal. The children showed that they could work in a concentrated way, and that they could show consideration for the older generation. These experiences in the project surely helped reduce prejudices.

The joint creation of a theatre play which dealt with the topic of being old and young and the exchange of roles by the different generations proved to be a suitable method. The actors had to open up a dialogue which focused on the topic of the play, they had to discuss the course of the scenes and negotiate their implementation. In this way, an intensive personal exchange was developed between the members of the different generations. The role-change in the play and the collaborative development of text and scenes offered the possibility of an intensive contact between the generations. Here the highest possible empathy between young and old could be observed. The children and seniors enabled themselves and each other to creatively look into the situations of being old and young today and to relate this experience their own life.

Cross-generation theatre combines the potential of people from very different age groups by providing them with an opportunity to develop mutual goals, and, with that, offers a forum to translate the goal of understanding each other better into action, thereby establishing a connection between old and young.

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Using Drama to Transform a Beginning Spanish Class An Ethnographic Report

Tim Collins

Zusammenfassung:

Tim Collins reflektiert über die besonderen Potenzen, die szenisches Arbeiten vor der Kamera für das Lernen besitzt. Als Beispiel dafür berichtet er von Verlauf und Ergebnissen eines Video-Projekts in seinem Anfängerkurs für Spanisch an der Universität. Collins geht dabei auf die verschiedenen Arbeitsphasen ein und bestimmt deren unterschiedliche Wichtigkeit für sprachliche und kulturelle Kommunikation. Dabei stellt sich heraus, daß das „Sich-Sehen“ auf dem Video eine zusätzliche Reflexionsebene schafft, die helfen kann, das Selbstbild der Lerner neu zu bestimmen

und Lernprozesse zu verlängern bzw. zu intensivieren.

Act 1

It's Wednesday, April 1, the tenth week of the semester of the Spanish 101 class I'm teaching at a major Midwestern university. I'm in my classroom with my students. Outside it's a chilly morning. Spring is late to arrive, and it's cloudy and gray. However, inside my classroom my students are in Barcelona, Spain, on a warm summer evening. The setting is a sidewalk café on Barcelona's

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Ramblas, a long pedestrian boulevard lined with newsstands, florists, cafés, pet shops, and tall shade trees. Some of my students come into view. Two young American women, Sharon and Patsy, are out for a walk on the Ramblas with a Spanish friend, Hugo. As the characters enter the scene, Hugo is explaining the Ramblas to them. He tells them that the Ramblas is built over an old riverbed and that nowadays it's a favorite place for people to stroll, go to a café, or meet before going out to dinner. They look at flowers at a florist's stand, buy a magazine at a newsstand, and watch a bird in one of the pet shops. Then they sit down at a table in a café, order drinks, and continue to chat in Spanish. Another Spanish male joins them, this one a self-imagined Don Juan named Omar. Omar tries to get to know the two females, and directs a series of *piropos* (a kind of sexist compliment some Hispanic males direct to females) to the two women. Sharon, the plainer of the two, pays more attention to Omar than her companion, Patsy, a tall, attractive blonde. Omar's *piropos* really annoy Patsy, so she just ignores them (and him), while Omar, frustrated that Patsy won't pay attention to him, tries even harder to get her attention. When Patsy warns Sharon that Omar is a Don Juan, a libertine, Sharon responds that she is a female libertine, a Doña Juana. Meanwhile, whenever Omar says another *piropo*, Hugo tries to change the subject so the women won't be annoyed. Then a flamenco guitarist comes and entertains the people in the café, and Omar tips him. Patsy and Sharon pay and leave because they have homework to do, rebuffing Omar's offer to drive them home. Before they go, the four of them make plans to get together over the weekend, but the females inform Omar that he needs to leave his *piropos* at home. I feel proud of my students because they are able to communicate effectively in Spanish.

Act 2

It's Thursday, April 2, and my students and I are in our classroom again. The students are watching TV. In fact, they are watching *themselves* on TV. They're watching the same scene from yesterday, one of three short plays that the students created and filmed themselves. The previous day's trip to Barcelona was no April Fool's Day joke. The students used the power of drama to transport themselves into a situation they might find themselves in while in Spain. Three groups of students each wrote and acted out short plays based upon one of

the dialogs in their textbook, *¿Habla Español?* (Allen, 1981). The class watches with interest as Patsy and Sharon chat with their Spanish friend Hugo. We laugh as Omar comes on to Patsy, only to find out that only the less-attractive Sharon is interested. Everyone listens as the flamenco guitarist performs a number. We feel relieved when the women find a way to ask Omar to stop saying *piropos* without losing his friendship. When the tape is over, we all applaud. Everyone is proud of his or her work, and in a subsequent discussion we talk about how much everyone learned about Spain. The students and I are amazed at how good their Spanish is after only ten weeks. They know enough Spanish to socialize with friends, order drinks, and understand song lyrics. They even know enough to flirt with each other and to put an end to the flirting when it makes them uncomfortable. The students also tell me that this activity really changed how they viewed themselves and their abilities in Spanish. They said that until now they had never imagined themselves capable of using Spanish for any real-world purposes. What happened in my Spanish 101 class? How did the students create their plays, and how did the creative process of writing, rehearsing, and performing short plays result in language acquisition? The process began four weeks before the performance.

Act 3 (Flashback)

My class was one section of Spanish 101, the first of a sequence of four courses that satisfy the university's foreign language requirement. I was one of nearly twenty teaching assistants teaching Spanish 101 that semester. Each TA used the same book, *¿Habla Español?* (Allen, 1981), followed the same syllabus, and gave the same exams. The textbook and class followed a grammar-based syllabus, and the book included many grammar exercises and activities for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

I chose to have my students do this project to enliven the class. I wanted to give them the opportunity to see themselves using Spanish in order to gain a sense that they could communicate effectively in Spanish. I also wanted to bring a greater sense of realism to the class by having the students move about, use gestures and facial expressions, and employ real objects. I also wanted them to create an end product – the videotape – they could be proud of.

To get started on the project, I got approval from the supervisor of Spanish 101 and then told my

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class. When I informed my students, they replied that the project appealed to them because it was a change of pace. They said that no one had ever offered them the opportunity to be videotaped in Spanish, and they were curious. To organize the project, I prepared an assignment sheet that listed the roles for group members (director, scriptwriters, actors, and actresses) and gave due dates for scripts, rehearsals, and meetings with me. The teams prepared three written products in Spanish: a script treatment and two drafts of the script. I used the treatments to make sure that the skits would make sense. I checked the scripts to ensure that the language was natural and idiomatic. I had students meet with me to discuss scripts and hold a dress rehearsal.

The Creative Process

The creative process of writing, rehearsing, and acting provided many benefits.

Creating the Scripts

The process of writing the scripts called for creativity and knowledge of target culture. The students quickly found out that in order to expand the dialog in the textbook they had to get more information on Spain. Therefore, the scriptwriters went to the library to do some research on Barcelona, the Ramblas, and Spanish customs. Information they found out included facts about the Ramblas, such as how the boulevard was built over an old riverbed, that it was lined with cafés, and that there were florists and pet shops along it. The students were surprised about the pet shops. I explained that the shops were in large kiosks, and the owners sold birds, small animals, and pet supplies. The students also researched Spanish music and found out that *tunas*, the madrigal singers referenced in the script in the book, did not commonly perform in cafés on the Ramblas. They found out that though flamenco was not typical of Barcelona either, that style of music was performed in cafés on the Ramblas, so substituted that type of music in their scripts.

The students found *piropos* an interesting custom, so decided to explore the male/female relationships in the dialog. Thus, they emphasized the role of Omar, increasing his lines and the intensity with which he came on to the females. Also, while in the textbook the females do not respond positively to Omar, in the class's version, one of the females leads him on, declaring that she is a libertine, too. The females, nevertheless, put a stop to Omar's advances without losing his friendship,

thus showing a way that the Americans can deal with this custom in a way that allows them to remain friends.

Finally, since the students had written the dialogs themselves, the language was meaningful to them. Thus, rather than repeating dialogs that somebody had created for them, the students (many for the first time) were actually saying an extended conversation that they had created themselves about topics they chose to talk about.

Rehearsal

The experience of rehearsing the plays supported the students foreground the role of rehearsal in a broader arena of linguistic behavior and realize its helpfulness to the language acquisition process. When we discussed rehearsal, the students said that the fact that they rehearsed somehow delegitimized their success in their eyes. This led to a discussion about ways we use rehearsal in everyday life. I asked students to name times they had gone over what they were going to say in a stressful situation. Students named situations such as asking someone out on a date. The students all agreed that the rehearsal was helpful in those situations and part of everyday life. This helped them come to the realization that the practice they did in Spanish was not unnatural, but rather a technique they used in their first language that was helpful in building fluency in their new language. The discussion of rehearsal also helped the students figure out the kinds of rehearsal that were helpful in building fluency. They said that clearly the way to build fluency was not oral grammar drills but rather conversation practice with partners. This was an important realization, because many times language learners focus excessively on grammar instead of also doing activities that build fluency.

Performance

Several performance aspects enlivened the dialogs and made them richer and more realistic than classroom activities. For example, the students brought in artifacts such as props (tables, chairs, glasses, cups, a magazine, a guitar, and a birdcage), costumes (a low cut dress for Patsy, a jacket and tie for Hugo), and make-up (a mustache for Omar). In addition, the students used movement and gesture. They walked down the Ramblas, pointed at a bird for sale, and sat down at the café. The students used money to pay for a magazine and refreshments. Omar leered at the females, Sharon looked embarrassed, and Patsy returned his leers.

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Finally, the students brought in sound effects – an audio-tape of a flamenco guitarist. Performing the plays also brought a new dimension to the class's language acquisition – the opportunity to try new roles and personas in their new language. In putting on the skits, the students could take on different characters, such as flirts (Omar and Patsy), a prude (Sharon), or a gentleman (Hugo). The students could experiment with new behaviors (such as *machismo*) and new customs (such as going to a sidewalk café). The students seemed to enjoy the different roles that they took on. In many ways, learning a new language involves a change of self – taking on a new identity and culture. Taking on new dramatic personas for a brief time allowed students to try out new "Spanish" characters. Being different people for a short time freed the students to see how the new personas fit and to speak from the safe place of roles, rather than having to put their English-speaking selves on the line in front of their peers.

Viewing

Viewing the tape was also a transforming experience for the students. In this case, they were transformed into the audience and were able to have an unusual "out-of-body experience" in which they could view themselves performing in Spanish. After watching the tape, the students universally expressed amazement at their proficiency in Spanish. Several students told me that they had never believed that they would ever be able to express themselves in normal social situations in Spanish. They said that this experience convinced them that they could indeed use Spanish for purposeful communication. Students' reactions to watching the tape gave new credence to the old saying that "seeing is believing." The students were for the first time provided with concrete evidence that they could learn Spanish and become good at it. The students also realized that learning Spanish was fun. In the weeks following the taping I noticed that students were much more willing to participate in class. They spoke up, were more willing to take chances, were not afraid to make errors, and enjoyed class more.

Epilogue

The information in this article, though anecdotal, provides compelling evidence that drama brought tremendous benefits to my Spanish class. The students learned a lot about Spain and Spanish culture, developed their language skills, found new techniques they could use to improve their Spanish, and developed a more positive attitude toward

language learning. To do this activity, students had to spend about four weeks preparing. Though most of the time was out of class, the investment of time was needed to do the research, write the scripts, rehearse, and so on. Over the course of those four weeks, my students read and practiced several long dialogs and multiple short ones during our regular class sessions. However, those dialogs had none of the impact of these three dialogs. Thus, this activity is a reminder that quality, not quantity is the key to effective pedagogy. More importantly, this activity is a good illustration of the transformative power of drama. Artifacts such as clothes and drinking glasses, usually absent from classrooms, were all present the day of the taping. The learners moved around and used gestures and facial expressions, something they rarely did in normal lessons (with the possible exception of expressions of boredom). Finally, the performance aspects of the project allowed the learners to transform themselves, first into new characters in order to try out new personas in their new language, and second into their own audience so that they could see themselves succeeding in their new language. Under the guise of drama, my students could try out fictive representations of themselves in their new language without putting their own self-identities on the line. The guise of drama also freed students up to take on the actions, artifacts, and attire of people in the new culture actually using the new language to accomplish real-world outcomes, such as learning local customs, ordering in a café, and socializing with friends. It is indeed ironic that the medium of drama, which essentially represents a fiction, made the language learning experience much more compellingly real and vivid than the allegedly real world of classroom language learning. Moreover, the students gained self-confidence because they for the first time saw themselves as successful in using Spanish to obtain real-world outcomes. Though most of my students were hard-working and had often been successful in terms of getting good grades, they had never had the opportunity to see that their ability in Spanish might lead to real-world payoffs. Luckily, the benefits of using drama in L2 classrooms are available to all teachers, even those who do not have access to video recording equipment. All teachers can make creating and acting out dialogs a regular project. However teachers need to allow adequate time for preparation, including rehearsal. In my class, students could not use class time to work on the project because the supervisor of Spanish 101 prohibited it. However, this project shows that the planning, writing, and rehearsing were valuable contributions to the quality of the

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students' work and merited class time. Finally, in order to make projects like this work, teachers have to be mindful of students' needs. The project cannot make excessive demands on student time nor can the performance aspect inject so much anxiety that students feel inhibited. Instead, teachers need to monitor students' workloads and emotional levels so that the experience is a productive, powerful, and positive one for everyone.

References

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About the author

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Adapting the Legislative Theatre in a German Comprehensive School

Stephanie Kleinwegner

Zusammenfassung:

Stephanie Kleinwegner berichtet von einem Theaterexperiment mit SchülerInnen der Jahrgangsstufe 13 einer Gesamtschule in Bochum, das mit dem Ziel durchgeführt wurde, die Anwendbarkeit der theaterpädagogischen Konzeption Boals für den schulischen Kontext auszuprobieren. Dafür wurden Szenen des Legislativen Theaters entwickelt und bearbeitet. Das Projekt diente außerdem inhaltlich dazu, in den Beteiligten ein Bewusstsein für gesellschaftliche Unterdrückungsmechanismen zu vermitteln. Nicht nur *geistig*, wie sonst in der Schule üblich, sondern auch *leiblich* sollten die SchülerInnen diese Mechanismen erleben, begreifen und darüber hinaus in der Gruppe Lösungswege und Alternativen zu den bewusst gewordenen Problemen erproben.

Hamlet says in his famous speech to the actors that theatre is a mirror in which may be seen the true image of nature, of reality. I wanted to penetrate this mirror, to transform the image I saw in it and to bring that transformed image back to reality: to realise the image of my desire. I wanted it to be possible for the spectators of the Forum Theatre to transgress, to break the conventions, to enter the mirror of a theatrical fiction, rehearse forms of struggle and then return to reality with the images of their desires. This discontent was the genesis of the Legislative Theatre in which the citizen makes the law through the legislator.

(Boal 1998, p. 9-10)

Summary

Dieser Artikel handelt von einem Theaterexperiment, durchgeführt mit Schülerinnen und Schülern einer Jahrgangsstufe 13 (Englisch-Grundkurs) an der Gesamtschule Erich-Kästner-Schule in Bochum-Querenburg, im Rahmen einer Staatsarbeit im Fach Pädagogik. Die Arbeit trägt den Titel „Die theaterpädagogische Konzeption Augusto Boals und ihre Anwendung in deutschen pädagogischen Kontexten“. Nach einer eingehenden Sensibilisierungsphase, die aus verschiedenen Theaterübungen nach Augusto Boal (vgl. Boal 1989) und Keith Johnstone (vgl. Johnstone 1995, 1998) bestand, wurden Szenen des Legislativen Theaters entwickelt und bearbeitet. Das Projekt diente dazu, in den Schülerinnen und Schülern ein Bewusstsein für Unterdrückungsmechanismen in der Gesellschaft sowie in der Politik zu vermitteln. Nicht nur rein *geistig*, wie sonst in der Schule üblich, sondern auch *leiblich* sollten die Schüler diese Mechanismen erleben, begreifen und darüber hinaus in der Gruppe Lösungswege und Alternativen zu den bewusst gewordenen Problemen erproben. Drei Szenen mit politischem Hintergrund wurden von den Schülerinnen und Schülern entwickelt. Dieser Artikels beschäftigt sich eingehend mit der Szene „Ausländerwahlrecht“.

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Bei der Arbeit mit dem Legislativen Theater haben die Schüler gezeigt, daß ihnen nicht nur Probleme bewußt geworden sind, die für sie zuvor nicht greifbar waren, sondern sie konnten auch am eigenen Leib erleben, daß es zu jedem vorhandenen Problem mehrere Lösungswege gibt. Des weiteren hat sich die von vornherein schon gute Klassenstruktur noch weiter verbessert, so daß die Schülerinnen und Schüler bald die Angst verloren, vor den andern im Sinne Boals "zu-schauzuspielen". In den eingereichten Stellungnahmen haben die Schüler ihre positiven Erfahrungen mit dem Legislativen Theater bezeugt.

The Conception of a Theatre Project in School

This article deals with a theatre project using Augusto Boal's conception of the Theatre of the Oppressed (below TO), planned and carried out June 2nd until September 11th, 1998 with students of the Erich-Kästner-Schule. This comprehensive school is situated in the Ruhr area of Germany, in Bochum-Querenburg. The article is based on my thesis for the German state examination (university degree) entitled „Die theaterpädagogische Konzeption Augusto Boals und ihre Anwendung in deutschen pädagogischen Kontexten“. For the project I worked together with three different classes, focusing on different aspects. In one group (11th grade) the focus was the *Forum Theatre*, which was applied to the work with short stories, in another group scenes of the *Legislative Theatre* (below LT) were developed and discussed. In this group, a senior class of English (13th grade), there were sixteen participants, seven male and nine female students. According to the teacher it was a rather homogeneous group with most students interested in new ideas and already used to class projects. The students worked on the project regularly during their English class, i.e. three to four hours a week. For Augusto Boal the method of the LT is the political version of the *Forum Theatre* (see Boal 1998, p. 20). Whereas in the *Forum Theatre* the spectator is expected to turn into a spect-actor and rehearse possible solutions to social problems presented on stage, in the LT he expected to find alternative solutions to political injustice. Due to the fact that it deals with political and social problems it could well be integrated in the curriculum of the thirteenth grade, as this schedules "social problems of society" for the first quarter of the year.

Boal is convinced that "theatre is the human language *par excellence*" (Boal 1998, p. 7). It creates dialogue not only between actor and spectator or the people and the legislator but, if applied in school, as well between teacher and student. Because of this dialogical relationship between students and teacher the students could act out possible solutions to problems and thus attained knowledge by using body and language.

The method of the *Forum Theatre* has been explained on various different occasions. Therefore I regard this method to be known to the reader. The LT, however, is the newest development by Augusto Boal. For this reason, and for the reason that it might be helpful to give a short introduction before the practical work is explained, it will be described briefly in the following.

The Legislative Theatre

"The purpose of Legislative Theatre is to conscientize politicians and voters about key issues, create a grass-roots response to issues and encourage the public to participate in the democratic process."

(Mixed Company 27.06.1998)

The development of the LT is based on Boal's work as *vereador* in the town council of Rio de Janeiro from January 1993 until December 1996. Fritz Letsch writes:

"Die Ziele seines Mandats waren die Demokratisierung der Politik durch Theater und die Entwicklung einer neuen Beziehung zwischen Gesetzgebenden und Bürgern. Die Gestaltung der Politik durch Theater war gleichzeitig Ziel, Thema und Erfüllung des Projekts."

(Letsch 30.08.1999a)

A major reason for Boal to present the first performances of the LT after his return to Brazil in 1986¹ was the fact that Brizola, being the governor of Rio, was forbidden to talk in public about the political condition of his country on behalf and in favour of Darcy Ribeiro, who was at the same time running for a seat as governor because:

"[only] the candidates not already in office could speak. But Brizola had made some recordings, so what we did was this: four of us would drive to a public place and then one would get out of the car and start playing guitar and people would gather. Then another would get out and put on the record of Brizola. And people would come close to see what was happening. Then we would make it louder and people would ask: 'But why doesn't he appear on TV and say this?' And we would tell them that he was forbidden by the central government."

(Cohen-Cruz 1995, S. 227)

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In the beginning of the LT Boal led nineteen theatre groups, who have supplied the town council with ideas of the citizens and 50 Green Papers to be discussed, some of which actually have been agreed upon:

„Wir haben acht Gesetze zur Verabschiedung gebracht: Ein Plan zum Zeugenschutz 1) (der erste dieser Art in Brasil), Spezialisten für die Geriatrie 2) an den staedtischen Krankenhaeusern, Hilfen für behinderte Menschen in der U-Bahn und in der Stadt, ein Gesetz zum Schutz vor Diskriminierung wegen der sexuellen Orientierung, etc. Mehr als 30 Gesetze sind noch zu diskutieren, unter ihnen eines zum Schutz der psychischen Gesundheit und ein Gesetz gegen geheime Abstimmung im Parlament.“

(Santos/Felix u.a. 30.08.1999)

Methodically, the LT works just like the *Forum Theatre*. Its main purpose is the conscientisation of social and political problems. A scene about a problem is worked out and presented to the people who are thought to have to deal with this particular problem, usually at a public place. Furthermore it is hoped to reach politicians in order to make them think about the issues presented. The aim of this is the construction of a dialogue between the two sides who confront each other through discussion.

The LT-scene ends when the protagonist finds him- or herself in a situation which at first seems impossible to solve. Afterwards the scene is repeated. This time the Joker – who is not in the actual scene – asks the spectators to think about the improvisation, to turn into spect-actors and then try out possible solutions by taking over the role of the protagonist. In contrast to the *Forum Theatre*, though, the LT clearly deals with a political problem, e.g. with a law which has not been passed but according to the actors should have been.

Besides Brazil the LT has been introduced to various other countries world-wide. In 1996 Augusto Boal together with Fritz Letsch led a workshop in Munich, one scene resulting from which dealt with the topic "homosexuality and marriage" concerning the political aspect of refugees searching for political asylum.

Aims of the Theatre Experiment in School

After this short introduction to the concept of the LT, I shall now come to its practical adaptation in school. The basis of the work with the TO is a dialogical relationship between actor and spect-actor:

"The Theatre of the Oppressed [...] has [...] the intention to democratise the stage space – not to destroy it! – rendering the relationship between actor and spectator transitive, creating dialogue, activating the spectator and allowing him or her to be transformed into 'spect-actor'"

(Boal 1998, p. 67)

This dialogical relationship, in which both sides help each other develop ideas and act out problem solutions, can be applied well to school work. Here, we do not only deal with dialogue between actor and spect-actor but also between students and teacher.

I have stated above that a major concern of the LT is the conscientization of social problems and oppression. For school purposes the LT can therefore help the students experience social and political problems – that are usually only *talked* about in class – themselves, physically. And more than that – in the LT the students can even try out alternative solutions for the problem. In reality solutions are prepared by politicians, who generally have no direct contact with the people confronted with the problems.

The vivid discussion about learners' autonomy and project learning shows that body, mind and language are considered equally important for the learning process. These three aspects are made use of in theatre work, i.e. the *body* as a means to express the *mind* and *language* as a generic term for the use of *body* and *mind*, according to Boal, for whom "theatre is the human language *par excellence*" (Boal 1998, p. 7).

It is the aim of theatre work as well as project-oriented lessons to start a conscientisation process, as De Costa puts it:

"In Augusto Boal's terms, spectator-oriented theatrical productions are a means of self expression that can assist those in attendance to alter their outlook from a state of passivity – which has been the traditional norm for the spectator in the theatre – to one of active, protagonist participation in the dramatic action, and, by extension, in community action. In this sense, theatre is at once theatre for conscientisation, theatre for education, and theatre for liberation."

(De Costa 1992, p. 124)

A second concern of the theatre experiment was to achieve a better – a dialogical – understanding among the students and among students and teachers. This aim is based on the belief that learning is easier in a positive, dialogical atmosphere between the participants of this process, i.e. students and teachers.

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The project was divided into three different phases: an introduction phase in which the students were mentally and physically introduced to the topic, a work-out phase in which they rehearsed the scenes they had chosen and planned to present to the group and a presentation phase. During the experiment the students participated in planning and realising the project lessons. My job was to help the students with their research on problems, to help them rehearse the scenes, try out different rehearsal techniques and to take on the role of the "joker", who leads the discussion about the presentation and animates the spectators into turning into spect-actors and helps to find possible solutions to the respective problems.

First Phase: Sensitisation

The focus of the first lessons was a general introduction into theatre work and the method of the TO. The lesson started with some warm-ups, e.g. "cross and circle"², or "sound circle". In the latter improvised sounds are produced by one participant and repeated clockwise by the others. These exercises help to conscientize the own body anew and enhance the preparedness to actually dare to act with and for the other students. After the general warm-up lessons I introduced the concept "status" by explaining and trying out an improvised shift of status. As in a scene of *Forum Theatre* we need for this exercise at least two people, one having a high, the other having a low status. The aim of this exercise is to change the high into a low and the low into a high status within the scene. The scene, which was played in class, was that of a boss who humiliates his secretary telling her that she is too slow and therefore incompetent. After a while the secretary, prior having always been silent, tells her boss that she is underpaid, always degraded and never rewarded for good work. Telling these things the secretary gets up from her chair. In doing so she even physically makes clear that she has grown in status. Whereas the usual warm-ups deal primarily with the conscientisation of the body, the status games really help the students develop scenes. Here, the natural allocation of status in real life is mirrored and a possibility of change can be rehearsed. Status scenes are already very similar to forum scenes because they mirror real life. Status can be found in every situation of life, be it politics, school, work or even among two best friends.

The fact that the students in this class, unlike those in other classes in which I worked on a similar project, accepted the alternative school method

easily and were motivated to try out all exercises with no major problems, made it possible for me to introduce the method of the *Forum Theatre* early. Warm-ups like "mirror-games" in which actors imitate their partners in everything they do, were tried out. Mirror games help the participants to look at each other very closely and investigate the partner's behaviour and movement accurately. This way the perception of the other is trained.

After the warm-ups the actual method of the TO could be applied. A first statue could be built, the theme of which was "school-life". Two students represented teachers, two others students. Having finished the statue, the other students in class changed it into the *real picture*, which showed the two teachers raising a reprimanding finger to the students. The following *ideal picture* of this situation, which was presented afterwards, showed the teachers and the students in a circle holding hands. The scene was followed by reflection. The "students" reported that they had acted in the scene as if it had been real life. The "teachers" of the *real picture* explained that they had incorporated two of their teachers who were regarded as too much authoritarian. It could easily be seen that the students were really surprised that they – although not willing – had brought on stage a part of their life and thus a problem which affected them. After this *Statue Scene* the first *Forum Theatre* experiments could be started. The class split into two groups voluntarily, one of which stayed in the classroom, the other of which went to the room next door. This way, both groups could develop their scenes independently. Having rehearsed the two scenes intensively, the first group presented theirs: a scene in which a woman travelling in a tram is humiliated due to her disfigured face. In the first repetition of the scene the student who replaced the protagonist started abusing and humiliating the other passengers as well. This solution was not accepted. Thus, one student pointed out the possibility of several solutions to a certain conflict.

By reflecting the scene the students already showed that they had started becoming conscious of the fact that oppression (often regarded as a typically Third World-problem) exists in our own surrounding. At the same time they started developing strategies for problem solving in the group. It seemed to have become clear that the *Forum Theatre* deals with problems which affect the students' own society.

After the rehearsal of the first forum scene the summer holidays started, so that the work-out phase could not take place until after the summer break.

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Second Phase: Work-out

In the first two lessons after the summer holidays the method and the aims of the TO were summarised. Moreover, another *Forum Theatre* scene was planned to be produced because it had been six weeks since the students had acted the last time. For the warm-ups we tried out word associations and a "one-word story" – a story told clockwise with everybody saying only one word. The warm-up was followed by the development of one scene, in which one student was discriminated against due to her non-fashionable clothes. Afterwards the class was divided into three subgroups, each of which was explained a special rehearsal technique³. About half an hour later the three groups played their scenes for the others.

One group used the "analytical rehearsal of motivation"-mode. The scene they played was dominated by the emotions "shy" and "envious". Four young women suppress a fifth one because of her outsider-status, i.e. not being dressed according to their style. The spectators explained that the oppression in the scene was not as obvious in a "shy" atmosphere as in an "envious" atmosphere:

The project was now once more interrupted by a week long field trip to different destinations. For this reason the next lesson began with a group (re)integration warm-up in which the students welcomed each other back (see Biederbick/Haarmann 1995p. 24 ff.). They told each other shortly what they had experienced and how they felt after this break from school. For this warm-up the students made use not only of their language but also with body in order to communicate, e.g. by touching each other knee to knee when saying "hallo". The *Forum Theatre* scenes that had been attempted a week before were discussed and repeated again.

"Look at this ugly duckling"



After this long period of becoming acquainted with acting as well as with Augusto Boal's methods of spect-acting, the scenes to be rehearsed finally turned into political ones, so that the LT could start. One whole lesson was needed to sort out themes that everybody found interesting and worthwhile. In the end three possible topics were accepted. The students decided to work out the scenes in the same groups as before, since they had got used to these line-ups. The first group decided to work on a scene about the problem of "homosexuality and marriage", the second one went for the "legalisation of marijuana for ill people", and the third one chose "the foreigner's right to vote". I think that the third topic serves the aspect "body, language and intercultural understanding" best. Therefore, this will be explained in greater detail. The groups started the work-out of the scenes by researching their respective problems. The "foreigner's vote" group went to the library to have a look at the statute book in order to find out what it actually says about the problem at hand. Afterwards the first brainstorming about the scene took place:

The setting is a polling station. A Turkish man queues up in the line of the voters. When it is his turn to vote he finds out that – because he is not German – his name is not on the list. He starts quarrelling with the polling officer. The argument is often interrupted by xenophobic comments of some of the German voters. A change of citizenship is no considerable solution for the protagonist. He leaves the polling station disappointed.

The aim of the following lesson was to work on the characters in the scenes according to the exercises Boal suggests for this reason (see Boal, 1995, p. 180). This time's rehearsal exercise was to cast the three most important roles – the Turk, the polling officer and the xenophobic German – three times with respectively different actors. This exercise should help the students to experience different positions and to empathise with the role of the different characters.

During the next lesson the three groups rehearsed their scenes again, this time using the *Stop-and Think*-method⁴, which gives the students the possibility to express whatever they have in mind about the scene or about other areas, without regarding the natural *Cop in the Head* (See Boal 1995, p. 40 ff.). This technique caused problems for some students. One student reported that she could not ver-

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balise her thoughts easily, because they were always confused and had hardly anything to do with the scene itself. This is a problem which appears frequently. The method supports free expression of opinion because thoughts are often suppressed by a self-made censorship. The purpose of the *Stop-and-Think* method is to be able to express these oppressed thoughts. Boal developed this technique mainly for the *Rainbow of Desire*-method because here, the free expression of thoughts is an important aspect to get freed from the suppressing *Cop in the Head*. Boal explains:

"Everything that is conscious is or can be verbalised. But, in the very time this verbalisation – this expression of our thoughts, emotions or sensations in words – is taking place, in the time it takes us give voice to, to articulate these words, our brains continue to produce thoughts. And, however fast we verbalise, new thoughts arise, thoughts that remain un verbalised. This technique allows us – theatrically, aesthetically – to 'fix the moment' and to verify all the thoughts, layer upon layer, that are active at any given moment."

(Boal 1995, p. 174)

Third Phase: Presentation and Reflection

In the presentation phase, which followed the expanded work-out, all three scenes were succeeded by a vivid discussion but the "foreigner's vote" scene was discussed most thoroughly. I suppose that this was the case because it was the scene that came closest to the participants' real life. Especially in a comprehensive school there are many foreign students, who find themselves directly confronted with this problem.

The scene was repeated twice. In the first repetition the student, who replaced the protagonist, reacted very aggressively towards the polling officer. The officer, however, made clear that it was not his fault that the Turk could not vote. Another actor called the Turk an "aggressive foreigner". After all, the scene could not be ended in a positive way. As it was to be expected the students were not happy with this version of the scene. In the second repetition the student, who took over the protagonist's role, suggested to switch roles with the antagonist within the scene. So the actors did. This seemed to convince the antagonist because he experienced how the foreigner felt. The spectators as well as the actors liked this solution a lot. But they were also sure that in reality a scene like this would hardly take place. The students realised that in Germany one needs more ways to

a better intercultural understanding in society. This understanding is a requirement for an amendment in legislation. Everybody agreed that there should be a change in legislation. All students knew of course that there had been a discussion in the Bundestag for a while in the run of the election campaign. The Social Democrats (SPD) had been planning to pass a new law concerning the right to have two citizenships and therefore to be allowed to vote in the home country as well as in the country of residence. Unfortunately, after all this law was not passed due to protests among German voters. The students considered that these protests resulted from the lack willingness of many Germans to communicate with the foreigners and thus to understand them.

In the last double lesson (2nd September 1998) the class worked out petition letters to be sent to the Bundestag. These letters described the political problems the students had been working on and suggested alternatives. In this same lesson I collected the students' statements about the work we had done together during the last couple of weeks. This was the main part of the reflections phase from which I could see what the students had learned and whether they had appreciated the teaching and learning method applied – one that uses theatre to make people think and learn or one that uses physical performance to make politics. It increases the awareness of social and political injustice by letting us experiencing injustice with the own body and mind.

The statements show that the students have reached an intercultural understanding especially in the scene described above. By dealing with this problem they have learned to feel and act as foreigners. In the scene they took on the role of the foreigner

"I'm afraid your name is not on the list!"



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scenes they rehearsed were decided themselves, e.g. by collecting information about political discussions from the news, papers or from the statute book.

As it is mentioned in several statements, the project has brought about an improvement of the class dynamics as well as a growth of the students' self-confidence. On the one hand it has helped the students to conscientize their own body but on the other hand it also has helped the students realise physical boundaries, which they had not known of before. This became clear with Boal's exercises "circle and cross" or "slow-motion race". By practising these exercises the students learned that things, which seem easy at first, might turn out to be rather difficult.

In the beginning of the project some students found it difficult to actually act in front of their class mates. These initial uncertainties, however, diminished quickly while getting used to use the body in the learning process. From lesson to lesson it became easier to motivate the students. In the end of the experiment everybody was convinced by the positive results, with regard to the learning process, a learning and rehearsing for reality. One student especially summarised the process of conscientisation which took place in the course of the project:

„Meiner Meinung nach war das Theater spielen und die Lockerungsübungen eine gute Sache. Da sie einen zum Nachdenken gebracht haben, über Themen, die sonst einen nicht so beschäftigen.“⁵

The students rewarded the scenes, which had resulted from their own opinions, with a high motivation and vivid participation. They mirrored the students' concern and gave them a reason to think about problems of which they had not yet become aware. Moreover the students commended that they could choose the topics to be dealt with themselves:

„Generell fand ich die Theaterspiele sehr gut, vor allem war ich davon begeistert, daß wir uns die Themen (Ausländerwahlrecht' z.B.) selber aussuchen konnten. Dadurch wurde es sehr interessant. Besonders die Idee zum Schluß nun einen Gesetzesvorschlag zu entwerfen finde ich sehr gut.“

In the students' opinions it becomes obvious that the LT has indeed caused a conscientisation of social injustice and moreover that during the project the students learned things they can use in their further life, e.g. how to act in job interviews or how to behave in problematic situations:

„Ich denke das wir durch Ihre Hilfe, Fähigkeiten entdeckt haben, nämlich durch das Improvisieren. Man muß sich schnell auf andere einstellen. Vielleicht sogar gut für ein Bewerbungsgespräch.“

Some time ago there was a vivid discussion in Germany concerning adoption of Boal's term "Theatre of the Oppressed" to German contexts. In this context Fritz Letsch suggested the term „Reale Theaterarbeit“ (see Letsch 30.08.1999b). In my examination thesis I stated that I think this term neither covers innovative possibilities of this theatre method, nor the actors' physical activity and experience. Thus, prior to the project at the Erich-Kästner-Schule I suggested the term "Theatre of the undiscovered possibilities" (Theater der unentdeckten Möglichkeiten; 1998, p. 20). But after the project I soon considered a yet different term. Inspired by a student's statement, in which it was mentioned that because of the theatre the student had discovered physical abilities, which she had not known of before, i.e. the ability of physically experiencing problem-solving, even for political purposes (see the statement above), I suggested the term "Theatre of the undiscovered abilities" (Theater der unentdeckten Fähigkeiten; (see 1998, p.149). This term implies Boal's opinion that there is the ability to be an actor in every person, and that the only problem with people is that they do not know about it.

Up to now it seems as if the theatre project at the Erich-Kästner-Schule in Bochum worked out without causing any problems. This of course was not the case because we indeed had to face some negative aspects as well. First of all it is not easy to plan and to run a project in class. The debate about project learning and problem oriented learning in school has occupied many people for decades (see especially Bastian/Gudjons, 1988; Meyer 1994; Scheller 1987, 1998). But even though nowadays project learning and learners autonomy is highly recommended, it is hardly ever realised, especially due to the packed curriculum. Although theoretically the project in class should be suggested by the students it is usually bound to the curriculum and therefore suggested by the teacher. In the case of the LT-project, however, it was initially my idea to run it, but nevertheless it was the students who chose the topics to be dealt with and who planned the further steps. It was rather a coincidence that the project even fit directly into the curriculum, which demanded the topic "social problems of society". The scenes that were presented all dealt with certain problems of society. Therefore the project can be regarded as a practical and interactive adaptation of the curriculum.

A further problem, however, was that of the limited time that was allowed for the project. A lesson in German school usually lasts only 45 minutes. Considering the need of a warm-up phase in every meeting, even a double lesson is hardly sufficient

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to really achieve what was planned. It frequently happened that just as the students had a good idea for a scene the lesson was over and the next one was in some cases five days later.

One last problem was that the rehearsed scenes were not presented in public. This was because the students had to start studying for the tests which had to be written soon. Nevertheless they have written Green Papers for the authority which shows their initiative and willingness to work against the social and political injustice that they had become aware of during the experiment.

Despite these problems the project still can be regarded as successful. Regarding the matter of intercultural understanding it can be stated that, although the students were not directly asked to develop a scene with an intercultural theme, they nevertheless did. This shows that intercultural understanding is a major concern of the students. They have shown that they are interested in politics and more than that, also in politics concerning foreigners. Although they can't make laws themselves they have learned that at least they can show the legislators their interest, they can show the legislator that they do care for social and political injustice even though this injustice is not obvious at first sight. This positive aspect of the learning process that has taken place among the is expressed by a student in the final statement:

„Meiner Meinung nach waren diese ‚Theater-Stunden‘ ganz schön effektiv, denn ich hatte, eben durch improvisierte gespielte Szenen, den Eindruck, daß man durch solch eine Art von Theaterstück einiges für persönliche – möglicherweise noch kommenden Situationen – lernen kann, spontan und ‚improvisiert‘ reagieren zu müssen. [...] Es war [...] für mich sehr interessant, sich einmal mit unterschiedlichen Persönlichkeiten (Theaterrollen) auseinanderzusetzen, diese sich ‚zu eigen‘ zu machen und sie darzustellen (bzw. es zumindest zu versuchen!).“

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Notes

¹ In 1964, after the second military strike in Brazil, Boal (like many other Brazilians who had been regarded as subversive to the military system) were tortured and forced into exile. Boal, e.g. lived in other south American countries, like Peru, and later on in Europe.

² First the participants are told to draw a circle in the air with one arm. After that they are told to draw a cross into the air with the other arm. These exercises are not difficult to perform. But as soon as the participants are told to do the two exercises at the same time they usually find out that it is very hard to perform – and that they have reached their personal limits.

³ Boal suggests several different rehearsal techniques, e.g. the 'analytical rehearsal of motivation', in which a scene is played in different moods, e.g. "love" or "hate". Here the actors solely concentrate on the emotion in a particular moment, so that a certain character can be changed and analysed more easily (see Boal 1995, p. 180). A second mode is the "analytical rehearsal of style", in which a scene is placed in a certain style or genre, e.g. "science fiction" or "romance", so that sometimes, by changing the "style" of a real-life scene, essential elements can be discovered which this style was hiding (Boal 1995, p. 180).

⁴ In the stop and think method the joker stops the scene whenever he finds it interesting to hear what is really in the actors' mind. When the scene is stopped, the actors one after the other express anything that is in their mind, no matter whether it is of major importance or not (see Boal 1995, p. 174 ff.)

⁵ The students' quotes which follow are direct transcriptions from the statements they handed in.

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Rehearsing Methodologies....**A Workshop Encounter With/Between Brecht's Baal and Boal**

Warren Linds

Zusammenfassung:

Warren Linds berichtet über ein Theaterlaboratorium, das er an der University of British Columbia, Vancouver (Canada) abgehalten hat. Ziel des Experiments war es, theatermethodische Ansätze der Brechtschen Lehrstücke mit Boals Konzept des Theaters der Unterdrückten für eine Neubewertung individueller sozialer Erfahrungen der Beteiligten zu nutzen. Linds reflektiert darüber, was theatermethodisch passiert, wenn ein Brechtsches Lehrstück (Baal) nach Boalschen Prinzipien produziert wird, und er denkt darüber nach, inwieweit Brechts Gesellschaftskritik auf dem Theater und Boals Gesellschaftsveränderung durch das Theater einander gegenseitig bedingen.

Background, Wherein The Facilitator Tells His Story of Coming to Write This:

I have been facilitating workshops based on *Theatre of the Oppressed* (TO) (Boal, Theatre) with a variety of community groups and schools for the past 14 years. Theatre becomes a place for social experimentation, giving a community the opportunity to use the language of theatre to investigate relationships of power through a series of theatre exercises and games. This work often leads to a Forum Theatre performance, which is a theatrical game in which a problem is shown in an unsolved form, to which the audience (spect-actors) is invited to enact alternative approaches. After one showing of the scene, it is shown again until a member of the audience shouts "stop!" and then replaces the person they feel can potentially overcome a power being put on him. The audience member then tries out alternative approaches to the situation. Many alternatives are attempted in the course of a single forum - the result is a pooling of knowledge, tactics and experience. It is at the same time what Boal calls a "rehearsal for reality," so that in the relatively safe space of theatre people can try things out and reflect upon them in

How can we adapt without imitating; learn a sensibility as well as a technique; and take the living breathing process of an artist and mould it to our own needs?

(Kinzer, 25)

order to develop strategies for dealing with similar situations in daily life.

Normally in my work, Forum plays are developed from personal stories shared by actors/participants in extended workshops. These narratives are then developed collectively as a group of individuals perceive a whole range of different, but often related, stories that began with an original one. But the improvised creation of stories from collective investigation is only one route into the creation of these interactive plays. Another way to explore issues of power can be triggered through/from scripted plays¹. For example, Boal (Letter) recounts that his theatre troupe once performed Brecht's *The Jewish Wife* where they added the physical presence of all the characters with whom the protagonist speaks on the phone (but who are not normally present either physically on stage or by words in the script). In the first presentation those characters were mute, but from the second running of the play on, the spect-actors replacing the wife had the right to address them and they would then improvise together.

In this case the events of pre-second world war Germany (as represented through Brecht's dramatic text) came face to face with the stories of racism in France (through the enacted narratives of the spect-actors and actors in improvised action in the Forum). This is an example of dramatic text enabling a journey into personal story telling, interpretation and transformation.

I experienced another possible approach to the use of dramatic text to collectively investigate our experiences of power relationships at the International Festival of Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) in Toronto in 1997. There I participated in a workshop led by Michael Wrentschur, a member of Die Gruppe Forumtheatre in Vienna, Austria. The workshop, called *Learning by Playing with the Text not Watching Plays*, interplayed a Brecht *Learning Play* with Augusto Boal's idea of a theatre that

Rehearsing Methodologies...

A Workshop Encounter With/Between Brecht's Baal and Boal

enables passive spectators to become spec-actors. The workshop experimented with an actual (inter)play² where Brecht's texts interacted with Boal's transformational learning processes scripted text and personal story spiraled into, and intermingled with, one and another³. Experiencing the process at the 1997 Festival workshop did enable me to understand how I might move beyond storytelling coming from a single story as we were able, with the aid of a Brecht text, through a form of dramatic metaphor about power, to explore the often unspoken dynamics that happen in our experiences.

In this article I will outline a process inspired by Brecht, Boal, Die Gruppe Forumtheatre, some readings and my own experience. This laboratory happened within a Theatre Directing class at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. Undertaking such a brief exploration with a group of students would be different from working with a community group with common interests. However, such labs are important places to elaborate new techniques and methods, as participants are willing to engage in and critique material, and are also able to bring their experiences as theatre practitioners and graduate students to the process.

The Chosen Text: A Learning Play

Brecht's first full-length play was *Baal*, written in 1918. Around 1930 he planned a number of what he called *Lehrstücke* (or didactic playlets) about the character he now called Bad Baal, the Antisocial Man. The playlet has, according to Willette (69) little to do with the original play, apart from the name of the character and one common scene. The text I (and the 1997 workshop) used in the laboratory was a fragment of Bad Baal (though Brecht eventually didn't include it as part of these *Lehrstücke*).

Brecht's task for the Learning Play was to show the world as it was, in order to enable the audience to discuss and challenge the structures of oppression. These were forms of sociological experiments in the art of dialectical thought, limbering-up exercises and mental gymnastics (Kellner, 288) that were theatrical performances meant not so much for the spectator as instructions for those engaged in the performance. Brecht also used them as experiments to develop ideas for later play writing (Schoeps). The playlets provide points of departure for further explorations into the art of dialectical

thinking in discussing, and acting on issues presented.

As for Bad Baal, in 1938/39 Brecht commented that his portrayal of Baal in the *Lehrstücke* was not correct in that the problem in the world was not antisocial people but rather that the owners of the means of production who were antisocial. Because of this limitation, the fragment is a glimpse at a reality of characters without much context or connections to political or social power. But it does serve as an entry point into investigating relationships between three characters with different social positions: Baal, Lupu and the little boy. According to Philip Auslander, Boal's theatre is based on a conception of the body and its movements as being distorted by power relations but one that steps "aside momentarily from its particular ideological regimens to try on others for size" (130). On the other hand, the Brechtian actor "exposes the social implications and behaviours revealed when those actions are examined from a specific ideological view" (129). What happens when these contrasting, though complementary, views are put together in living bodies by exploring a Brecht script using a Boalian process? I wanted to explore the *Bad Baal* dramatic text in an effort to look at the link of the personal/individual with social and ideological issues (Brecht's purpose in doing his *Learning Plays* with his actors). Using such an ideological text as starting point to develop story through these relationships also meant that I was not just trying to find a way to infuse the text with more life by helping actors connect to their own experiences, but that I was also able to explore ways the life experiences of the actors influence, and their interpretations are influenced by, such a text, spiraling backwards and forwards as one affects the other.

Food for Action⁴: Workshop Notes and Thoughts on The Laboratory Process

The Facilitator Proposes....

We will get to know a text and the feelings/relationships that emerge from it.

We will do this by exploring our own experiences through how the text resonates with us.

Then we will put this text on its feet through its own words but our movements will be based on our own experiences.

And then directs the group..:

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First of all we do some warm-ups/tune-ups. Our Objective in the first stage of this process is to use our bodies to prepare for the shifting ground of the workshop.

1. *In a circle, one person creates a gesture, then passes it to their left; as each person receives it they deepen it with feeling. It goes round and round without a beat. Do it around the circle several times.*
2. *Someone else leads by passing a gesture. This time, those who receive the gesture adds something to it. Again, do it around the circle several times.*
3. *One person provides a complex gesture....the rest of the group mimics, then each person leaves the circle, plays with that gesture as they move, then creates their own complex gesture. Come back to the circle. Then unify in one gesture/movement from all of them...continuing to do your own until a collective gesture emerges.....(now a new gesture)...then leave circle. create own complex gesture....back to circle...unify....*

The Facilitator Reflects on What Happened:

At the beginning of a workshop there is a need to do what Johnston (1998) calls tune-ups, "because players do need to tune in to each other (116)". An energized body is required to begin work and bringing the group together is important. I also use these kinds of exercises to begin to explore the themes of the workshop through our bodies, rather than just through verbal language and conversation. As Johnston points out, (these exercises can) "become microcosms of the later macrocosms which are the larger challenges" (117). So these exercises become a bridge between the world outside the laboratory or workshop and the world that is the workshop.

The comment was made by participants later on in the debriefing that the last exercise in this sequence led to collective gestures, yet the theatrical work we did seemed to end with an emphasis on individual stories. This is a valid comment that raised for me the issue of how to develop interactive plays that have more possibilities for collaborative analysis and action to deal with structural and political issues. This also means that there should be possibilities in the chosen text that might lead to more structural and political analysis. This is not the first time I have been challenged on this. In 1997 I gave a presentation on Forum Theatre at an academic conference on critical pedagogy. The audience there questioned how we might enable collective and collaborative interventions to transform the situations posed. This idea thematically fits with the warm/tune up exercise of collec-

tive/individual gestures and is the reason I selected this as the first series of exercises.

I think one way to deal with this dilemma is to continue to use Brecht's *Learning Plays* as a text – source and explore the individual-collective dynamic in a longer period of time. This would allow for small group interaction to not feel the pressure of having to come up with "one" story to represent their individual stories but to explore different elements of each story. We could also undertake further collaborative analysis when each story is presented to the larger group. This would involve looking at the symbolism of the Brecht text and how it inter-relates with the lived/living stories of the participants. Perhaps there are other themes and other commonalities or differences that might emerge. We could also play with Image⁵ and tableau to show the central tensions of the story and their points of view.

Familiarizing Ourselves with the Text

The Facilitator:

Read the text out loud while walking through the room, talk with words through the text, embody it, express it. let the text speak to you. Repeat one word or phrase. Dialogue...with words. This can be out of sequence with the other person you may interact with.

Bad Baal, the Anti-Social Man

A STREET IN THE SUBURB

Accompanied by Lupu, Baal meets a little, sobbing boy in front of the advertisement signs of some obscure movie theatre.

BAAL: Why are you weeping?

THE BOY: I had two dimes for the movie but a boy walked up and snatched one from my hand. That boy over there! *He points.*

BAAL *to Lupu*: That constitutes theft. Because the theft did not result from gluttony, it does not constitute a theft necessitated by hunger. Because it involved a movie ticket, it constitutes a theft necessitated by the desire to see. Nevertheless: it is a theft.

BAAL: Did you not call for help?

THE BOY: Yes I have.

BAAL *to Lupu*: A cry for help. An expression of human solidarity. Best known as the so-called death-cry.

BAAL *strokes him*. Didn't anybody hear you?

THE BOY: No.

BAAL: Can't you yell louder?

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THE BOY: No.

BAAL to Lupu: Then take his other dime, too! *Lupu takes the other dime and both continue their walk unconcerned.*

BAAL to Lupu: The usual result of all appeals by the weak.

(translated by Michael Wrentschur from *Der boese Baal der Asoziale*
[Bad Baal the Anti-Social Man])

The Facilitator Explains:

So we have this one page text of Baal. The idea now was to get to know the text, the feelings and the relationships that emerge. By choosing one word or phrase the actors can get in touch with the text through repetition and exploration of feelings and sounds. The idea is to let meaning and analysis emerge first with voice then through bodily interactions with others.

I found the work the actors did strong and felt as I walked around listening that the participants really got involved. I did wonder if I as director should be reading the text along with the group and interacting or providing examples of what I am talking about through doing it. This aspect is a question I always had as facilitator/director. Perhaps the best response right now is to decide on a case-by-case basis. With groups that are having more trouble improvising with the text I might get more involved.

Fable

The Facilitator Explains while Directing:

A relation between two people...simplified to its essentials and physically and verbally expressed. Write down the salient points of view from the director's standpoint...

What happened...whose point of view are you taking? What happened in the scene? Take a strong stance that is changeable that conveys an impression of the scene's central action.

Other Possibilities: Image...series of images? Play's plot...retold on stage from a specific point of view...in a clearly defined gesture...relation between two people...more than a plot summary...the fable is intended to reflect on the essential action of a play as director intends it to be perceived by the audience. how and why things happen. Write a paragraph on this scene in light of your own experience of it conveying the central action...10-15 lines.

The Facilitator Who Seeks Explanation from Others:

The idea of using Fable came from Craig Kinzer and applies Italian director Giorgio Strehler's assertion that theatre must have a point of view, for it is only through our own particularities and

thoughts that we can face up to the task of the theatre. The more you assume your role as a member of society, the more you participated in history, the more you will discover about the characters you have developed, for

"[A] character is not an immutable abstraction. It is a changing reality, though it remains fundamentally one. You must see the theatre as a place of mutability, of dialectical fact, and you have the courage to be one thing and not everything, to express one possibility contained in the character and the text, and not all of them. a theatre in which there is no point of view is an empty theatre."

(269-270).

Boal concurs:

There is one thing that is very important in theatre; it is that whatever form it is, it presents images of reality to be transformed or to be perpetuated. When you present an image of a reality, you choose a view point, a place from where you are going to see those images. Like a photographer. The playwright or the men or women doing theatre, they have to choose where they are. What are their positions. You have to take the image of reality and say where do I stand? Because theatre is moral, TO or not. When we show images of reality, we show images that we see, and in the process of transformation, that we want.

The Participants Interrupt the Facilitator:

Here are a few of the fables written by participants based on their enacted understandings of the Baal text. They point out different approaches to the idea of fable and the points of view that might be taken with this particular text:

- *There is a call for help and someone is trying to enable the boy to seek his own justice. Physical Action speaks louder than emotional solidarity action. Someone seeing a person in distress enters their space to try and rectify the problem; however they rectify with their own techniques.*
- *Baal was strolling along with a student and met a young boy who created an opportunity for a teaching point. Baal seized the opportunity to investigate and demonstrate a social truth. He discovers the boy is crying because someone bigger than him needed his money. He enjoys revealing that if someone is weaker they'll be preyed upon. He uses the boy to do so.*
- *The victimization of an unsuspecting person by passers by in order to illustrate a concept; the discussion of which was provoked by the would-be victims and the result of the provocation was*

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their victimization. In effect, the victim victimized himself. The conclusion to the passers-by argument.

- *A cry for help. It is vague to me. First... Why "cry" is supposed to be an expression of human solidarity? Is it not rather an appeal for human solidarity? Would louder crying help in any way?*

The Facilitator Continues His Explanation:

The fable was a small part of the lab that had not been incorporated in the Festival workshop that I had participated in. I saw it as something that could incorporate more focused directing tasks by a group collaborating on putting on the play. As Kinzer points out in his article about how he used it in teaching the directing of Brecht, the idea of fable ("Brecht's preferred term designating a play's plot as it is retold on stage from a specific point of view, in a clearly defined *gestus*" [27]) takes practice to develop. He found the idea of clarity of action and a strong point of view were one of the most difficult things to teach his directing students.

In Kinzer's work, he developed fable by reading a text first. I wanted to see what happened by engaging in the previous stage of getting to know the text on our feet. How would our understanding of it as fable emerge? How could this then be linked to our own understanding of the text through our own stories? This forced the participants to think of the scene in terms of point of view and what happened from their own limited time with it. Because this is quite a short scene, people generally outlined a plot or made a philosophical point. Kinzer underlines that it took a few tries at this before his students started to really work at the detail and point of view in the fable. The fables that we have seen here from the participants had lots of potential to deepen our own understandings of different aspects of the text. One person saw Baal as a teacher; another had a more political point of view about victimization; and another's explored motivation.

The next step of moving from the text to people's own stories meant that we had to leave their fables behind. I am fascinated by the possibility of introducing the fable of the text and then coming back to it later in the lab. Then we could have looked at the way scenes were to be acted out from our own stories and write a new fable of our stories as expressed in the text. This would give us the opportunity to see how the text and our stories intermingle and how our viewpoints shifted. The fable of our story would quite naturally be from

our own viewpoints.... would the original one also take the viewpoint of the character we most identified with? How and why would it change?

"Non-Fixed" Version

The Facilitator Re-Appears, Reading From His Plan:

In a circle think of who these characters are in your own life, and the instances of this you have experienced.

Then backs turned to each other, using one line from one character in the script, become one of the characters you were (or someone you encountered) and would like to investigate in your own life. How did the characters talk and express themselves.

Use all of the theatre space....you are that character in your life, walk around.

The Facilitator Reflects:

The idea now was to relate the relationships in the text as we have discovered them to our own situations. I was impressed with the way the exploration of the script through repeating a word seemed to easily link people to their own similar experiences. At first I sensed people were resistant to the idea of "discovering" their stories through text repetition and wanted clarification as to whether it comes through character or the scene. I think finally it was through the relationship of the three characters "on their feet" that the strongest work happened. It was these moments of connection that I always look for and remember. Extending that part of the workshop by perhaps taking another line from another character would allow for more investigation of the character and the relationships created.

This stage was a transitional one where we were playing with the text in the context of our own experiences and, in that way, discovering new aspects in the original text. I sensed some confusion and even some resistance to this idea. Perhaps the transformation was too abrupt. Perhaps I didn't explain it well enough; or maybe I tried to explain it too much because as people started to try it out I saw understandings in (inter)action as people took the idea and played with it and quickly found resonance with others.

The activity led to the formation of groups of three where the participants' stories and experiences as they resonated with the text were to be developed. I had initially thought to read out the fables and then use the similarities of particular fables to organize the groups of three to work

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together. But I found it more helpful here to continue to work in the natural flow on our feet and build on the feelings and senses that had emerged in the familiarization with text section, and do parallel work with the text but in the context of our own situations. (This "parallel work" liberates the text from its original context, thus creating a new "non-fixed" version).

Groups of 3: Scenes from Daily Life

The Facilitator Returns ...:

Each member of the triad shares a story (talk about it). Then direct the story, playing the character you want to investigate. You don't have to share what the story is. It's up to you...direct it as a particular situation or as symbolic of a situation. The only words you need to use are the ones from the script. (Share it or show it.); Choose one example per group that most resonates with those in the group. All members of the triad play their text to each other, improvised with the same text based on experiences they had or want to investigate.

Responses by the others.... what they felt, what happened, go through with each person...you play as you understand the other character based on your own experiences.

....And Reflects:

The objectives here were to relate the text to participants' own experiences and find ways to share it theatrically. This section should take up the bulk of the workshop/lab as we finally get to put the text "on its feet" by working at the text through our own stories and working at our stories through the text. Generally, the groups worked well together. As a group of people with experiences in acting and directing they found it fairly easy to carry out this and direct each other in their stories. I left it to the groups to decide how to share their stories so that they would then act out. In a group which didn't know each other as well, or where there would be a need for less disclosure because of the sensitive nature of the themes being explored, I would establish some clear ground rules for disclosure in the earlier part of the workshop as well as include more community building warm-up and tune-up exercises. Several of the people in this lab found it easier and more time efficient to first outline the story verbally. By adding background work in image and tableau we could just as easily use nonverbal "snapshots" to develop the scene, using the original text to add captions to each snapshot (like a story board, but using our bodies as the cartoons and the text as the "balloons").

Groups of 3 present to the whole group

The Director Wraps Things Up:

Play one of the scenes that most resonates or expresses the feelings for other groups.

*To the audience: what did you see? What does it remind you of? What are the motives? Ask the group watching the title the scene? What is the fable now? Here I asked each group to play their scene. Then I asked for some titles. Participants shared: *Baby Bullies, Wicked Witch of the West, Opportunism, The Court*. These could have then been explored further by writing up the scenes as fables. Some of these would center on motivation and feelings, others on aspects of character and stereotype. During one scene I asked the audience members to stand behind the character who most resonated with their own experience. Since time was running out, the laboratory ended as we began to discuss the process.*

What Was to Come Next?

The Facilitator Outlines His Unfinished Plans:

I would have liked to continue the workshop with each scene, again spiraling back and forth from the original text by Brecht to the participants' texts: both the contributions brought to the script and those created by the participants during performance. For example, I would ask them what their characters represent, have them write down the fables of each of their scenes, and then discuss the interplay between the fables of the scene and the fables of the script they wrote earlier.

I planned to then ask the group to choose one scene to work on – the one that the participants found most interesting or wanted to explore further. At the time, I was most interested in how this process could lead to Forum Theatre. We would have then explored Forum by choosing to define characters – who should be fixed and unchangeable and who could be changed or could change the situation.

Another option would be to look at the silent character - Lupu - and explore what he could/ should/ would say or do in response to the situation. Other possibilities I have thought of involve exploring how the play's meaning changes as we explore new permutations and combinations of text and experience. For example, we could use the original text as a tiny part of a larger play, creating scenes before the text and after it: what were Baal and Lupu doing together? What was the response

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of the little boy after they left? I can also see how the process could be extended by for example, looking at the play as a presentation of larger issues. Who are these people? Who are they in our own lives?

The Facilitator Reflects ... And Doubts:

The Italian director Giorgio Strehler (270) reports that Brecht taught him "doubt" as the fundamental essence of his theatre. Doubt, as the dictionary tells us, is "to hesitate to accept as true". My word processor's thesaurus offers up the synonyms "indecision, questioning, reservation, uncertainty, apprehension, qualms, misgiving, skepticism." Doubting something, Strehler adds, "doesn't mean everything is a contradiction but that you are always able to change your ideas, that you are not bound for life to an ideology, and that you can seek truth in opposites" (270).

What I have found, as I reflect on this process, is that the process itself created doubt. I had wanted to explore with the others the development of story through the interplay between different forms of text...dramatic, personal, collective, and ideological. I'm not sure I achieved this. As the process went on I found myself unclear, unsure of what was happening. Part of the problem was time. Things operated at a faster pace than I had hoped. As this was the first time I led this process, I found myself concentrating on learning the process, and so I could not adapt in the process of facilitation.

Boal and Brecht both see the body as being expressive of power relations in the world because it and its actions and gestures are determined by those relationships. The two authors also contrast one another. As I mentioned in the introduction to this essay, Brecht's scripts outline a specific viewpoint based on an ideological commitment that comes from outside the theatre (Auslander), while Boal's process involves unveiling through theatrical exercises the mechanisms and ideology of oppression and the development of physical alternatives to these power relationships. These two theatrical responses to the question "What can be done about oppressive social relations in our world?" do not contradict one another. They can inform a transformative theatrical methodology through an exploration of embodied personal experience using an ideological text. This then could lead to a whole other series of investigations, spiraling back and forth between text, world and the experiences of participants.

These spirals mean we can investigate metaxic relationships between the world of the workshop,

the world of the text and the world of the participants. This interplay creates a multi-layered, nested text/performance of one enfolded in and amongst the others. This is a new possibility that emerges through the interplay of Baal through Boal and goes beyond Boal's (Rainbow) concept of metaxis, which is "the state of belonging completely and simultaneously to two different, autonomous worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image. The participant shares and belongs to these two autonomous worlds: their reality and the image of their reality, which she herself has created" (43).

I say "goes beyond" because when working with a text, it quickly becomes evident that each individual "reality" is interwoven with many others realities. From the experience of leading this lab I can also see how this metaxic interplay involves another level of investigation between the world of the workshop, the world of the participant and the world of the text (and its own connections to its own world – in this case Brecht's).

Theatre of the Oppressed is constantly being adapted and changed to meet changing contexts. As Frances Babbage, an English TO practitioner says: "The work cannot remain static, cannot be unproblematically used here, there and everywhere, but must continually be re-invented in order to remain lively and relevant" (2).

Not every dramatic text will be appropriate for every group. A critical question for future investigation will be which short texts would be appropriate for which group or situation. Brecht's *Lehrstücke*, with their specific social/political analyses, provide one example of short pieces to initiate this process. The strong and committed writing within them offers one viewpoint of the world, which can serve as a springboard for a spiraling interplay of ideology and methodology. This viewpoint can, through dramatic investigation, be opened to question and critique. For example, I have previously developed a critique (Linds) of some of the ways I have worked with "stories" in Theatre of the Oppressed workshops. It is possible to try another approach to "story": There are ways to devise a theatre that help the audience question what is the "norm" and what they can do about it. This doesn't mean that theatre has to be inaccessible and obscure, denying participants and audiences alike any engagement as they try to puzzle out what is happening on stage, but it does mean that theatre must use tension to help us question the normative and dominant culture. The tools are available to do this in the development of the Forum play through a workshop process that uses the concepts

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of disruptive or interrogative text. We can take an initial "draft" of the play, deconstruct and critique it, and then create a new play with new images and text.

To summarize the experiences of one Austrian TO group, Brecht's *Learning Plays* and Boal's Forum Theatre allowed new possibilities for the work to arise as I continue to explore my own practice. New questions emerged from the participants in the laboratory and in my reflective writing about it. A colleague at UBC, Kadi Purru, reviewed a draft of this essay and pointed out at several points themes and questions that could be the subject of several other essays. For example how, through our (inter)play with Baal, did/could Boal and Brecht both connect with, and raise questions about, each other's methodology, aesthetic and ideology? How are dramatic texts somebody's personal stories and personal stories someone else's dramatic text? I hope that new issues will also emerge from readers' own (inter)play with this text. This is, I feel, one strength of dealing with the intermingling action of the work of several theatre practitioners: Boal, Brecht, The Facilitator and the Participants share in a living/encountering/rehearsing of methodologies.

Note

I am greatly indebted to the students of the Fall 1998 graduate class in Theatre Directing at the University of British Columbia and Professor Jan Selman, who were willing to journey along with me in this exploratory workshop; to Michael Wrentschur of Graz and Vienna, Austria who conducted the workshop that introduced me to the potential of working with Brecht's Baal and Boal; and to Kadi Purru for her invaluable editorial and methodological comments on drafts of this article.

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sponding with others doing similar work to that described in this article and be contacted at

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Notes

¹ Boal directed theatre (both in agit-prop and with the Arena Theatre in Sao Paulo, Brazil) well before he developed the theatrical form called Forum Theatre. It was, in fact, his critique of a conventional theatre that separated a passive audience from actor that led to his development of the system called Theatre of the Oppressed and, ultimately to his exploration of the interactive approach to transformation called Forum Theatre. For more background on some of Boal's work that led to this, see the chapter Poetics of the Oppressed (120-155) in Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, Theatre).

² I use the terms (inter) play and spiral to indicate the living, simultaneous interactions that occur in our dramatic explorations. Spirals drift one into the other as a maze of interminglings emerges. As Cook says, "one of the chief beauties of the spiral as an imaginative conception is that it is always growing, yet never covering the same ground, so that it is not merely an explanation of the past, but is

also a prophecy of the future; and while it defines and illuminates what has already happened, it is also leading constantly to new discoveries" (413).

³ At the same TO Festival I also saw a Forum Theatre performance of a fragment of Brecht's The Good Woman of Szechwan, which Die Gruppe Forumtheatre had used to investigate social activism and immigration in Austria.

⁴ I will outline in this essay some of the elements planned in the lab and the thoughts that went into it, some options I didn't use, and what happened. I include in italics my original planning notes and instruction at the beginning of each section so that the reader may see some of the exercises used as well as the flow of the workshop.

⁵ In Image or tableau work participants, using their own and others' bodies as "clay", create still images of their lives, feelings and experiences. These frozen "sculptures" are then the starting point for action as the Images are brought to life through movement and voice. New discoveries are made in the interaction of the participants' bodies in (e)motion. Because there are initially no words, Images can work across some language, cultural and political barriers. I have found Image work a powerful method to enable an analysis of power relationships in a particular situation, understandings of common and different themes and the development of stories.

CALL FOR PAPER

Performance, Pedagogy & the Body

We are editing a section on performance and pedagogy for upcoming issues of a refereed journal, *Transpositions*, at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Although recent critical theory has facilitated our understanding of pedagogy as a social practice, contemporary educational models continue to rely on language-based approaches to learning. The inclusion of the moving body itself in the classroom experience is often overlooked. We seek submissions that address the dynamics of the body and performance in the classroom, explorations involving a reinstatement of the body in classroom practices, and the potential of performance-based approaches to pedagogy.

Some suggested topics include:

- Ways in which performance pedagogy impacts on current issues in the social and transcultural dilemmas facing education today.
- An inquiry into how the interrelationships between performance, the multiple intelligences, and the arts offer new approaches to critical pedagogy.
- Discussions about how the body – especially the moving, active, and engaged body – can transform the pedagogical experience of the usually "passive" student.
- Discussions about and evaluations of specific techniques regarding performance practices in the classroom.
- An analysis of how varying disciplines and philosophy, and ethnography, impact upon the development of performance pedagogies.
- Case studies of individual teachers, schools, and universities implementing alternative & performative modalities. These discussions can be simultaneously anecdotal, theoretical, and comparative.
- In a broad sense, definitions of and reflections on performance and how it enhances the learning experience.

Essays can range from 2500 words to 7000 words. Two copies of the complete articles, a 500-word abstract, and a short bio need to be submitted.

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Theatre Pedagogy in Germany/Theaterpädagogik in Deutschland

Theatre Pedagogy in Germany**Theatre Pedagogy in Germany (the theory and methodology of teaching theatre [studies])**

An abundance of artistic-pedagogical activities exist in the Federal Republic of Germany, which are carried out using theatre based methods or theatre games; there are many children's theatres, youth theatres, theatre pedagogical institutions, such as the theatre pedagogical centres, as well as further education institutions. In addition, we know and appreciate forms of street theatre which are involved in and committed to social and political engagement. For example, street theatre that chooses political and economical injustices as the theme of its work/performances.

A large number of theatre educationalists or pedagogues work at theatres, where they prepare or assess the public's visits to the theatre or they work together with the audience – young people in particular – studying scenes selected from the various plays performed at the theatre. Theatre or drama in the form of school theatre and study-groups is performed in lots of schools, in order to; introduce literature; study and act out dramatic texts; or to make it possible to gain a new kind of physical-acting access to the most diverse themes, e.g. from ecology, biology, culture or communication. Furthermore, at some schools, "dramatic acting" is offered as a third artistic subject, along side music and art. At certain universities and colleges, theatre pedagogy is also incorporated into courses for those either studying to become social pedagogues or teachers, or who wish to work in cultural areas/the arts.

Parallel to these well established institutions, a wide variety and number of festivals, workshops and meetings take place, at which the different

forms of pedagogical theatre and of theatre pedagogy are practised, developed and exchanged.

The education of those artistically and pedagogically involved in theatre pedagogy is very different. Some of them are actors/actresses; some, having worked as directors or in directing, now run theatre companies or groups; others are writers or are drawn from the other arts. Teachers, social and school educationalists/pedagogues are also actively involved. The professional title of *Theaterpädagoge/Theaterpädagogin* (theatre educationalist/pedagogue) has gained acceptance over recent years.

The relevant organisations in existence in the Federal Republic of Germany are as follows: the *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Spiel und Theater* (BAG) (the German Group of Acting and Theatre), which consists of a combination of virtually all the amateur drama and school theatre associations and theatre pedagogy; the *Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik (BuT)* (the German Association of Theatre Pedagogy), which is primarily organised by and for theatre pedagogues/educationalists from theatrical and further education institutions; and the *Gesellschaft für Theaterpädagogik (GfTh)* – the Society for Theatre Pedagogy – which focuses on the theoretical aspects of theatre pedagogy and higher education. Theatre pedagogy is a broad field within Germany, comprised of activities and – to extend the metaphor – a lively scene, which is constantly moving, changing and developing in new ways.

F.V./gk

The Society for Theatre Pedagogy

Florian Vaßen and Gerd Koch. Translated by Anna Marie Reid

The Society for Theatre Pedagogy (*Gesellschaft für Theaterpädagogik*) was founded on the 2 February 1980, making it the oldest national theatre educational/pedagogical organisation in the Federal Republic of

Germany. The society regards its most important tasks as being: the implementation and co-ordination of theatre pedagogical projects, workshops and seminars. It also organises exchanges of information between the

working members based in different locations, as well as between other organisations and interested parties. The Society for Theatre Pedagogy offers a link between the various organisations, in relation to numerous activities in the most varied theatre pedagogical areas.

Since its establishment, Bertolt Brecht's *Lehrstück* – Theory forms a special focus for practical and theoretical work. Brecht's model of didactic play (learning play) assumes that aesthetic experiences, pedagogical processes of learning and becoming politically aware, are not so much a consequence of adopting theatre processes but more so of playing one's self. This work focuses on the conception of one's self and on self-reflection in the group and, in addition to this, in a social context. The didactic actors, or simply the 'players', are supposed to sociably and socially interact, communicate and exchange views and experiences with one another; so that they come to understand themselves and their own experiences, combined together with the experiences they have in common and also with political-social experiences. Brecht suggests that, in institutions, the so-called "Pedagogues", should learn how to behave; to change their inner and outer manner with the help of theatre and dramatic acting, to develop a new art – namely the art of living and making the most of life and its experiences.

Over the years, aside from the approach presented by the didactic play/learning play, a multitude of theatre pedagogical activities have been developed in the members' various fields of work and in the different pedagogical and academic institutions. Apart from the conception of the didactic play/learning play, others also worth mentioning are Boal's *Theater der Unterdrückten* (Theatre of the Oppressed); body and improvisation theatre, and the interpretation of scenes.

The Society for Theatre Pedagogy collaborates with colleagues and institutions, (theatre pedagogical) further education organisations, colleges, universities and schools, state-run theatres and independent theatre companies and groups – in terms of both theory and practise. In addition to the practise aspect, special emphasis is given to the theoretical and methodological development of theatre pedagogy. The *Lehrstück-Archiv-Hannover* (LAH) belongs to the latter. LAH, which was founded at the University of Hanover in 1983, chiefly sets out to collect the so-called *grey* literature or, in other words, the intellectual/theoretical literature available on the didactic play (e.g. diploma, examination work and dissertations, reports on experiences, documentation and minutes of workshops etc.). Then LAH makes this material available to all those who are interested in it. The Theatre Pedagogy News Journal "Korrespondenzen" was founded in 1985. It appears biannually, with each issue containing a minimum of 64 pages. It is the sole theatre pedagogy academic journal in German speaking areas/countries.

In the meantime, BuT has become co-publisher: having most recently focussed on the following themes (see the table on the right):

The Society for Theatre Pedagogy

Diverse book publications, which have either been produced by the Society for Theatre Pedagogy or their members, have contributed to the increasing, intensified theoretical discussion on Theatre Pedagogy – which has in turn resulted in the "professionalisation" of the career of theatre pedagogues/educationalists in the Federal Republic of Germany; by broadening the scope and improving the quality of training, so that the social acceptance and relevance of working as a Theatre Pedagogue, have risen considerably.

Some important publications are:

Widerwort und Widerspiel. Theater zwischen Eigensinn und Anpassung. Situationen, Proben, Erfahrungen, ed. Bernd Ruping, Florian Vaßen und Gerd Koch, Lingen und Hannover 1991.

Gebraucht das Theater. Die Vorschläge von Augusto Boal: Erfahrungen, Varianten, Kritik, ed. Bernd Ruping, Lingen und Renscheid 1991.

Lach- und Clownstheater. Die Vielfalt des Komischen in Musik, Literatur, Film und Schauspiel, ed. Gerd Koch und Florian Vaßen, Frankfurt am Main 1991.

Reiner Steinweg: Lehrstück und episches Theater. Brechts Theorie und die theaterpädagogische Praxis, Frankfurt am Main 1995.

Wechselspiel: KörperTheaterErfahrung, ed. Florian Vaßen, Gerd Koch und Gabriela Naumann, Frankfurt am Main 1998.

Massnahmen. Bertolt Brecht/ Hanns Eislers Lehrstück "Die Massnahme". Kontroverse – Perspektive – Praxis, ed. Inge Gellert, Gerd Koch und Florian Vaßen, Berlin 1999.

Theater, Trotz und Therapie. "Im ästhetischen Prozess gibt es keine Behinderung außer der, der wir uns stellen". Ein Lies- und Werkbuch für Theater, ed. Bernd Ruping, Lingen 1999.

Ohne Körper geht nichts, ed. Gerd Koch, Gabriela Naumann und Florian Vaßen, Berlin 1999.

The society membership fee is 40 DM per year and this includes a free copy of the (biannual) news journal. Information on the Society for Theatre Pedagogy, LAH and the news journal can be obtained from the address given below. We look forward to; hearing from and working together with new contacts; receiving information and contributions to the news journal, and finally to welcoming new members to the society!

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Bundesband Theaterpädagogik e.V. –
The German Association of Theatre – Education

Bundesband Theaterpädagogik e.V. – The German Association of Theatre – Education

Theatre Education means "Culture Education"

One of the most important aims of the *Bundesband Theaterpädagogik*, which was founded in March 1990, is to further theatre-educational work, so that it can be considered in the same terms as "culture education", i.e. education in arts and in music. Therefore, the association promotes theatre-educational practices, which foster communicative, creative and esthetical competences; endeavour to develop the cultural identity of its participants and make theatre, as an art form, more transparent. Another key activity pursued by the Bundesverband is to ensure that theatre-pedagogical work is given greater recognition. By setting high standards, the Bundesverband strives to professionalise theatre-pedagogical work.

Theatre is a universal educational medium. Consequently the Bundesverband promotes theatre-educational work in different areas of activity; in theatres, schools, socio-cultural institutions and leisure/recreational centres; working with both young people and senior citizens alike, as well as in relevant institutions, such as theatre education, teacher training and research institutions.

The Association's Concrete/Actual Work

Congresses and Festivals: Annual congresses, referred to as *Bundestagungen Theaterpädagogik*, are organised and realised in co-operation with a different nationwide institution each year. These Bundestagungen are the central forums for discussing important themes concerning theatre-educational theory and practice. Furthermore, Bundestagungen provide an excellent opportunity for the members of the association to meet, exchange experiences and information. The topics dealt with at last year's congress were: "Authenticity in Theatre and Theatre-education" and "Eurovisions – Towards a Network of Theatre-education in Europe".

The annual festival "Youth Clubs in Theatres", which includes performances, workshops and training sessions brings a groups of approx. 200 young theatre club players and their teachers/trainers together.

Theatre-educational Training: In 1999, the Bundesverband published/produced terms of reference for the training of those working as theatre educationalists. These terms were prepared by the "Committee for Education, Teaching and Research", in order to establish rules regarding the aims and necessary subjects to be covered in the training of theatre-educationalists.

Committees: The Youth Clubs Festival is organised by the "Youth Theatres' Committee". It has set up a national (federal) network for this particular branch of theatre-educational work. Another board, the "Theatre-peda-

gogues in Theatres' Committee" was established in 1994 and it strives to provide a base for exchanging experiences, information and training within this area. Plans have been made to establish additional committees in the near future.

Publications: The Bundesverband, together with the "Gesellschaft für Theaterpädagogik", publishes a biannual journal "Korrespondenzen", containing articles on theatre-educational theory and practice which focus on discussing its role and practice. In January 2000, the *Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik* (in co-operation with the *Bundsgemeinschaft Spiel und Theater*) issued a paper on all the institutions that are involved in and committed to theatre-educational training in Germany.

Projects: Theatre-educational projects permit experimental approaches and exemplary working methods, which include a combination of theory and practice. Hence, the *Bundesverband* happily engages in projects such as theatre groups; "Echo-Exchange" an inter-cultural project with Cyprus and a theatre project which supports nonviolent forms of family education.

The Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik conveys and transfers its profile into federations such as *Deutscher Kulturrat*, *Bundesvereinigung Kulturelle Jugendbildung*, *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Spiel und Theater*, *Paritätisches Bildungswerk* and *National Coalition für die Umsetzung der UN-Kinderrechtskonvention in Germany/Deutschland*.

Becoming a member of the Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik

Individual persons, as well as institutions, may become a member of the *Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik*. In January 2000, members of the *Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik* are drawn from about 40 different institutions, including universities, academies, theatre-educational centres, theatre groups, theatre houses and other theatre organisations. In addition to this, there are about 295 individual members, including freelance workers or employed theatre-pedagogues who are engaged in different fields of theatre-educational activities: professional and amateur theatre, theatre-educational centres, educational institutions, in socio-cultural areas, youth welfare, leisure time service or and in theatre work with elderly people.

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Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft (BAG) Spiel & Theater/ Federal Drama & Theatre Association

BAG is a non-profit umbrella organization for drama and theatre in children's and young people's cultural education. Most relevant nationwide associations for drama and theatre education in Germany are represented by it on national and international level. Thus it is no surprise that the „Gesellschaft für Theaterpädagogik“ and the „Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik“ are two of its members.

But BAG is much older than those organizations of the 90ies. BAG is rooted in the youth movement at the beginning of the 20th century, a social movement, which was aiming at a general life reform, especially a self-determined life according to youth. By youth education as holistic education the whole society was supposed to be reformed. Amateur play beneath folk music and folk dance was part of this process by shaping a community in youth camps and schools field centers in the country.

Among the founders of the BAG at the 31st of Mai 1953 were those who had led the amateur play out of the youth movement into the 20ies and set the trend in Germany after the second world war. Since that time BAG has been gathering the powers of the amateur theatre, especially of the youth and children's theatre in school, church and non-formal education. With joint forces they have been discussing various drama or theatre phenomena and have been working in the field of qualifying drama teachers.

As for the latter BAG has developed training programmes in drama- and theatre-in-education in cooperation with other institutions such as universities. After elaborating a curriculum, after establishing postgraduate studies for teaching professions BAG is now propagating a concept for basic university studies in theatre-in-education. Artistic demands of the so-called amateur theatre have been growing just the same way. Social and esthetic dimensions of drama- and theatre-in-education are struggling for predominance. The different members of BAG hold various opinions on this, – that's the result of a conference in 98 (Korrespondenzen, vol 32, pg. 3 - 33) and the beginning of a discussion, which has been going on since then.

Festivals are places for artistic competition, exchange and social meeting. There's a manifold festival scene for children's and youth theatre, but there is little exchange and there isn't anybody who knows all events. Thus BAG has been trying to build up a festival network and has contributed to a festival calendar since a conference on the subject in 99.

New media affect drama- and theatre-in-education in its esthetic and social dimensions. New challenges and the specific role of drama- and theatre-in-education within a multimedia society will be the main topics in 2000.

Besides representing interests, besides organizing and realizing children's workshops, multiplier training measures, national theatre encounters, drama and theatre consultancies in Germany- international drama and theatre work has been an important facet in all fields. For instance BAG is engaged in longer-term cooperations with Turkish, Russian and Israelian partners, has been organizing international youth theatre encounters, multinational festivals, international workshops for adults and children as well as specialists' conferences (for instance "Brecht & Stanislavski & the Consequences"). Thus the BAG office also works as a service center for international exchange programmes in drama- and theatre-in-education.

Its national and worldwide commitment ends up in various memberships: in the German Federal Association for Cultural Youth Education, the Council of the German Youth Theatre Encounter in Berlin, the National Cultural Council, the National Centre of AITA/IATA (Association Internationale du Théâtre Amateur/International Amateur Theatre Association), EDERED (European Drama Encounters/ Recontres Européennes de Drama) etc..

Publications (selected):

- „Brecht & Stanislavski – und die Folgen“
- 8th European Children's Encounter EDERED 1996 (German & English Version)
- Aus-, Fort- und Weiterbildung für Spiel- und Theaterpädagogik (in cooperation with the Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik)
- Spieltheorie (in cooperation with the Hochschule der Künste Berlin)
- Theatertheorie (in cooperation with the Hochschule der Künste Berlin)

Member associations:

- Arbeitskreis der Landesarbeitsgemeinschaften Spiel & Theater/ Study Group of Drama & Theatre Associations in the Laender
- Akademie Remscheid für musische Bildung und Medienerziehung/ Academy Remscheid for Education in Music, Arts and Media
- Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spiel in der Evangelischen Jugend/ Drama Association in the Evangelical Youth
- Arbeitskreis Kirche & Theater in der EKD/ Church & Theatre Study Group in the Evangelical Church in Germany
- Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft für das Darstellende Spiel in der Schule/ Federal School Theatre Association
- Bundesverband Theaterpädagogik/ Federal Association for Theatre-in-Education
- Burckhardtthaus- Evangelisches Institut für Jugend-, Kultur- und Sozialarbeit/ Evangelical Institute for Youth, Cultural and Social Work (associated)

- Festival „Theatertage am See“
- Festival „Theaterwoche Korbach“
- Festival „Göppinger Theatertage“
- Jugendhof Scheersberg/ Youth Yard Scheersberg
- Katholische Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spiel & Theater / Catholic Drama & Theatre Association
- Gesellschaft für Theaterpädagogik / Society for Theatre Pedagogy
- Institut für Spiel & Theater an der Hochschule der Künste / Institute for Drama- and Theatre-in-Education at the Hochschule der Künste Berlin

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Sent through Global Message Exchange - <http://www.gmx.net>

New Books/Rezensionen

Schewe, Manfred, and Peter Shaw, eds. *Towards Drama as a Method in the Foreign Language Classroom*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Verlag, 1993. Paper, 356 pp.

From the book cover:

"Drama is proposed a new reference point for the teaching and learning of non-native languages. Authors from a variety of cultural, linguistic and professional backgrounds present a wide range of dramatic approaches to language teaching, offering the latter a series of fresh and challenging impulses. The volume as a whole represents a first step towards the establishment of a method of foreign language teaching based on drama, as a holistic method in its own right; and in so doing aims also to initiate a new field for research: namely drama in foreign-language teaching."

Gerd Bräuer

Um es vorwegzunehmen: Das vorliegende Buch ist nicht nur eine deutliche Empfehlung wert für Lehrende, die mit ihren SchülerInnen oder StudentInnen Theater spielen wollen, sondern für all jene, die das Ziel verfolgen, die Aneignung einer Fremdsprache zu einem *persönlich bedeutsamen* Erlebnis werden zu lassen. Den Herausgebern Manfred Schewe (Oldenburg) und Peter Shaw (London) ist eine Sammlung von Beiträgen gelungen, die den Fremdspracherwerb als *ganzheitliche* Angelegenheit vorstellen. Während Drama als Lernmedium durch Initiatoren wie Ingo Scheller (Oldenburg) in der Schuldidaktik oder Gerd Koch (Berlin) und Florian Faßen (Hannover) in der Hochschuldidaktik längst Einzug gehalten hat, sind Wortmeldungen zum o.g. Thema aus dem Lager der DaF-Didaktik immer noch selten und die Vorbilder aus dem anglo-amerikanischen Raum (Maley, Duff, Holden u.a.) weiterhin tonangebend. Wenn im Vorwort von Schewe und Shaw von der Notwendigkeit einer körperbetonten, oftmals nonverbalen Komponente neben dem Hören und Sprechen, Lesen und Schreiben im Fremdsprachenunterricht die Rede ist, dann sollte dies für den Bereich DaF nach wie vor Neuigkeitswert besitzen.

Auch wenn das Buch nicht direkt auf Deutschlehrende zielt, so stößt es doch in viele vorhandene Lücken in Sachen Drama im DaF. Teil I des Buches gibt Ein- und Überblicke zur Disziplingeschichte im Rahmen des Erst- und Fremd- bzw. Zweitsprachenunterrichts. Gavin

Bolton (England), Patrick Verriour (Kanada) und Barrie Hawkins (England) arbeiten die bereits erwähnten anglo-amerikanischen Ursprünge der Disziplin detailliert auf und ordnen sie einem größeren lernpsychologisch orientierten Kontext zu, der sich von James Moffett, über Lew Wygotski bis zu Jerome Bruner zieht und die Rolle des Körperlich-Gestischen im Spracherwerb näher beschreibt. Unterricht wird außerdem als soziales Phänomen betrachtet, in dem Lerner als Individuen und als GruppenteilnehmerInnen interagieren – das ist eine Konstellation, die von vornherein wesentliche Aspekte dramatischer Arbeit in sich birgt.

Die weitere Aufteilung des Buches folgt der begrifflichen Definition der Herausgeber vom Drama als Sprachlehr- und lernmethode: Teil II widmet sich dem Drama in der Ausbildung (*Drama-in-Education*), das den Unterricht als Lehr- und Lernmedium *prozessorientiert* begleitet. Teil III hingegen wendet sich dem Theater im Unterricht zu (*Theatre-in-Education*), das die Aufführung eines dramatischen Textes zum eigentlichen Gegenstand macht und dementsprechend *produktorientiert* verläuft.

Peter Groenewold (Niederlande) verdeutlicht eingangs des zweiten Buchteils mit seinem Simulationsmodell eine wesentliche funktionale Grundlage für Drama in fremdsprachlicher Ausbildung: Das Erlernen einer anderen Sprache verläuft u.a. als *kulturelles* Lernen, bei dem Eigenes und Fremdes in Dialog geraten. Dramatische Strukturen schaffen hierfür eine ideale „Bühne“. Caroly Glock (Australien) belegt dasselbe Phänomen mit dem Begriff des Erfahrungslernens (*experiential drama*), bei dem fremde Sprache und Kultur in simulierten *real life*-Situationen – in einem Schutzraum, wo Fehler als dramatisches Element jederzeit willkommen sind – erprobt werden. Toyoko Shimizu (Japan) erläutert theoretische und praktische Grundlagen dramatischen Improvisierens, das neben Imitieren (Simulieren) und Adaptieren eine der drei Haupttechniken der Methode des Drama im Unterricht darstellt. Daniel Feldhändler (Deutschland) beschreibt die speziellen Gruppenprozesse, mit denen bei dieser Art von Unterricht gerechnet werden kann. Durch das Offenlegen der Querverbindungen zur Humanistischen Psychologie (Dufeu, Moreno u.a.) und Theaterwissenschaft (Stanislawski, Boal u.a.) verdeutlicht Feldhändler die enormen

pädagogischen Potenzen dramatischer Tätigkeit für den Sprachlernprozeß. Peter Erlenwein (Deutschland) geht der bereits erwähnten Partnerschaft von Körperausdruck und Sprache nach (Piaget) und spürt ihre Bedeutsamkeit für ganzheitliches Lernen auf. Im Mittelpunkt steht das Schärfen der Sinne für die kulturellen Unterschiede zwischen Sprachen und ihre produktive Überwindung in Form von ganzheitlichem Verstehen. Sabine Wolf (Deutschland) setzt diese Konstellation noch einmal praktisch um, indem sie Pantomime und das Statuen-Theater (Boal) für den Fremdsprachenunterricht didaktisch aufarbeitet. Jörg Steitz-Kallenbach (Deutschland) betrachtet Drama im Unterricht aus der Perspektive der Lernenden. Anhand seiner Erfahrungen als Teilnehmer eines Seminars zum Fremdsprachenunterricht durch Drama beschreibt er Möglichkeiten und Grenzen bei der individuellen Begegnung mit alternativen Unterrichtsformen innerhalb traditioneller Bildungseinrichtungen.

Teil III des Buches widmet sich, wie bereits angedeutet, der Inszenierung von fremdsprachigen Theaterstücken. Eoin Bourke (Irland) konzipiert dieses Anliegen als extra-curriculare Aktivität, deren pädagogisches Umfeld er genauer vorstellt. Neben einem hermeneutischen Verstehen künstlerischer Texte durch ihr In-Szenesetzen geht es dem Autor vor allem um das ästhetische Erfahren der fremden Kultur bzw. Literatur. Indem Bourke Inszenierungsarbeit anhand von Theaterstücken konkret vorstellt, entsteht eine reizvolle Liste möglicher Texte, die von Hans Christian Andersen bis Karl Valentin reicht. Lynne Brackley und Robert Packham (England) widmen sich der anderen Seite, der Rezeption von fremdsprachigen Theaterstücken und geben praktische Hinweise für die Vor- und Nachbereitung solcher Ereignisse im Fremdsprachenunterricht. Emelie FitzGibbon (Irland) schlägt schließlich den Bogen zurück zum zweiten Buchteil, indem sie die beiden verschiedenen Elemente der Arbeitsmethode Drama im Fremdsprachenunterricht, *Theatre-in-Education* und *Drama-in-Education*, auf Möglichkeiten produktiven Zusammenspiels untersucht und somit eine Synthese prozeß- und produktorientierten Lehrens und Lernens versucht.

Der Abschluß ist dem theoretischen Konzept des vielseitig vorgestellten Gegenstandes dieses Buches gewidmet. Mit Manfred Schewes Beitrag und Udo O. H. Jungs (Deutschland) Bibliographie gelingt die Definition von Drama im Umgang mit Fremdsprachen als *Methode*, ihre Ein- bzw. Zuordnung in den weiteren Kontext bestehender Theorien des Fremdsprachenunterrichts und nicht zuletzt der Ausblick auf zukünftige Forschungsschwerpunkte.

Manfred Schewe und Peter Shaw demonstrieren mit der Gesamtkonzeption dieses Buches einen praktisch orientierten Lernbegriff, der in John Deweys *learning by doing* verwurzelt ist: Der Griff auf die Theorie (4. Buchteil) ist Reflexion und Systematisierung des praktisch Erlebten (Teile 2 und 3), wobei letzteres vor allem prozeßorientiert ist. Hier geht es um Drama als *alltägliche* Lehr- und Lernmethode, weniger um die einmalige Aus- bzw. Vorstellung ihrer Resultate. Diese Konstellation initiiert lebenslangen Wissensdurst.

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Gerd Bräuer

Wagner, Betty Jane, *Educational Drama and Language Arts: What Research Shows*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton-Cook/Heinemann, 1998.

I wish I'd had Betty Jane Wagner's book, *Educational Drama and Language Arts*, a few years ago when I was on a legislative task force recommending courses for women in prison. "We need skill based courses," was the cry from most opinion makers, "substantive" classes in computers or "something that will help them get jobs." Drama, long thought of as an "extra," a "frill" in many educational communities, was certainly not on the short list of considered courses. Even if my ten years of producing plays with women in prison had convinced a senator or two that such a program might be as valuable as Life Skills, most – who took themselves to plays on weekend and encouraged their children to get involved in after school theater productions – had no idea of the many ways that dramatic arts can be embedded in the curriculum to effect one's thinking and language abilities. And at the time, without such a book, I had no ready reference from which to draw for studies that show the power of drama's influence on learning. For that is the greatest strength of Wagner's text. Just as *Writing Across the Curriculum* courses changed the face of many institutional approaches to writing, Wagner's book, because it is cumulative, comprehensive, and, at times, instructional, has potential to be an advocate for infusing drama into the curriculum. Wagner, a professor at Roosevelt University and prolific author of articles and books on writing and the educational uses of drama, speaks for the need to produce educated students who undertake learning more than "just the facts, ma'am." She also reinforces the need for teachers who want their students to understand more fully "history, human interactions, scientific discoveries, the role of persons in various professions, the texture of the lives of characters in literature – in short, the larger school curriculum" (8). Her book is an antidote for those teachers told to teach for tests, for it shows that the most obvious route to point is not always the most effective.

Wagner's expressed goal in what she calls a "user-friendly resource for doctoral students and others who are jumping into the icy waters of research on drama" (1) is to answer the question of "Does classroom drama actually teach anything?" (3). Her book focuses on improvisational drama, and Wagner aims to show how it can be used as "an intentional teaching strategy to enhance learning" (5). The book is organized into four parts: an overview where Wagner defines her terms and helps us see that she isn't suggesting creative drama classes per se, but the more radical idea of utilizing drama throughout the curriculum; a section presenting results and experiences from research studies on uses of drama and its effects on language and thinking; a third section based

around the implications from studies involving drama and writing; and a final portion in which she looks at research paradigms and the future. Although drama "has remained marginal in American language arts classrooms" (11), Wagner's research indicates that it should not be so. Drama studies presented in Wagner's text show it can improve reading, writing, and thinking skills.

Wagner spices up what sometimes becomes a fairly dry presentation of research results with detailed examples of drama in the classroom and chapters written by other educators, scholars and pioneers in drama in education studies. David Booth's excellent chapter, "Language Power Through Working in Role," gives us an interesting case study from a Canadian junior high classroom where students engaged in a three-month study of the Holocaust. Booth watched students playing roles and the results of their learning from such role-playing in an eighth grade class at an alternative public school. Students studied the "resulting emigration of survivors to North America... based on the equity and diversity components of a curriculum document, and focusing on the Holocaust" (57). Some played filmmakers or families of survivors, while others took on the roles of immigration officers. Through writing, talking and performing, they gleaned insights that might not have been learned without the use of drama. For example, taking on the role of immigration officers "demanded that they [the students] accepted being members of a group that, in history, had resented and resisted the immigrants" (60).

Likewise, Anne Haas Dyson intrigues us with her chapter "The Children's Forum: Linking Writing, Drama, and the Development of Community in the Urban Classroom." She observes how drama can enhance "learning to write and learning to participate in a complex community marked by sociological differences" (149). Children performing their own texts in an urban elementary school dealt with tensions that in some ways paralleled the larger culture. Working through those texts, children under their third grade teacher's tutelage, talked through their conflicts in creating, casting, performing, and writing about a play based on super heroes. Haas shows us – again, in an experiential study that gives classroom details and conversation – how the children managed the use of drama and issues arising from it.

Wagner makes sure that her chapters involving theoretical framework, definition of terms, charts and hard data are interwoven with experiential studies. She realizes that the research material is understandably dense. Wagner and her contributors draw upon the complex work of psychologists such as Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner as well as drama educator Dorothy Heathcote and theorists Howard Gardner and Jean Piaget. But Wagner and her contributors, on the whole, make their theories accessible to us.

I was least fond of the chapter by FranCina Conard, "Meta-Analysis of the Effectiveness of Creative Drama," which was an empirical study designed to measure results that make a "case for drama" (211). Wagner herself admits a quantitative study doesn't seem to have

the power of the experiential, ones like those she later tells us will define future research: "studies of cases, classroom ecology and teacher cognition and decision making, just to name a few" (346). She seems to include it because it has some use for those who need empirical research results in order to get funding, but frankly, it did not add much to her case.

This is not a book to show novices how to set up the use of drama in their classes, and research seems to be somewhat lacking in that area. Wagner emphasizes this point in a later chapter when she speaks to the need for enriched research studies and for explicit drama in the classroom techniques: "We need to look at what good drama teachers do and need to know, which methods of introducing drama...are effective" (241). But even without being a how-to, *Educational Drama and Language Arts* is successful in conveying its potential for the development of language skills, particularly for K-12 students.

Sometimes I had to remind myself that Wagner's intention is to show the data. I wanted the writing to be less stark, more fanciful like theater itself. I wanted to learn more about the studies, glean more of the techniques than she actually presents on the page. I also wanted to jump into the text and add my own comments about information that might help the teacher less informed in drama technique. I imagined the uninitiated asking for more details about how David Booth got his students to use "their bodies to create two still dramatic pictures or tableaux" (59). Why, I wondered, was there no mention of Augusto Boal, one of the founders of such image theater, a practitioner known throughout Europe and Canada (*Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, New York: Routledge, 1992)? He would have been a great help in understanding how to set up some scenarios. When I found reference at the end of Brian Edmiston and Jeffrey Wilhelm's chapter, "Repositioning Views/Reviewing Position: Forming Complex Understandings in Dialogue," pointing me to a "more detailed analysis of how teachers... create dialogue among students and teachers in drama" (117), I wished there had been even more finger-pointing towards good drama in education pedagogy.

These minor weaknesses aside, Wagner has a terrific list of references for those of us who want to read more, and she does convince us that drama can teach a great deal. Through her thorough presentation of the research, she implies that the average teacher who seeks to use drama in the classroom can get results. One such average teacher is delightfully presented in Philip Taylor's chapter on "Reflective Practitioner Research." Taylor develops a case study of Carl, a teacher who doubted the use of drama and shied away from it as a "growing within type thing" (214). A workshop with a drama practitioner and a professional development project spurred him to discover that he could use drama in his curriculum but also provided a way for him to assess his own teaching. This chapter also shows how valuable it can be when experienced specialists work with other teachers, stimulating them to add drama to their curriculum. Although I missed my opportunity to use Wagner's book to promote drama in prison, I won't fail to bring it with me this year to meetings at my college about devel-

oping our Arts in Mind program, where I plan to promote classes utilizing theater techniques to enhance other areas of learning. *Educational Drama and Language Arts* is not a book I'd take to read on my Spring Break, but it's definitely a book to be armed with in the slings and arrows world of educational assessment.

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Jean R. Trounstin

Theaterpädagog/inn/en benötigen auch Bücher für ihre Arbeit / Even Theatre Teachers need Books

Vorstellung einiger Neuerscheinungen / Some new publications

Unermüdet ist Hans-Wolfgang Nickel, langjähriger Leiter des Instituts für Spiel- und Theaterpädagogik an der Hochschule der Künste Berlin und ebendort Hochschullehrer in Sachen Spiel- und Theaterpädagogik aktiv - auch nach Erreichen der Altersgrenze (siehe KORRESPONDENZEN, Heft 32). Nun liegt ein weiteres Ergebnis seines produktiven Tuns vor: ein broschiertes Band SYMPOSIUM THEATERTHEORIE (als LAG-Materialien 39/30, Berlin 1999, 215 S.). Der 2. Untertitel des leistungswerten Beitrags von Hans Martin Ritter (S. 109ff.) gibt gewissermaßen (oder besser: wie mich als interessierten Leser) an, um was es in diesem Band geht/gehen kann: „Die Schauspieltheorie und die Theaterpädagogik“ (S. 109ff.). Eine nützliche, in sich auch kontroverse, kleine Argumentationshilfe liegt vor.

Wie eine Fortsetzung und Überführung mancher Gedanken in theaterwissenschaftliche und metatheoretische Diskurse liest sich der Band TRANSFORMATIONEN. THEATER DER NEUNZIGER JAHRE - herausgegeben von Erika Fischer-Lichte, Doris Kolesch und Christel Weiler als Recherchen-Band 2 der Zeitschrift „Theater der Zeit“ (ISBN 3-9805945-8-0). Hier liegt auf 193 Seiten eine Bilanz des nicht nur deutschsprachigen Theaters vor: Sie reicht vom Ende (?) des Geschichten-Erzählens bis hin zum „performative turn“ innerhalb der Theaterarbeit und ihrer Theorie bzw. weist über das enge Handlungsfeld der Institution Theater hinaus in andere kommunikative Felder der Gesellschaft.

„Die neue Macht der Darstellungskunst“ - das ist der Untertitel einer illustrativen Untersuchung von Thomas Meyer: POLITIK ALS THEATER (ISBN 3-351-02477-0); mit einer hier sehr angemessenen fotografischen Studie von Martina Kampmann: „Augenblicke der Inszenierung“. Dieser Band macht deutlich, daß das Handlungsfeld der Theaterpädagogik als geselliger und gesellschaftlicher Pädagogik umfangreich und vielgestaltig ist - daß es sowohl den Bereich des „Wir-alle-spielen-Theater“ meinen kann, wie das, was jeweils historisch fixiert als „Theater“ mit Institution, Text, Verhaltenskodex usw. meint. Das Stichwort „Theatralität“ oder der „wei-

te Theaterbegriff“: eine doch nicht so schlechte Hilfe, um unser Arbeitsgebiet zu umschreiben!)

Sogar eine sorgfältige literaturwissenschaftliche Untersuchung, die „Lektüren zum Verhältnis von Dokument und Kommentar“ (Untertitel) zu BRECHTS ‚FATZER‘-FRAGMENT vornimmt, wie die Arbeit von Judith Wilke (ISBN 3-89528-203-0), ist noch ein Beleg für die Dialektik und Reflexivität neueren theatralen und/oder theater-pädagogischen bzw. theater-kommunikativen Tuns. Die von Brecht überlieferten Fragmente (bzw. ‚das‘ Fatzer-Fragment) ist mit Teilen der Eigenlektüre des Autors Brecht ausgestattet, montiert diese Selbstreflexivität des Autors in seinen eigenen Text als neuen eigenen Text. In KORRESPONDENZEN, Heft 31, berichteten Gerd Koch und Marianne Streisand unter dem Titel FRAGMENTE UND FRAGEN über den Versuch des Berliner Ensembles, alle Brechtschen Fragmente zur Ausstellung zu bringen. Wir hoben damals die Installation des „Fatzter“-Fragments als besonders gelungen hervor. Das tut auch die Autorin Judith Wilke und nennt sie darum „bemerkenswert, weil sie die Entgrenzung des Theaters auf andere Kunstformen, auf Happening, Neue Musik und Performance mit einer Textlektüre verknüpft hat, die auch das Publikum in das Geschehen mit einbezog und sich selbst vorführte. Damit erinnerte sie an die dem Fragment eingeschriebene Utopie von ‚Theater‘ als einem Ort kollektiver Erfahrungen“ (S. 253).

Wenn ich einmal annehme, ein Leser, eine Leserin ist mir bis hierher voller Einverständnis gefolgt und hat die genannten Werke gar gelesen, dann könnte ich - je nach Arbeitsinteresse - vier Weiterlese-Empfehlungen geben - Buchhinweise, die aus dem oben Erwähnten einige Linien weiterführen. Also (1): Weiter mit Brecht - dann lese man die gedruckt vorliegende Ringvorlesung aus Anlaß des 100. Geburtstages Bertolt Brechts an der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin im Sommersemester 1998: BRECHT 100 (Bezug über die Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Philosophische Fakultät II, Institut für Neuere Deutsche Literatur, Schützenstr. 21, D-10099 Berlin, Fax: 030/20196690). Das Buch garantiert eine aufgeräumte Lektüre. (2): Zur Mitbeteiligung von sog. Zuschauern - da empfiehlt sich der ‚neue Boal‘ (Siehe auch das KORRESPONDENZEN-Heft 34 mit dem Schwerpunkt „Reflexionen. Perspektiven. 20 Jahre Theater der Unterdrückten in Deutschland“). Gerade kam der langerwartete Boal-Band DER REGENBOGEN DER WÜNSCHE. METHODEN AUS THEATER UND THERAPIE (ISBN 3-7800-5811-1) heraus mit einem langen Interview, das Jürgen Weintz (KORRESPONDENZEN-Autor, der auch das Buch herausgab und bearbeitete) und Bernd Ruping (KORRESPONDENZEN-Mitherausgeber) mit Augusto Boal führten. Mit diesem Buch zeigt sich Boal an einer Stelle seiner Theaterarbeit, die das entfaltet, was er bereits bei seinen ersten Besuchen in Europa immer wieder notiert hat: Die Bedeutung des psychischen und emotionalen Faktors der Unterdrückung. Und Boal bleibt sich treu in diesem Grundsatz, den wir vom Brechtschen Lehrstück-Ansatz kennen: Das Mit-Tun der Spielerinnen und Spieler ist gefordert - besser gesagt: Ein menschliches Kommunikations-

verfahren/-modell soll bereitgestellt werden – im Fall des neuen Buches von Boal eher mit psycho- und soziodramatischem Hintergrund. Zusammen mit seinem ersten Buch „Theater der Unterdrückten“ von 1979 liegt nun so etwas wie der ‚ganze Boal‘ vor – leider fehlt uns in deutscher Sprache noch ein wichtiges ‚link‘ seines Tuns, als – gewissermaßen – theatraler Ombudsmann, nämlich als Bürgervertreter innerhalb des sog. „legislativen Theaters“ (London 1998). (3): Im Doppelheft 7/8 der KORRESPONDENZEN von 1990/91 schrieb Ingeborg Meyer einen der ganz frühen Aufsätze zum neuen biographischen Spielansatz von Jonathan Fox: „Playbacktheater: Das Theater aus dem Bauch und ohne Drehbuch!“ (S. 31ff.). Das ist nun lange her – mittlerweile hat sich auch hierzulande viel Experimentelles auf dem Sektor des Playbacktheater-Ansatzes getan. Darüber informiert sensibel und kleine Schritte des spielerischen Erkennens und Wieder-Erlebens würdigend der Band von Jonathan Fox und Heinrich Dauber (Hrsg.): *PLAYBACKTHEATER - WO GESCHICHTEN SICH BEGEGNEN* (ISBN 3-7815-0983-4). Der Band ist aus einem internationalen Symposium in Kassel hervorgegangen, er liefert Personen- und Sachwort-Register, so daß eine Art Nachschlagewerk entstanden ist. Mir wichtig ist vor allem der Forschungsansatz, der in der subjektiven und gegenstandsbezogenen Methodik eine Erweiterung bedeutet – einerseits weil gezeigt werden kann, daß Theater (auch) eine Forschungsmethode ist/sein kann und andererseits wird sichtbar, daß Forschungen sich ihrem Gegenstand anschmiegen (Adorno) sollten: ihre Ergebnisse sind dann nicht ‚clean‘, sondern sie tragen Bedeutungselemente des Subjektiven, Emotionalen, Biographischen, Perspektivischen usw. an und in sich. Diese Momente werden also nicht als periphere Größen der Forschungspsychologie beiseite geschoben; siehe dazu z.B. das Schaubild „Playback als Forschungsinstrument“ (S. 203). „Geistesgeschichtlich ... entstammt das Playback Theater (dem) europäisch-nordamerikanischen Kontext (wie das Psychodrama, die Gestalttherapie und die Themenzentrierte Interaktion) ... aus dem ... bis zum Einsetzen des Naziterrors unzählige soziale, kulturelle, politische und wissenschaftliche Impulse und Bewegungen entstanden, die sich vielfältig mischten. Ihre Vertreter – Jacob Levy MORENO, Fritz PERLS, Martin BUBER, Kurt LEWIN, Erich FROMM, Ruth COHN ... – schätzen sich gegenseitig hoch und lernten voneinander. Sie wurden als Juden, Sozialisten und radikale Humanisten in die Emigration vertrieben. Ihre Ideen und praktisch politisch-künstlerisch-pädagogischen Konzepte gerieten ... in Vergessenheit, um ... aus Amerika re-importiert zu werden“ (S. 83). Das Buch zum Playback-Theater ermutigt und rät zur Vorsicht in der Arbeit an der Subjektivität mit theatralen Mitteln in der und für die Zivilgesellschaft. (4): Eine große und auch z.T. großartige Performance war die Tagung „Performance und Lehre“, die 1998 in Potsdam stattfand (siehe die „viestimmige Erinnerung“ darin in KORRESPONDENZEN, Heft 34). Jetzt liegt der Tagungsband mit dem poetischen Titel *SCHREIBEN AUF WASSER*, herausgegeben von Hanne Seitz, vor (ISBN 3-88474-800-9/3-923064-73-X). Hanne Seitz' umfangreiche Untersuchung *RAUME IM DAZWISCHEN* stellten wir ausführlich in den KORRE-

SPONDENZEN, H. 32, vor. Für die, die das Glück hatten, die intensiven Tage in Potsdam mitzuerleben und zu gestalten: eine Erinnerung, die vieles wieder plastisch werden läßt und auch einiges neu sortieren wird. Der Prozeß wird so – verändert – weitergegeben. Für die Leser, die nicht dabei waren, wird ein Überblick über die Breite des Performativen entstehen, der das engere Feld des Theatralen verläßt und andere Kommunikations- und Darbietungsweisen beerbt. Man lese sich auch hier ein – und setze anders (wie denn sonst!) fort ... Parallel-Lektüren zu diesem Performance-Band könnten die Untersuchung, der Versuch von Burghart Schmidt *BILD IM AB-WESEN. ZU EINER KUNSTTHEORIE DES NAHEZU-NEGATIVEN IM SCHWIERIGEN SCHEIN DES ‚BILDER-VERBOTS‘* sein (ISBN 3-901190-51-1) und die Arbeit von Hermann Pfütze *FORM, URSPRUNG UND GEGENWART DER KUNST* (ISBN 3-518-29017-7), dem wir im Heft 27 der KORRESPONDENZEN (mit dem Themenschwerpunkt „Fremdes Theater“) den Aufsatz mit dem Titel „Wenn Fremde gehen, kommt Gewalt“ verdanken. Übrigens: Beide Autoren haben einen starken Bezug zur Bildenden Kunst – und den hat die Performance ja nun auch.

Auf den (nicht vorhandenen) Tisch der Redaktion der KORRESPONDENZEN kommen – erfreulicherweise – immer mehr Bücher zur Rezension. Leider können nur einige umfangreich vorgestellt werden. Manche werden in einer Sammelrezension wieder dieser gewürdigt (und vielleicht noch einmal umfangreicher rezensiert). Direkt an die hier angezeigten Publikationen schließt übrigens eine Veröffentlichung, die Christoph Riemer, der unermüdlische Maskenmacher/-künstler herausgegeben hat, an: *MASKEN. IMAGINÄRE FOLKLORE* (Bezug über Burckhardthaus, Herzbachweg 2, 63571 Gelnhausen). Nebenbei: Der Herausgeber ist auch ein kreativer Fachmensch für eine Performance des Essens (siehe oben den Sammelband von Hanne Seitz).

In Heft 32 der KORRESPONDENZEN stellten wir umfangreich die konstruktiven Vorschläge von Ulrike Hanke für ein theater- und spielpädagogisches Curriculum in der Sozialpädagogik vor. Hieran schließt sich – recht eigensinnig und anders – ein Theorie-Praxis-Buch an, das Georg-Achim Mies und Peter-Jürgen Sommer erstellt haben: *ÜBER DAS THEATER-MACHEN. REFLEXIONEN ÜBER DAS WILD ÄSTHETISCHE & WILD PÄDAGOGISCHE. BEITRÄGE ZU EINER BEDEUTUNGSOFFENEN SOZIALEN ARBEIT* (ISBN 3-933493-00-5). Was gefällt mir auf den ersten Blick an diesem Buch? Daß es Anschauung und Reflexion verbindet, daß es das wilde Vagabundieren und den offenen Horizont praktiziert! Ein Buch für Menschen, die selber praktisch tätig sind und die schon immer mal, das, was sie machen, zu Papier bringen wollten. Von dieser Stelle ein Gruß an die unbekanntenen Kollegen und ein Dank für das Gesprächsangebot, das diese Publikation auch darstellt.

Ein bißchen Eigenwerbung: *LERNEN IN NEUEN KONTEXTEN*, das ist der Untertitel eines neuen Buches, das Gerd Koch, Gabriela Naumann und Florian Vaßen unter dem Titel *OHNE KÖRPER GEHT NICHTS* herausgegeben haben (ISBN 3-928878-56-5). Dieses Buch ist die sehr erweiterte Fortsetzung eines Projektes, das wir 1993 mit

dem Heftschwerpunkt der KORRESPONDENZEN, Heft 17/18 („Ohne Körper geht nichts ...“) begannen. Nun kreisen viele kompetente Autorinnen und Autoren um die Brennpunkte „Körper/Kultur“ und „Körper/Spiel“ (eine Auswahlbibliographie beschließt den Band).

Theaterpädagogik: Das Wort ist ein Kompositum: Theater & Pädagogik. Ist Theaterpädagogik ein integratives, synergetisches Tun? Ja, manchmal schon. Auch steht man/frau manchmal vor Zerreißproben: Mal zieht der Pol Pädagogik, mal der Pol Theater ... Und wir als Theaterpädagog/inn/en mittendrin. Da hilft vielleicht Supervision – oder – wie man früher salopp sagte – ein gutes Buch. Es darf auch eine Zeitschrift sein, z.B. THEATER DER ZEIT (Fax: 030/24722415), die ich hier nicht nur erwähne, weil sie gut ist, sondern weil seit 2000 dies Gute nun auch monatlich zu lesen ist (statt bisher zweimonatlich). Das zum theatralen Pol. Nun zum pädagogischen, besser: erziehungswissenschaftlichen. Neu auf dem Markt ist die ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR ERZIEHUNGSWISSENSCHAFT (Fax: 02171/490711), die Debatten anstößt und elaboriert, die uns als Theaterpädagog/inn/en angehen, wollen wir den zweiten Teil unserer Profession nicht vernachlässigen. So lieferte z.B. Heft 3/1999 wichtiges Material zu Lebenslauf, Biographie und Bildung und diskutierte Individualpädagogik/kommunitaristische Erziehung – da können wir den Boalschen oder Brechtschen Ansatz heranzuführen und das Playbacktheater oder wieder anders das Theater der Politik. Hier wird mir deutlich, daß wir Theaterpädagog/inn/en uns in solche Diskurse aus unserem ‚job‘ heraus einmischen sollten – um das Fach zu stabilisieren und um Schnittmengen mit anderen Disziplinen und Handlungsfeldern zu bilden.

Ulrike Hentschels Buch THEATERSPIELEN ALS ÄSTHETISCHE BILDUNG. ÜBER EINEN BEITRAG PRODUKTIVEN KÜNSTLERISCHEN GESTALTENS ZUR SELBSTBILDUNG. Deutscher Studien Verlag, Weinheim 2000: Das Buch (vgl. Rezension in KORRESPONDENZEN, H. 29/1997) war seit Mitte 1999 vergriffen und erscheint im Februar 2000 in einer 2. Auflage. Zu beziehen über Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Spiel und Theater e.V., Falkenstr. 20, D-30449 Hannover.

(Alle Buchhinweise sind – soweit vorhanden – mit ISBN versehen – das spart einige Druckzeilen.)

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Hans Martin Ritter: Sprechen auf der Bühne. Ein Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch. Mit Fotos von Katharina Megnet und Thomas Gevers. Berlin 1999

„... sicher kein orthodoxes Buch der Sprecherziehung oder Sprechwissenschaft“, hat Hans Martin Ritter nach eigenem Selbstverständnis geschrieben. Und tatsächlich unterscheidet es sich in mehrfacher Hinsicht grundlegend von den einschlägigen Werken dieser Disziplin.

Diese Unterschiede ergeben sich aus zwei grundsätzlichen Überlegungen:

Zum einen bezieht sich Ritter zur theoretischen Fundierung von Übungen und Arbeitsvorschlägen nicht auf die Ansätze der Sprechwissenschaft und Sprecherziehung, sondern auf die Vorschläge unterschiedlichster Schauspieltheorien. Deren Bedeutung für das Sprechen auf der Bühne arbeitet er im Prolog zu seinem Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch heraus. Im Dialog mit diesen künstlerischen Konzeptionen vollzieht er ihren Weg nach und geht ihn für seinen eigenen Ansatz neu. Ausgehend von konkreten, in der Schauspielpraxis auftretenden Problemen über deren systematische Reflexion, gelangt er zu Arbeitsvorschlägen, die wiederum im unmittelbaren Zusammenhang der Praxis erprobt sind. Diese Vorgehensweise macht das Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch für theoretisch interessierte Praktiker gleichermaßen lesenswert wie für praktisch interessierte Theoretiker.

Zum anderen grenzt sich Ritter in seiner Schrift ausdrücklich von einem Fachverständnis ab, das die Sprecherziehung als ein „technisches“ Fach in der Schauspielausbildung ansieht. Eine Trennung zwischen technischen Übungen und künstlerischen Vorgängen ist aus seiner Sicht nicht sinnvoll. In seinem Epilog formuliert er diese Einsicht in kritisch-konstruktiver Auseinandersetzung mit namhaften Vertretern der Sprecherziehung und Sprechwissenschaft. Ästhetische Praxis ist nach Ritters Überzeugung nicht teilbar, in dem Sinne, dass sie erst im szenischen Produkt sichtbar wird, sondern sie ist bereits im Arbeitsprozess, in jeder Atem- und Stimmübung enthalten. So formuliert er als einen Grundsatz seiner Arbeit: „Jeder noch so elementare Vorgang ist zugleich ein kommunikativer und ein ästhetischer, jeder ‚technische‘ Vorgang ist auch ein künstlerischer“ (20). Prolog und Epilog bilden den Rahmen für die Darstellung der sprecherzieherischen Arbeit, in der die praktische Umsetzung der hier erörterten Grundannahmen veranschaulicht wird. Die Darstellung gliedert sich in zwei Teile, die wiederum in jeweils vier Hauptstücke – umrahmt von Vor- und Nachspielen, mit Zwischenspielen als Gelenkstücken – unterteilt sind. Der formale Aufbau findet seine Entsprechung im inhaltlichen Fortschreiten der Arbeitsvorschläge von einfachen, elementaren Übungen zu komplexen Vorgängen in der szenischen Arbeit und erleichtert so, nach dem ersten Lesen, das Auffinden von Arbeitsschritten und Übungssequenzen. Eine Hilfe dabei bieten auch die sehr ausdrucksstarken Fotografien von Katharina Megnet und Thomas Gevers.

Im ersten Teil mit dem Titel „elementare Arbeit“ werden Übungen zu Atem, Stimme, Lautung, zur Rhythmik und Musikalität von Sprache und Sprechen vorgestellt. Auffällig ist, dass alle Übungen situativ eingebettet sind. Auch elementare Übungssequenzen sind so angelegt, dass sie die innere Vorstellungen der Übenden herausfordern und gleichzeitig das physische Ausagieren dieser Innenwelten verlangen. So werden bereits Lockerungs- und Aufwärmübungen nicht rein technisch vollzogen, sondern mit Bildern verbunden, wie zum Beispiel dem vom schmelzenden Schneemann in der Sonne oder von der Weide im Wind (vgl. 29). Gelenkstück zwischen den beiden Teilen bildet ein Exkurs zum Sprechen von Versen, der in einer – meines

Wissens nach – einzigartiger Weise die Besonderheiten des gesprochenen Verses auf der Bühne diskutiert. Ritter geht dabei – anhand zahlreicher Beispiele – auf die Schwierigkeiten ein, die die Widersprüche zwischen gebundener Sprache und situativem Sinn für das Sprechen auf der Bühne bedeuten.

Der zweite Teil des Lehr- und Arbeitsbuches ist der Arbeit am Text gewidmet. Hier werden die in der elementaren Arbeit geltenden Prinzipien vertieft und erweitert und mehr und mehr in den Zusammenhang der szenischen Arbeit gestellt. Im Mittelpunkt aller Arbeitsvorschläge steht die Arbeit am Gestus der Sprechenden, mit dem, nach Brecht, die Beziehungen und Haltungen der Menschen zueinander erfaßt werden. Dieses kommunikative Moment im Text aufzufinden, es situativ zu verankern, auszuagieren und – wo nötig – wieder so weit zu reduzieren, dass es lediglich als Handlungsintention sichtbar bleibt, ist nach Ritter das zentrale Anliegen aller von ihm vorgeschlagenen Übungen zur szenischen Arbeit. Wie schon in der elementaren Arbeit entspricht auch auf dem Weg zum Sprechen auf der Bühne jede einzelne Übung den formalen Kriterien ästhetischer Gestaltungsprozesse auf dem Theater, die der Autor mit dem Dreischritt von Handlungsimpuls – Aktion – Schlußgeste umschreibt.

Ritter verdeutlicht sein methodisches Vorgehen exemplarisch an den unterschiedlichsten Textformen und – Fragmenten: an „Shakespeare-Splittern“ und Sonetten, an Brechts reimloser Lyrik mit unregelmäßigen Rhythmen (Aus einem Lesebuch für Städtebewohner), an Balladen, Kurzprosa und Erzählungen. Dabei führt der Weg immer stärker hin zur szenischen Arbeit: von den Textsplittern zu größeren szenischen Fragmenten, von Gedichten, die eine Figurenrede beinhalten, und an denen damit Prinzipien szenischer Arbeit in nuce zu erfahren sind, bis hin zu Formen szenischen Erzählens, wie sie in der Mauerschau und im Botenbericht vorliegen, um nur einige Beispiele zu nennen.

Als Ziel seiner sprecherzieherischen Arbeit hebt Ritter die Befähigung des Schauspielers zur doppelten Aufmerksamkeit hervor, zur innerszenischen Kommunikation und gleichzeitig zur Kommunikation zwischen Bühne und Zuschauerraum. Auch vor diesem Hintergrund erklärt sich noch einmal die Abkehr von einem rein technischen Vorgehen und stattdessen die Entwicklung einer Methode, die jede einzelne Übung im Zusammenhang des Theaterereignisses reflektiert und an deren kommunikativen und ästhetischen Anforderungen ausrichtet.

Ritters Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch enthält keine Rezepte. Bei aller Anschaulichkeit in der Schilderung einzelner Übungen (eine Leistung, die jeder zu schätzen weiß, der schon einmal versucht hat, die simultane und vielschichtigen Vorgänge von Übungen in das sukzessive System der Schriftsprache zu bringen), ist er sich offenbar immer der Gefahr bewußt, die das unreflektierte Abarbeiten von Übungen für die schauspiel- und theaterpädagogische Praxis bedeutet. Seine Formulierungen sind deshalb durch den gesamten Text hindurch konsequent von didaktischer Zurückhaltung gekennzeichnet. Es geht ihm darum, Vorschläge zu machen, Arbeitsmodelle vorzustellen und in vielen Fällen auch Variationen anzubieten. Da seine Vorschläge sehr vielfältig, überraschend, oft witzig sind und keinen Bereich zwi-

schen Himmel und Erde auslassen (der verspätete Jesu eilt über den See, was ein besonderes Maß an Atem- und Körperspannung erfordert), vermögen sie ansteckend zu wirken. Auf diese Weise eröffnet Ritter für den lesenden Praktiker Anschlussmöglichkeiten, mit seinen Arbeitsvorschlägen weiter zu arbeiten, sie als ein offenes System zu nutzen.

Dass damit nicht nur Schauspielpädagoginnen und (angehende) Schauspieler angesprochen sind, sondern auch Theaterpädagoginnen in den unterschiedlichsten Arbeitsfeldern, stellt eine weitere Qualität dieses Lehr- und Arbeitsbuches zur Sprecherziehung dar. Gerade das konsequente Verankern von Übungen in situativen Zusammenhängen, das Verbinden von Übungen, die die Imagination und die sprecherischen und körperlichen Fähigkeiten ansprechen, ist in der schulischen und außerschulischen Bildungsarbeit von Theaterpädagoginnen unverzichtbar. Ritters Anregungen und Arbeitsvorschläge sind richtungweisend für eine theaterpädagogische Praxis, in der ästhetische und kommunikative Prozesse gleichermaßen angestrebt werden, Produkte ästhetisch und kommunikabel gestaltet sein sollen. „Sprechen auf der Bühne“ empfiehlt sich damit als Grundlagenwerk nicht nur für die Schauspielausbildung, sondern auch für die Ausbildung von Theaterpädagoginnen.

Am Ende seiner Überlegungen wirft Ritter eine Frage auf, die sich der kritischen Leserin seines Lehr- und Arbeitsbuches im Verlauf der Lektüre immer mal wieder stellt: Er fragt nach dem Sinn einer Sprecherziehung, die von psycho-physischen Zusammenhängen ausgeht, auf allen Ebenen situative Vorgaben macht und sich an Modellen aus der alltäglichen Praxis orientiert angesichts einer Theaterentwicklung, in der der Text mehr und mehr zum Material wird. Der gesprochene Text auf der Bühne hat dabei nicht mehr die Funktion, von konsistenten, am Prinzip der Mimesis orientierten Situationen zu erzählen, sondern ist lediglich ein Element im gleichberechtigten Nebeneinander heterogener theatraler Zeichen. Angesichts der aktuellen Konjunktur postmoderner und postdramatischer Diskussion um zunehmende Heterogenität und Fragmentarisierung in den Künsten und auch um die Vervielfältigung von Identitäten, den Verlust des ganzen (dramatischen) Subjekts benutzt Ritter den Begriff der Ganzheitlichkeit in seinem Lehrbuch gewissermaßen antizyklisch. Er benutzt ihn jedoch nicht unkritisch und ist sich seiner problematischen Konnotationen bewußt. Die Rede von der Ganzheit ist für ihn vor dem Hintergrund des Diskurses der Theateravantgarde nur dann noch sinnvoll, wenn sie das (widersprüchliche) Einzelne im Ganzen nicht verleugnet und gleichzeitig das Ganze (das ästhetische Produkt) bereits in jeder einzelnen Übung des Arbeitsprozesses angelegt ist. Diese interessante Diskussion kann jedoch auf der letzten Seite des Buches nicht mehr ausgelotet werden. Für die damit aufgeworfenen Fragen zu den Anforderungen an die Schauspielausbildung in Anbetracht einer sich radikal verändernden Theaterästhetik vermag der Autor, im Rahmen seines Lehr- und Arbeitsbuches zum „Sprechen auf der Bühne“, allerdings ein erstes Problembewußtsein zu schaffen.

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nicht entleihbar

