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# Friday Night at the Mayaguez Mall: A Rationale With Examples on the Use of Drama in the Notional-Functional Classroom

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FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE MAYAGUEZ MALL:

A Rationale With Examples on the Use  
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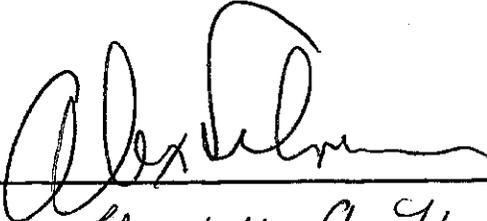
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of  
Arts in Teaching degree at the School for International Training, Brat-  
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Principal adviser   
Project adviser/reader Elizabeth A. Yoniewicz  
Date October 6, 1981

## ABSTRACT

Three recent intensive courses teaching EFL in Puerto Rico and ESL in Brattleboro provided the author with practical experience using drama activities in connection with the application of notional-functional syllabuses. These experiences are described and the choice of a "functional" approach is justified. Functions are explained and an overview of drama is given. Seven practical drama activities for a variety of language levels and situations are presented. A discussion of the pedagogical aspects of practicing functions through drama follows, wherein such considerations as the role of the teacher, the development of the student, lesson planning, giving directions and aims are included. Some thoughts on the language/drama teacher conclude the paper.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I am attempting to share with second language teachers ways of incorporating drama techniques and drama methodology in courses based on notional-functional syllabuses.

The first chapter, BACKGROUND, describes three recent teaching experiences which provided me with most of the thoughts and techniques found in this paper. The next chapter, FUNCTIONS, sets out to define what the term "functions" means, why I chose to work from a notional-functional syllabus in my courses this summer and how I selected the specific units of language to be taught. In DRAMA, I aim to give a personal overview of what drama is. The chapter IDEAS describes seven different drama activities for practicing language functions in the classroom. Such questions as "The Role of the Teacher" and "The Development of the Learner" are dealt with in PEDAGOGY. The final chapter, THE LANGUAGE/DRAMA TEACHER, is part summary, part advocacy of the paper's main points.

There are many questions concerning the employment of drama techniques in a functional syllabus that I have not chosen to answer or even discuss. This is not due to their lack of importance, but rather to the fact that either I, as a teacher, am not yet ready to discuss them or else individual teachers, on their own, have to provide their own answers. They are such questions as: How much time should be spent on drama? What sorts of classes is it good for? How does it all fit into the curriculum? What if my supervisor doesn't allow it?

I have not set out to write a practical guide to drama use. I have attempted to construct and support a rationale, illustrated by practical examples, based on my own experience and reflection.

I strongly believe in the importance of sociolinguistic learning in

the language class and that drama activities are central to the accomplishment of the aims of all second language teachers who share this view.

Much further research is needed into the place of drama in the presentation, practice and communication of functions. The chapters that follow are no more than a documentation of my own awareness that hundreds more chapters are necessary for a real understanding of the possibilities.

## BACKGROUND

Recently I had an opportunity to teach three different language courses which provided me with most of the experiences and much of the reflection that went into the contents of this paper.

First came a five week, three and a half hour a day, intensive Aural English course in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. The sixteen learners ranged in age from thirteen to forty and included housewives, engineers, bored teenagers, precocious teenagers and university students. The class's level was roughly intermediate. For most of the students, it marked the first time that they had freely volunteered to study English. It was a new situation, one which did not involve the coercion of exams and academic credit or the hurdles of prerequisite courses. English is a compulsory subject in all schools and colleges on the island. Puerto Ricans have a choice about French or German, but not English. And if they don't choose to study it, they don't necessarily choose to learn it.

My students, then, were somewhat motivated. The course which they signed up for provided them with several new experiences. They had never before studied in such a socially and educationally mixed group. They had never before studied English without the immediate kinds of rewards, threats and motivations that the Puerto Rican system of education could bestow upon them. Furthermore, they had never before been asked to work with something other than a grammar-based syllabus.

Though Puerto Ricans travel to the mainland, Mayaguez was strictly an EFL environment. In contrast, my next teaching experience took place in the friendly and accessible ESL community of Brattleboro, Vermont. The students had a wide variety of different ability levels. They were all newcomers to the States, all headed for homestays with American fami-

lies. Their visits began with English courses at the School for International Training.

One group was Japanese. Their ages ranged between twenty and forty-five and their levels went from complete beginner to advanced. There were five students in the class, which met for five hours a day over two and a half weeks. They then settled into three-week homestays before returning to Japan. Another group consisted of twelve South American teenagers bound for one-year homestays and exchange student adventures in U.S. high schools. They were also at SIT for two and a half weeks.

Both the Japanese and the South Americans were entering situations in which no one would ever be likely to correct their English. In contrast to the English they learned before coming to the States, their success or failure with the language would most probably not be measured by their teachers but by how well they met their own needs and made themselves understood.

The last teaching experience was a three-day Shock Language course for linguistically aware, English speaking graduate students in Brattleboro. The language was Norwegian. The course consisted of eight hours overall, for twelve learners who knew not one word of Norwegian, nor would, in all likelihood, have occasion to use what they learned in the foreseeable future.

The summer provided several contrasts: EFL/ESL, similar ages/mixed ages, similar level/mixed levels, adults/teenagers. What all of the courses had in common was an emphasis on spoken English and complete freedom for the teacher to proceed in any way he chose.

## FUNCTIONS

### Rationale

On the first day of the Mayaguez course, the students gave me the impression that they wanted to spend five weeks discussing serious things like Women's Liberation or Puerto Rican Self-Sufficiency in Agriculture. After a couple of these discussions, I pointed out to them that although everyone was participating and using English, all they were really doing with the language was reporting, debating and expressing opinions. There were many other aspects to communication than those which "serious discussions" called forth. When the teacher in the classroom next to mine made up a course-long list of conversation topics (whose intellectual demands were equal to fifty-five years of living on the second floor of the Museum of Modern Art), I decided to save my class from the same fate. I introduced them to Functions and the idea of a notional-functional syllabus.

With the Japanese and South Americans in Brattleboro, I had thought of basing the courses on Situations. Anticipating their homestays, I thought that such situations as The Kitchen, or Lost in the Streets, or A Visit to Another House would give them what they needed for survival and communication. But too many situations seemed equally crucial, while, at the same time, I knew that half of those situations were unlikely to come to pass. I was searching for a more primary means of organizing the language to be taught. What could be done in your own kitchen as well as in your neighbor's? These learners were about to have to communicate in English all day long in different places and situations. What kinds of communications were they likely to effect? In any given situation, they would probably be pretty clear about what they wanted to do with the

language, but how to do those things in English? How could I make sure that we covered their most important communication needs in class? I spent hours outside of class with a Japanese woman who knew almost no English when she arrived. She could say little more than "The table is next to the wall." But in Brattleboro no one asked her where the table was. Instead, she had to do the following five things constantly: greet people and know when others were greeting her, ask people for information and help, thank people for their assistance, ask people to explain things more slowly or more clearly, tell about herself. The other Japanese, whose English was more advanced, had of course the same needs as well. I analyzed these five needs and isolated the simplest units of each communication. These units became the syllabus for the course.

The students studying Norwegian began their course by making and transcribing a Community Language Learning tape. It had been my intention to plumb the transcription and unfathom all the grammar rules that it contained. In the end there was too little time to accomplish that goal properly, and I chose to examine the tape for what kinds of things the students had wanted to do with the language. Because I thought that we could master some of those communications quickly, I again decided on a functions approach.

#### Explanation

A notional-functional syllabus is simply a way of organizing the material to be covered in a language course. It uses, as a starting point, the actual language that native speakers use. Notions have to do with conceptual meanings like Time, Space, Person, etc. We express the notion of "future time" in the sentence "She'll come at five" differently from the notion of "past time" in the sentence "She came at

five." When teaching such notions, there is a certain amount of grammar that has to be learned, but the focus of the lesson is on the notions and not on verb tenses or prepositions.

Functions are the names for the things we do when we communicate. The following sentence, seen on a poster on a Fifth Avenue bus, has one function, To Announce Something. The "something" contains notions of time, place and existence.

There will be a meeting of all interested Fifth Avenue Bus Commuters next Wednesday, April 29, at 5:00 in Room 1109 at the World Trade Center.

Let's look at another sentence which contains a notion of time.

Come at five.

What is the function? To Invite, To Delay, To Plead, or something else?

Studying functions means studying how to express what we are doing when we are speaking as well as understanding what others are doing to us. It does not mean learning some kind of code that relates functions and their forms on a one-to-one basis. If that were the case, there could be three-way dictionaries (Spanish word: gracias = Function in English: To Express Thanks = Form that native speakers use: Thank you). But what about "Thanks," "Thanks a lot," "I'm grateful," "You can't imagine what that did for me," "Listen. Anytime you need something, just ask. Anytime. I mean it."

The Norwegian students worked on four functions: To Greet, To Express Thanks, To Express Interest and To Take Leave. While they learned to express each function well and while they learned whatever grammar was necessary to understand and reproduce the expression of the functions, the Norwegian grammar that they did learn in three days never did fit neatly together into a pyramid. For students who were used to adding

new bits of grammar to old bits of grammar, like some kind of linguistic logoset, it was as if they had learned four functions from four different languages which all had the same intonation and pronunciation.

In the other summer courses, the relationship between functions and grammar was much more controlled and logical, which it could very well be, since I, as the teacher, had complete control over which function to teach next and which expressions of that function to introduce. Functions can make for a spiraling syllabus. After six weeks, you can come back and teach a more complex way of expressing the same function. Similarly, students with different levels of ability in the same class can work on whichever interpretation suits their needs. One Japanese expressed thanks with "Thanks." Another one was ready for the more limited context and more complex grammar and vocabulary of "I am really quite grateful to you."

#### What to Teach

The question of how to prioritize which functions to teach can be dealt with by a close evaluation of the communicative needs of the learners. Whereas in an ESL context, the teacher has to be aware of the nature of the student's interaction with the community, in an EFL context, the choice of functions is tied to the student's perception of his or her own needs, which is often related to satisfying intrinsic curiosity about sociolinguistic differences between L1 and L2 (even if they don't know what "sociolinguistic" means). This curiosity is often more acute than that of a learner in an ESL situation because cultural security and language dominance keeps the second language and culture in a continually abstract, exotic and nonthreatening perspective. My students in Mayaguez hardly experienced what it was to fail at communication in English because there was no pressing need to succeed. They could pick and choose

what they wanted to be able to do in English based primarily on their imaginations. Class, at times, resembled an unending drama about American life that took on the mythical qualities of a Dos Passos novel.

The interpretations of functions to be taught depend on grammatical complexity and appropriateness. But where does an interpretation come from and how is it introduced? In Mayaguez, between Skits in English and myself, there were plenty of lists and plenty of examples of different native speaker language. Often, someone in the class already knew how to say the function. When students used inappropriate language, it gave me a chance to gradually work the wrong examples into right ones before their very eyes. I liked to suddenly give vivid one-man dramatizations of the use of a function in context at the very moment they had worked it out. Long lists of things were largely overkill, but often there was one item on a list that sparked special interest and I would tilt to that interpretation from then on. Newspaper columns, magazines and television were useful as sources of new functions and new expressions, but couldn't possibly serve up an instant expression for what students wanted to know at that moment.

Brattleboro had the advantage of having people I could drag into the classroom whenever I needed "live" language. I became quite friendly with the cleaning lady in the building where we met. At a moment's notice, she would come in and answer such questions as "What do you say when someone asks you for a date and you don't want to go but don't want to hurt his feelings?"

The community as a whole provided a context for practicing new language, being introduced to new language and experiencing the need for still more new language. A student might go out and Ask for Information about restaurants in town. She might come back and practice how people

Inform others about where to eat, what's good, how much it costs, etc., and then ask about Receiving Compliments because someone said she spoke good English. (She might also like to Express Disbelief because someone thought Ecuador was a province in Brazil.)

In Mayaguez, by concentrating on functions and the appropriateness of the various expressions of these functions, I was much better able to correct students' English within a context that they could accept. With most previous teachers, if the teacher said "Good morning," they could have said "The moon is made of goat cheese" and have been correct. Now there was a new dimension to correctness.

As the sole arbiter of appropriateness and correctness in an EFL situation, my role in the classroom carried greater authority than I had previously believed was proper for a language teacher. The power and frequency of my correcting was potentially quite dominating. For that reason, I chose to use Mary Hines's book Skits in English as a conduit into which I could channel some of that authority. With the Japanese and South Americans in Brattleboro, the obvious benefits of using the widespread resources of the community negated any similar need for a textbook.

In stating that I chose to work with a functional syllabus, I don't mean to imply that I planned it all out in advance, day by day. In fact, I made much of it up as I went along, basing the functions to be taught on the communication needs of the moment. While it was fairly arbitrary as to which function followed which, I was very much concerned that all previously learned functions were constantly recycled. I also took into account the grammatical capability of the students when choosing precisely how functions were to be expressed. I paid some attention to grammatical connections which reached across functions, so as not to leave anyone in

the state of speaking four languages for very long.

Although useful lists of function words exist, I did not feel constrained to use such lists or any particularly uniform way of stating functions, such as infinitives-only. Most of the time I defined the function word, but not always. Furthermore, by telling myself that I was operating with a notional-functional syllabus, I did not necessarily believe I was doing anything earthshatteringly new. There have always been teachers who worked with language analytically (that is, first seeing how native speakers communicated and then seeing how it was put together, rather than vice versa). There have always been teachers who stressed communication and all that it implied.

For my students looking at their own language learning, functions proved to be extremely useful. When a student in Mayaguez said, "I am engineer. I have twenty-eight years," I was able to correct his English because I was helping him to present himself, not because his grammar was wrong. But just as To Present as a function is incomplete without the notion of Who or What (in this case, "himself"), so is To Present Himself incomplete without a context. When I could tell him that he would not get too far at a disco in Chicago with a line like "I am engineer. I have twenty-eight years," then we were talking about something which was in the student's self-interest to learn.

### The Units

The list of English functions devised by ESL specialist Julia Dobson (see Table 1) is one person's attempt to delineate functions. The overall categories for the nature of various communications are written in capital letters. In each category are specific illustrations of each kind of communication. The six major function categories (Requesting and Giving



Information, Expressing Thought Processes, Expressing Opinions, Making Judgments, Modifying People's Behavior, Expressing Personal Feelings) cover all likely communication needs. The illustrations of these (to ask, to inquire, to request, etc., etc.) can be expressed on either the sentence level, or just as appropriately but with more complexity, on the discourse level.

The categories "Interacting Socially" and "Relationship Patterns" are broadly based. Exemplifications of these functions would be on the level of clusters of functions or speech acts. When the dimension of register is added, the expression of many of the functions is affected.

Some functions can be perfectly expressed by one word. Others cannot be mastered until a maze of cultural and sociolinguistic considerations are understood. The teacher using a functional approach to teaching can subject the language which native speakers use to however complex a set of sociolinguistic coordinates he chooses to work with. The results will be units of language of various sizes. Decisions about the nature of the units he ultimately chooses to work with depend on the level of the students and the communicative needs they are likely to encounter. The leader of a group of visiting Chinese factory managers, on a three-month tour of American Chamber of Commerce chapters, has to know more about introductions than, "Hi. I'm Chip and this is my pal Shorty."

The problem of what to teach was solved by functions. How to teach them did not conjure up whole new methodologies nor did it invalidate old ones. During the summer, I succeeded and failed with aspects of all the methodologies I had ever been exposed to. One methodology which I did use often was drama. It occupied only a portion of my lesson planning and only a portion of the drama activities that I did employ was used spe-



## DRAMA

I have read that drama is conflict, that it is the recreation of life, that it is the doing rather than the telling of a story, that it is "play" in its broadest sense. I think that it is all of these things.

It embraces music, art, dance and poetry. It seems unnecessary to draw lines between these artforms. If I did draw a line, I might put myself in the position of saying that music and art do not belong in the language classroom while I strongly believe that they do.

If functions are what one is really doing with language, drama is what we are doing with the functions.

Man: Excuse me. Do you have the time?

Woman: No, I don't. (Pause) I forgot my watch and my whole day is thrown off.

Man: I know how that is. (Pause) I'm having a bad day myself.

Woman: That's too bad. (Pause) Do you want to tell me about it?

Functions: Requesting Information/Answering a Question/Reporting a Fact/ Expressing Confusion/Expressing Commiseration/Expressing Sympathy, and so on. What is it all about? Boredom? Loneliness? Is someone picking someone up? Who then? Are there larger units at work here than just what is on the sentence level? How does a "pick up" work, culturally and linguistically? How does this conversation go from a simple inquiry and response to a completely different mode of interaction? How do people meet and talk to total strangers in a given culture? How do they keep the conversation going? Is it possible to present, practice and integrate the function To Strike Up a Conversation? How can people strike up a conversation if they already know each other? Through drama.

Drama is purposeful. Only what is necessary is included. Everything is relevant. For the drama about loneliness, we don't need to know that these people are waiting in the rain for a bus, that the man caught some-

one else's sleeve when he tried to open his umbrella, that there were quite a few brakes screeching and gears turning while this conversation was going on. On the other hand, we might be able to make use of a sixteen foot tall puppet eating dinner all alone. When you create a drama, you use only what you need, but you can have as much as you want.

If an audience was present when the drama above was enacted, it would be a theatrical event, a play. Otherwise, it is a dialogue (if it is written down) or an improvisation. It might be done on cassette tape or it might be done with stick figures, flashlights and whispers.

Drama doesn't have to look and sound like what you see and hear from a Lower East Side fire escape on a summer night, but there is nothing unreal about it. Not if you are talking about real ideas, real things that happened, real dreams, illusions, fears and feelings. The language in a drama must be appropriate to what is being expressed. Bad theater is inappropriate communication. The audience is not getting what you mean. The king is acting like the janitor. When there is no audience, then there is no one to say what is appropriate or not unless you choose to impose the question of appropriateness on yourself.

The drama teacher is someone who enables others to take part in dramas. That usually means making a lot of the decisions about the characters, the story, the form of the drama, the length, the beginning and the ending. The students' task is how to dramatize the story. That often means choosing appropriate language. This paper is only concerned with drama activities that help students learn to express language functions. Drama activities also build community, break the ice, provide for emotional and physical outlet, exercise the imagination and give people the opportunity to be active when they might otherwise be passive. All of these objectives are worthwhile and may well be the benefit of using drama to teach functions.

## IDEAS

The seven ideas listed here are representative, not comprehensive. They are designed so that every member of the class participates simultaneously. There are no onlookers, no audience.

The first four ideas are suitable for any level, including beginning. The next two are for intermediate or advanced levels, the last one is for advanced only.

They have all been tried out with language learners. They are designed to allow the learner to do different things with language. As far as the stories go, they are all original, although making up the stories is the easy part. Ideas for the construction of activities are found in many good books, some of which are listed in the bibliography.

Further discussion about the pedagogical aspects of using these drama activities is contained in the next chapter.

### 1. On Location: Five Conversations

#### Friday Night at the Mayaguez Mall

The teacher names the place. In this case, it is the huge American-style shopping center, seven miles on the main road out of Mayaguez. Friday night is when the week reaches a climax. Everyone goes to the Mall. Some shop, some hang out. The teacher asks for ideas for five different, but typical, conversations which can be heard at the Mall on a Friday night. The students suggest the following: Salesperson talking with Customer, Mother talking with Security Guard about her lost child, A Friend advising another Friend not to buy a pair of tight pants, A Teenage Boy trying to interest a Teenage Girl, A Store Manager talking with a Salesperson who he believes is stealing from the store.

The teacher suggests which functions might be contained in each con-

versation but only those that the class has recently worked on. For example, Greeting and Showing, Pleading and Expressing Worry, Hinting and Pointing Out, Hinting and Boasting, Warning and Expressing Innocence. Perhaps the teacher gives the class as few as three functions (Hinting, Expressing Worry, Expressing Disagreement) which work for all the conversations. The class is divided into pairs and each pair works out a one-minute improvisation of one conversation, concentrating of course on the expression of the functions. The teacher urges the students to "Think Radio." The stories must be told without the benefit of action, props or visual effects. What is happening must be made clear from the language itself. After ten minutes or so, the teacher tells the class that they have five more minutes in which to finish. When time is up, the class quickly decides on a proper order for the five conversations.

Then they are put on cassette. First, a piece of relevant music is taped, then the first conversation, then more music, then another conversation, and so on until the final piece of music at the end. To tape the music properly, a second tape recorder, with a lead to the first one is necessary. When the taping is completed, everyone listens. The teacher asks how the appropriateness of the language, the effectiveness of the drama and the quality of the recording could have been improved. Continued focus on the linguistic element, the artistic and the technical will allow the students to measure their development in drama work.

## 2. Fable at the Table

### A Week at a Norwegian Hotel

This is a variation of the idea above. The students are complete beginners in Norwegian. They have learned to Greet and to Identify themselves. The next function is to Show something (specifically, snapshots

of their friends and relatives). The grammatical forms embodied in the function are This is/That is and My/Our.

The teacher begins the lesson by handing out stacks of white cards to each student. He tells the group to draw as many pictures as possible of photos they would likely have in their wallets if they were Norwegian guests at a skihotel in the mountains. The photos can be of relatives, friends, car, dog, place of work, whatever. Students are encouraged to think about quantity, not quality. Lively Norwegian folk music sets a nice tone for hurrying them along.

After a few minutes, everyone has several "photos." The teacher draws his own crude photos on brown paper, then says, "This is my wife. That is my dog. This is our house." The class is told that they will be making a drama using the photos, but first they need to practice the new forms. After suitable time for the presentation and practice of the new grammar, the drama begins.

Groups of four are seated at different tables for their first night's dinner at a cozy Norwegian hotel in the mountains. They will be staying one week. Each guest has come alone. It is hotel policy to seat them at tables with other guests and they are expected to keep the same seats at the same tables throughout their stay. The guests Greet each other, Identify themselves and Show each other the photos in their wallets.

For each of the next six class days there are new functions and new dramas at the tables. Each drama recycles old functions besides incorporating new ones. Each drama can be put on cassette each day (carefully linked by music to the scene from the day before) or else all seven scenes can be reviewed and taped at once on the seventh day. At the end, the seven scenes (each need not be more than thirty seconds in length), linked with music, will make a drama that Ibsen would have been proud of.

Here's the story: (1) They meet and Show Pictures. (2) One of the guests is celebrating his birthday and orders champagne for the table (Expressing Thanks, Expressing Surprise). (3) One guest breaks her leg skiing (Expressing Sympathy, Expressing Understanding). (4) One guest breaks her arm (Expressing Astonishment, Invoking the Gods). (5) Another guest breaks his leg (Hyperbole, Speechlessness). (6) A blizzard swirls around the hotel (Reporting Facts, Expressing Agreement). (7) The last night. The bones have healed and the blizzard has subsided (Toasting, Leavetaking).

The class listens and comments on their own progress in drama work in terms of the appropriateness of the language, the effectiveness of the drama and the quality of the recording.

### 3. A Docudrama With Folksong

#### Reagan Cuts Food Stamps

A final variation on the use of short dialogues interspersed with music and put on cassette is to make use of a folksong. The students are South American and they have expressed an interest in U.S. current affairs. They go on a tour of Brattleboro, where some of them visit the Social Services Office. They hear about the Administration's cuts in the food stamp program. They discuss it in class and decide to make a drama.

The teacher asks for a familiar melody to which they could write a folksong. The melody chosen is Paul McCartney's "Yesterday." The teacher divides the class into groups of three. Each group is to compose one verse of a folksong about food stamps, poverty, government waste, hunger or whatever they choose. When the verses are ready, they are put into the best order for a song.

The teacher tells the story. A Mother and her Daughter go to the Social Services Office for their monthly food stamps and are told that

they have been cut off from the program. There are four scenes, each involving three characters. Each group works on all four scenes. After each group has taped its scene, the entire class sings and records another verse from the song. In the end there will be four different dramas, each one united by the same folksong running through it.

First the mother and daughter Ask For the food stamps and are Denied. Then they Plead and the social services bureaucrat Sympathizes. Then they Express Worry and the bureaucrat Expresses Discomfort. Finally, the bureaucrat Denies Guilt and the family Expresses Anger.

The result is a powerful docudrama about a contemporary issue. The class listens and comments on the appropriateness of the language, effectiveness of the drama and quality of the recording. At this point the class might decide to make their own documentary containing interviews with people in the community, photographs or a slide show, narration and music.

#### 4. The Before and After Improvisation Computer

##### A Trip to Brattleboro

Five Japanese students are about to take their first forays into the town of Brattleboro. Their task is to interview Americans and find out what they know about Japan. They have made up their questionnaires and have practiced expressing the functions of Interrupting people on the street, Asking them questions and Thanking them. They have also practiced how to Terminate a conversation that they don't want to continue.

Before they go out on their own, the teacher offers to act as an American Improvisation Computer for them. They can walk up to the teacher and try out their functions on him as many times as they like. The desks and chairs are pushed aside. Although the group studying Norwegian sat

at tables for their improvisation, it seems important for the Japanese to be on their feet, walking around. There is much more to the expression of functions than just the linguistic component. The cultural aspects of loudness, stance, gesture, positioning and facial expression are vital to effective communication. They seem to warrant particular focus for the Japanese. Were the Japanese to work on an improvisation about a week at a hotel in the Poconos, they would have been sitting at tables too. The activity dictates, to some extent, whether to have movement, use a tape recorder or just sit and concentrate on speaking. But the activity can be chosen to meet specific needs of specific groups.

The teacher starts walking back and forth across the room. The Japanese come up one by one and engage the teacher in conversation. Each time a student says, "Excuse me" or "May I ask you some questions?" the teacher gives a slightly different response. The responses are designed to cover all of the possible eventualities that might befall the students on the streets. The improvisations continue for over an hour. It is in the students' best interest to be prepared for going into the community and they use the security of the classroom for all the help they can get. In the end the students themselves decide when they are ready.

Just before they leave for town, the teacher asks them to make note of how Americans Say Goodbye. When class resumes the next day, the Leave-taking improvisations begin. This time the teacher plays the role of a Japanese and the students play Americans.

Before-and-After Improvisations can be used for such experiences as Going to a Restaurant (before: ordering food; after: small talk by the waiter), Using the Telephone (before: making inquiries; after: how to end the conversation).

After each round of improvisations, students can discuss which func-

tions they need to express next. Before-and-after improvisations are excellent for mixed-level groups because each student gets individual attention by the teacher.

#### 5. The Cleaning Lady

A fuller development of the short, paired improvisations used for the cassette dramas and the words-and-action improvisations of the before-and-after kind is the One-Day Play, which is improvised, polished and staged by the class from beginning to end in two and a half hours. The functions used in the play might already be known, in which case the play becomes an opportunity to use them in real conversation. The play can also be made without delineating all of the functions contained within and then remade after students see that certain moments in the play would be improved by concentrated work on the addition of new functions or more appropriate language. Planning for one or two remakes with a different focus each time might be advisable in order to extend the students' development of the material.

The following drama has seven scenes. Here is the story: (1) A teacher on vacation meets a cleaning lady from the same school. They didn't know each other well in school, but here, miles away in the countryside, they chat amiably (Introductions, Expressions of Friendliness and Interest). (2) The cleaning lady is back at work, refreshed and relaxed, when her boss, the custodian, comes up to her and informs her that she will unfortunately be replaced in three months time by a new machine. She will get all her benefits and generous severance pay (Delivering Bad News, Expressing Disbelief). (3) She goes to the manager of the factory that manufactures machines which replace cleaning ladies. He interviews her for a job and then hires her at minimum wages (Asking Personal Questions,

Expressing Interest). (4) She gets on-the-job training from another worker. All the buttons and levers are confusing (Giving Instructions, Expressing Understanding, Expressing Frustration). (5) It is several years later and she is now a highly skilled, well-paid worker in the factory. A new political party has taken over the country with the platform that there must be one hundred percent employment, not merely fifty percent employment in highly specialized industries like there is at the moment. A government worker, who just happens to be her old teacher friend, visits her. She comes to say that the factory will close and she must go back to her old job of being a cleaning lady (Persuading the cleaning lady to go, Expressing Resignation). (6) Back at her old job, she meets another cleaning lady who will now share the work with her, whereas before she used to do it alone (Guarded Friendliness and Introductions). (7) The politician lady goes back to her boss's office to report on her day's activities (Reporting Facts, Expressing Personal Feelings).

Each scene has two characters. The teacher divides the class into pairs. Each pair contains Person A and Person B. For each scene, the teacher decides who A plays and who B plays. Each pair improvises all the scenes from the entire play. The teacher stops the improvisations each time when they are going strong, not when they are waning down or finished. It doesn't matter if students haven't completely finished; their energy level must remain high in order to work through the entire sequence. After the pairs run through the seven scenes, the scenes are reassigned, one to a pair, for further development (I am assuming that there are fourteen students in the class. If there aren't, the teacher has to work with a different number of scenes, accordingly). Each pair works concentratedly on its one scene. During this polishing period, students can search for props, bits of costume and furniture. (Desks and chairs are pushed aside.)

When the scenes are ready, the teacher goes around to each pair and finds out exactly how each section will end. This will enable him to turn on music at precisely the right moment. The students sit in a circle around an open space in the order of the scenes in the play. The teacher plays music, then slowly turns down the volume as the first scene begins. When it ends, there is continued music while the two students clear their props and the new students set up theirs. Then the music fades again and the play continues. After the final scene is played, the music comes on for the last time and continues to its climax. Besides agreeing on the music cues, the students must coordinate place names, common references and the names of the characters in the drama. The scenes need be no longer than two minutes in duration.

The class discusses its work. There may well be enthusiasm for re-making the play at another time. It might also be useful to see the scenes in terms of relationship patterns instead of isolated functions.

#### 6. Working With a Text

##### Scene I of "The Death of Bessie Smith"

When a theater director is faced with directing a play, he usually tries to figure out what the subtext is, or the real meaning behind the characters' lines. The functions of specific lines have to be interpreted in ways appropriate to the scene. The smaller and larger units of language need to be looked at in isolation as well as in conjunction with each other. Just as there might be ten ways of expressing a given function, so might there be ten possible functions for a given piece of language. Deciphering the proper function depends on the contexts of setting, relationship patterns of the characters, occasion and other sociolinguistic factors particular to the scene. Working with a text provides opportunities for deducing sociolinguistic information and then applying that information to sensitive

words-and-actions dramatizations of culturally rich material. It doesn't matter which period or genre the play is set in. When the famous Russian director and writer, Stanislavski, wrote about theater, he talked about the inner life of the text. He just as well could have been talking about functions as they are being used here.

Actors have to know the implied functions of their lines in order to deliver them appropriately. Besides being purely linguistic, these functions have a psychological and cultural element as well. Who are these people and what are they really saying? Students analyzing the text of an American play can learn a great deal about American life. What are the actions of the characters? How do they listen to each other? What is the body language?

Groups of two work on the following scene. It is the first scene from Edward Albee's play The Death of Bessie Smith, which students have already read through. One plays Bernie and one plays Jack. Every nuance of the text should be worked on. The style should be a naturalistic one. How do the American characters in the play talk, sit, move, laugh, gesture and use their faces? No one is telling students how they should talk and move when they speak English. The focus is entirely on the characters and the play.

The teacher can direct the scene himself, he can get an outside person to come in or students can direct each other. Directors might want to begin by discussing what the functions are behind each line, each speech act, each conversation, each scene. Students then act out their roles. By focusing so hard on a text and then actually taking on the roles themselves, students increase their ability to look at the target culture as a whole and mine that culture for the purpose of learning how native speakers communicate.

The Death of Bessie Smith

SCENE ONE

The corner of a barroom, BERNIE seated at a table, a beer before him, with glass. JACK enters, tentatively, a beer bottle in his hand; he does not see BERNIE.

BERNIE  
(Recognizing JACK; with pleased surprise) Héy!

JACK  
Hm?

BERNIE  
Hey; Jack!

JACK  
Hm? . . . What? . . . (Recognizes him) Bernie!

BERNIE  
What you doin' here, boy? C'mon, sit down.

JACK  
Well, I'll be damned. . . .

BERNIE  
C'mon, sit down, Jack.

JACK  
Yeah . . . sure . . . well, I'll be damned. (Moves over to the table; sits)  
Bernie. My God, it's hot. How you been, boy?

BERNIE  
Fine; fine. What you doin' here?

JACK  
Oh, travelin'; travelin'.

BERNIE  
On the move, hunh? Boy, you are the last person I expected t'walk in that door; small world, hunh?

JACK  
Yeah; yeah.

BERNIE  
On the move, hunh? Where you goin'?

JACK  
(Almost, but not quite, mysterious) North.

BERNIE (Laughs)  
North! North? That's a big place, friend: north.

JACK

Yeah . . . yeah, it is that: a big place.

BERNIE

(After a pause; laughs again) Well, where, boy? North where?

JACK

(Coyly; proudly) New York.

BERNIE

New York!

JACK

Unh-hunh; unh-hunh.

BERNIE

New York, hunh? Well. What you got goin' up there?

JACK

(Coy again) Oh . . . well . . . I got somethin' goin' up there. What you been up to, boy?

BERNIE

New York, hunh?

JACK

(Obviously dying to tell about it) Unh-hunh.

BERNIE

(Knowing it) Well, now, isn't that somethin'. Hey! You want a beer? You want another beer?

JACK

No, I gotta get . . . well, I don't know, I . . .

BERNIE

(Rising from the table) Sure you do. Hot like this? You need a beer or two, cool you off.

JACK

(Settling back) Yeah; why not? Sure, Bernie.

BERNIE

(A dollar bill in his hand; moving off) I'll get us a pair. New York, hunh? What's it all about, Jack? Hunh?

JACK (Chuckles)

Ah, you'd be surprised, boy; you'd be surprised.

(Lights fade on this scene, come up on another, which is)

After working on the play, the teacher suggests that the students go, in small groups, to a bar, cafe or coffee shop. They should observe how

people talk, taking surreptitious notes, if possible. They should note the "characters" who frequent the establishment, taking special note of their nonverbal communication. Back in class, they will write their own one-act play out of their raw data. To write a good play, it sometimes helps to have students write the beginning, the middle and the end, before fleshing out the whole story. Once the play is written, it can be shared with the rest of the class or put on videotape. Bars, cafes and coffee shops are good settings for drama. They are different in every country. It is easy for students to know what to do in the drama (eat, drink, lean, play the jukebox, meet new people, tell tall tales, complain, boast, be miserable, play cards, make wagers, fight, show things, be regulars, be new in town, conform, be different, ask for help, talk politics, make predictions, tell jokes, get phone calls, get thrown out). One-act plays need not be longer than ten minutes. Short scenes or isolated conversations can be linked by jukebox refrains or overused cliches can be recited in chorus or sent up in the air on balloons.

## 7. A Simulation

### The Martians

The last idea is for an all-day or all-afternoon simulation. The exercise can have several contiguous aims and objectives, such as values clarification in a multinational group. Most of the functions involved come under the heading of expressing thought processes. Students must be careful about whether they are giving opinions, relating thoughts, stating assumptions, reporting facts or proposing ideas. Such functions are vital to college bound students, both in their aural and written English. The sustained mood of reasoning, discussion, sharing of ideas and the insistence upon clarity in solving the various tasks are all cen-

tral to the success of the simulation.

The teacher explains: "The Martians have contracted with various institutions on earth for lecturers to come up to Mars as part of a ten-week lecture series on the history of the world. Nine lecturers have already gone and come back. They came from China, Africa, Europe and all over. The Martians now know absolutely everything there is to know about the world up to 1945." The teacher does not explain what the Martians know or who they are or what they look like or who lectured to them. Such considerations are up to the students themselves to figure out, although no one will ask them such questions directly. "You are the tenth and last lecturer. You have to cover from 1945 to the present. The Martians know everything before then and nothing after. Your two-hour lecture will be based around ten significant events of the period. These can be political, economic, scientific or however you wish to underpin and highlight your remarks. They can be famous things or personal things. Each person makes his or her own list."

When everyone is finished, the lists are shared and explained. Before the discussion goes on too long, the teacher continues: "The Martians liked your lecture very much. In fact, they were crazy about you too. They are really interested in the world and they decide to ask you to help them. A group of about forty-five Martians are able to take some time off and take a trip to earth and they want you to be their guide. They will be able to visit earth for exactly seven days. Their spaceship can land anywhere you suggest. At the end of exactly seven days, it must take off again for Mars from the same spot. While on earth, the Martians would like to use public transportation to get around. That can mean anything from donkeys to the Concorde. They would like you to arrange their itinerary. Money is no object. The Martians prefer to eat and sleep like humans

while they are here, so you should provide for that. They are willing to go anywhere and do anything. It is a long trip from Mars and they probably won't ever come back. It is unlikely that another group will come for many hundreds of years either. Each person makes his or her own itinerary."

When everyone is finished, the itineraries are shared and explained. Again, before too much discussion, the teacher continues: "The Martians have come. While on earth they announce that they would like to make a statement and hold a press conference on the seventh day at a place near their spaceship. The world goes crazy in anticipation of what the Martians will say. But the Martians demand that there be no TV cameras, no tape recorders and only five human beings present when they speak. They would like you to choose the five. Everyone makes his or her own list."

After the lists are ready and shared, the teacher continues: "The Martians have spoken." Do not ask the group what the Martians actually said. That is for another game and another mood. "It is the day after. Your local hometown newspaper is going to press with its first edition after the Martians spoke. On the first page are two important articles. One is a summary of the Martians' remarks which includes the setting in which they were made. The information in it was garnered from someone who had contact with one of the five people on your list. The other article is your ace reporter's World Exclusive Martian Interest Story. It concerns some incident which took place just before the spaceship took off. Work with a partner in producing the two articles. Remember: hometown newspaper, one news story, one Martian Interest Story."

Everyone chooses a partner and goes to work. When the articles are ready they are read to the group.

Justification

Drama provides new contexts for using language. In the traditional classroom, there are traditional ways of interacting. There are certain types of communications that go on there and many that do not go on there. Drama brings in contexts that are not usually present. That does not mean such contexts are not real. It is just that they have been moved into the classroom, somewhat arbitrarily, in order to expand the language experiences of the learners. Although these contexts are, in a sense, borrowed, that does not exclude the need for them to be connected to the students' own experience. In what may seem like a paradox, the teacher is setting up activities in a foreign language and in a foreign culture that are supposed to touch the interior life of the learner. How can a seventeen-year-old from Peru dramatize the role of a sixty-year-old from Keene, New Hampshire? Where do the outside factors meet the internal processes?

I believe the answer lies in functions. The man can Plead, the boy can Plead. The man can Express Joy and the boy can Express Joy. The boy can't possibly look like or sound like the man. But he can do the same things with language and with everything else he uses in order to communicate. Because he is seventeen, his dramatization of the old man will be different from that of the teacher's or from Spencer Tracy's. But, just like Spencer Tracy, he can only make his drama in context. You can't tell someone, "O.K., plead!"

It need not always be the teacher who gives meanings and functions. Meaning can be extracted from texts, stories, the community and the media. There can be disagreements as to what the functions are. But there cannot be drama work until the functions are clear to the person who is creating. The functions are what is acted out, not things like the old man's twitch

or limp. (The twitch and the limp can be useful, however, after the functions are in place.) Students cannot be asked to dramatize stories without knowing what they are doing. When they don't know what the functions are, they giggle or stall or stop completely. They lose confidence and get embarrassed.

It does not serve the drama work for the teacher to focus on functions unnecessarily. Functions which are expressed well naturally, without teacher stimulation, are of course the desired results of language teaching. It pays to be economical about the number of functions highlighted. If the students studying Norwegian could have done other things besides just Greet each other and Identify themselves, the teacher could have suggested they engage in "small talk" while they were waiting for their dinners and Showing their photos. In that way, the function being worked on would be placed in a fuller communicative setting.

#### Artform

When the teacher, through his directions, does put limits on the communicative possibilities, that does not necessarily limit the overall significance or complexity of the work being done. One of the most effective and moving dramas that students made this summer grew out of simple twenty-second improvisations. I had asked the South Americans to dramatize the moment when they were most excited about the idea of coming to the States, while they were still at home in their countries. Groups of three worked together, taking on roles of persons who were present when these exciting moments happened. Each group did three improvisations. They then worked on the saddest moments, the scariest moments and, finally, the nicest thing to have happened after their arrival. Each group selected one student's stories to work on further. The four episodes were improvised

and I linked them together myself with a speech welcoming them to the States and wishing them good luck. The purpose of the exercise was to provide contexts for introducing Expressions of Personal Feeling in general ("I could have kissed the ground," "I was bowled over," and so on). But even though the drama was extremely short and simple, the pride that they showed in their work and the impact it had on them was considerable.

It is my assumption that students enjoy working on serious tasks. They like exercises to be linked together and to come to a climax. They like endings, not just exercises for the sake of doing exercises. The parts may be unfinished, but the whole is finished. That does not need to imply finished performances. None of the work mentioned here needs to be performed for others. The ability of any group to share and accept each other's efforts is something that takes time to develop. The teacher must consistently evaluate how secure members of the class feel with regard to their colleagues.

The basic principle in all drama work for personal development, be it language development or not, is that everyone works simultaneously. Everyone is doing, no one is watching. There is no audience until everyone is ready for it. The focus might be on language or teamwork or movement, but the nature of the work is still creative. It can have considerable artistic merit when students are concentrated and secure. Teachers should be prepared to accept beautiful and emotional results.

#### Teacher's Role and Student's Development

Although the teacher makes many decisions about the nature of the drama work to be attempted, once the task is set, the work then becomes the student's own. The teacher can decide what to do. The students decide how to do it. If the teacher steps over that line and involves

himself in how to do the task, the drama work is no longer the students' and they will lose interest. Respect and acceptance of students' work is essential. Correction of inappropriate language must be handled with care, even though it is still a language class. Once the drama has been given over to the class, the teacher is only a time keeper, a resource and an energizer.

Students, for the sake of their own development as learners, cannot afford to fail in drama work. If they experience failure, they won't want to try it again. The two biggest hurdles to overcome are lack of concentration and insecurity. One way to build up concentration is to begin with very very short activities. One way to build security is to have students work with things from their own lives. The Martians and the man from Keene can wait. If students are insecure about improvising on their feet, they can write out their dialogues first. If they are unsure about writing, the teacher can write out their lines for them. However one begins, it is best to stop while people are still excited. They may not have finished, but they will be ready for more when the next drama activity is introduced.

Working with drama over a period of time, the teacher has an opportunity to be quite demanding. In conversation activities, the teacher might not push the class at all. He might welcome and encourage any kind of participation. He recognizes that students need to use language naturally, in their own way. In drama work, one of the aims is good drama. You can't get a good conversation by having the same one over again. You can get good drama by inviting the students to focus on still one more aspect of what they have just done. The teacher can exhort his class to be thorough, to reach into themselves in order to do their best. He tries to stimulate them to think of new ways of looking at their work. At the

same time, he doesn't need to be Otto Preminger about it. Students often want to do something five times in order to create something they are proud of. They are unlikely to want to repeat five times the conversation about what they had last night for dinner.

Each repetition has to have a clear focus. The class can work on such things as appropriateness, listening noises and understandings, intonation, register or pronunciation. Communication is matched with practice.

### Learning

Drama is linked with learning in several ways. It helps people to solve problems creatively (from learning a language to balancing a check-book). Drama, music and art stimulate the right side of the brain, a stated goal in several language teaching methodologies. An interesting exercise is to play loud music and ask the students to find private, "quiet" spaces anywhere in the room. (Some will go under the desks.) Tell them that they are radio commentators. They are talking into microphones while they describe a funeral procession or a royal wedding to patriotic music. Or they are present at an earthquake or a fire while listening to Holst's "The Planets." Perhaps they are in a small plane above the Spanish countryside while listening to flamenco. All the students talk at once. If the music is loud enough, no one can hear the others speak. If it is dark in the room, no one can see. For students, it's a moment of totally private, uninhibited descriptive language.

Cognitive learning is accelerated when learners are absorbed in a task that is in their self-interest. The conviction behind the drama activity and the strength of the images created are what will absorb those taking part. I wish that all of my drama work had been as successful, as far as cognitive learning is concerned, as the before-and-after work with

the Japanese. Motivation, engagement and energy were at their highest and they learned more English in an hour than they did on any other given day. They learned what Americans are likely to say when they are too busy to talk, have all the time in the world to talk, are embarrassed about not knowing something, wish to change the subject, extend a welcome to the community, take leave. They learned to cope with all of the above by learning to express thanks and take leave quickly, introduce themselves and their business, put others at ease, keep their business going, express thanks with greater elaboration, take leave warmly. When the group studying Norwegian asked for the vocabulary that corresponded with their "photos," they learned the new words rapidly. Because the words were for things they had made themselves, their self-interest and motivation were strongly apparent.

#### Lesson Planning

It is possible to look at the language lesson in terms of presentation of material, practice and communication. The communication part of the lesson is the time when the new piece of language is no longer used in isolation, but integrated with the language that the student can already control. The new piece of language is thus practiced in a meaningful way.

Obviously, the drama activities mentioned here fall mostly into the communication section of the lesson. They are designed to create meaningful contexts in which students can speak and communicate. Besides serving as a context for communication, a drama can also be linked to presentation and practice. In idea #2, the Norwegian Hotel, and idea #4, the Before and After, new material is introduced after the drama activity has begun.

It is always possible to stop the drama and practice (drill, if necessary) on the spot. The class can practice the grammar point, or points,

contained in the new functions, or for that matter, recycled functions. If the grammar is in place, they can work on recalling suitable vocabulary. Or they can run through their repertoire of listening responses and answers to yes/no questions. When practice is linked with communication, learners are better motivated. Practicing in the middle of a drama is like letting a relief pitcher throw eight practice pitches from the mound in a baseball game. It is triggered by what is going on. Students can ask for practice, or ask for new presentations, in order to go further in their creative work.

There is a seamless, cause-and-effect relationship between making use of functions which the students already know and the construction of opportunities for the introduction of new functions. Dramas can grow organically. The leader of the Japanese group had mastered Introducing the group's members to all kinds of people, from fellow students at SIT to VIPs. He had also learned to Express elaborate Thanks on the group's behalf to the host families and other officials who might be of help to them during the forthcoming homestay. The class was improvising a scene from the final dinner with all of the host families (a dinner that was likely to take place in a month's time). Other community officials were present as well. He Introduced everyone and gave a speech of Thanks. One of the students said that he should tell a joke because he was too serious. How does one tell an after-dinner joke? I asked him to translate a Japanese joke. It was distinctly not what was needed. I got the cleaning lady and we worked out a new one. From the joke itself, we worked out what features after-dinner jokes contain (self-effacement, expressing innocence and nervousness about telling jokes) and went on from there. You couldn't stop the guy after that. A sample: "When I first got to the bus station in Baltimore, I was so shy about speaking English that when

my host father came up to me and asked me if I was Yoshiaki, I almost said no, and then I never would have been here tonight."

Drama is an activity in its own right. It should be labeled such. When the teacher says that the class will now work with drama, the class should know what he means. It is their time to be creative and his time to give directions.

### Giving Directions

The directions for drama work need not always be given in function word terms. Directions need only be clear enough and stimulating enough so that the students can figure out what the functions are. Here are two teachers giving directions. The class is about to practice using functions which they have already learned expressions for.

Mary Jane: O.K., class. Let's practice what we've learned. Pick a partner. Call yourselves A and B. A is the doctor. B is the patient. B is ill. There is a very funny scene in A's office. In the end, B hits A over the head with a stethoscope. Begin.

Mary Louise: O.K., class. Let's create a drama. Pick a partner. Call yourselves A and B. A is the doctor. B is the patient. B is ill. He goes to A. He wants A to understand his problem. A feels that for professional reasons she should understand B's problem, but for the life of her, she cannot figure out what is wrong. B gets more and more annoyed. A gets more and more flustered. Decide on the ending yourselves. Begin.

Unless the students are a group of professional comedians, they will need to have quite a bit of discussion before following Mary Jane's directions. Mary Louise's directions allow the students to begin right away. They also leave plenty of room for personal choices. Four groups in a class working with Mary Louise's directions will produce dramas of much greater variety than Mary Jane's, even though, on the surface, Mary Jane's might seem to provide for more freedom.

### Doing Versus Reporting

The juxtaposition of doing drama and reporting what happened in the groups can be usefully exploited by the teacher. Because a lot of the drama work in the classroom might not be heard at all by the teacher, he has a good opportunity to ask what happened. Students not ready for sharing their creative work are often quite ready to talk about it. By reporting what went on, they get to practice an entirely different set of functions. Often in reporting, the students use the very words which the functions are called by. As these words are important and should usually be defined and understood, often when the function is introduced, this is an important step in refocusing on both the concept and the execution of the function. One of Mary Louise's students might say: "I went to the doctor and showed her my leg. She asked me questions about it. I tried to convince her of how much it hurt. She merely listened and pretended to understand, but I could see that she was confused. I pleaded with her to help me. She was nervous and finally said she didn't know why my leg had turned orange. I then lit a match to the oxygen tank in the corner of her office and ran out the door." The teacher might ask, "How did you plead?" The student might say, "I said, 'Please, please, I'm going to die if you don't help me.'" Other students might learn from the example.

### Evaluation

With students often working out of earshot, how does the teacher evaluate the drama work being done? How do the students themselves know when they are speaking correctly and appropriately? The teacher using drama has to become skilled at being there and not being there at the same time. He has to circulate, listen and move away. He has to have a

sense of when he can be privy to what the students are creating. The class must accept him as a language resource, not as a competing creative artist.

He should recycle functions constantly. By far, most of what the students say, when working with drama, should be automatic and second nature. Any new language must be clearly focused. The teacher must say that in such and such a scene, the class should practice such and such function. They should include the new grammar and the new vocabulary. After one run-through of the scene, if needed, the class might repeat the part which contains the new language. The teacher and the others can listen. After correction, and perhaps some practice and reinforcement, they can try the whole scene again.

When the teacher does correct, he must not be seen as a drama critic, but rather as an interested listener. A lot can be gained from simply observing the students from a distance. Are they speaking with fluency? Are they in control of themselves and the task? If the answers are yes, then they probably don't have too many linguistic problems. Students can easily measure their own progress by noting which dramas they could make before and which they can make now. They can also remake old dramas and see how much richer and deeper the new ones are because of their language development.

### Aims

By working with functions, drama, a great variety of contexts for communication and making concentrated use of the community, when possible, students will be prepared for continued language learning when the course is over. Aware of the sociolinguistic dimensions of language use, they will be better able to analyze and learn from the "live" language all

around them. They will not be unduly dependent upon teachers and textbooks. By concentrating on their competence in expressing individual functions, they will have a better sense of what they can and cannot do in the language. Because they will come to view language as a phenomenon that is the product of the interaction of people in a social context, they will see "correctness" and "incorrectness" within social contexts as well. Competence will consist of specific, identifiable skills, "What functions in which roles can I express?" Self-confidence in both the new language and culture will grow as the list of skills grows. Finally, the student will view language as a vehicle for communication, not as something distant and intractable that is spoken well only after all the exams have been passed and all the grammar has been ingested.

## THE LANGUAGE/DRAMA TEACHER

The ideas in the Ideas chapter are personal. I doubt that any other teacher would have three out of four hotel guests break bones in three days. Teachers have to be able to come up with their own activities. If, as many teachers advocate, the classroom should be a "live" place where communication is real and teaching is based on student needs and not on a programmed textbook, and the language laboratory is a "live" lab where lessons are put together daily and prepared tapes are out of favor, then recycled gigs from faraway drama teachers are unlikely to be too inspiring either.

In order to make up drama activities, teachers have to experience drama work themselves as participants. They need to have confidence in their imaginations. Since the teacher using drama does so with the assumption that the students have good enough imaginations to make drama, it would be strange if teachers felt that they themselves didn't have good enough imaginations to plan activities.

Stories for dramatization are everywhere. Making them into drama is sometimes a question of putting limitations on too many variables, like putting caps on the valves of a steam engine. I have tried to emphasize the following guidelines for teachers using drama:

1. Very short can be long enough.
2. Tell students what the functions are. When the drama serves up the need for new functions, make another drama tomorrow.
3. Cut down on variables. (Tape recorders stop teenagers from jumping around.)
4. Make the decisions about what to do yourself. The students figure out the How.
5. One drama activity can be linked with many other classroom activities, such as reporting what took place, writing and stopping in the middle for practice.
6. Music and art can be very helpful. They can link scenes, stretch out short works, set moods and douse unwanted discussions.

7. The teacher's narration can be useful too.
8. Students never need to fail in a drama activity. All activities can succeed. If in doubt, don't try it.
9. All students should participate, so no one watches. Participation can be very simple but vital and meaningful nevertheless.
10. What stimulates the imagination is clear directions, strong images, novel ways of looking at things. Discussions about what to do next grind down energy and sap the spirit.
11. Sharing and accepting go both ways. For drama work to succeed, the students and teacher have to feel secure with each other. Teachers ask students to do strange things. Students share their hearts and make fools of themselves. The teacher must also be a human being.
12. Energy helps. The teacher cannot ask a class to describe a forest fire if he seems like the kind of person who spends his free time describing matchboxes. It is not enough to lay out the task and then go out into the hall while the students work. Energy and enthusiasm for the task are vital or no one will want to do it. Otherwise drama activities could be conducted by correspondence course.

I am not sure that ultimately the language teacher and the drama teacher are really two separate persons. They may be given offices at opposite ends of the corridor and they may suspect each other of the worst personal inadequacies. They may even, in practice, have taken refuge in each other's profession. Nevertheless, they may look at their own jobs with the same assumptions about teaching, learning and creativity.

I find it interesting that teachers who use a functional approach to language are working in the same vein as most drama teachers who represent the main thrust of twentieth century arts education. Both look to life itself for the source of what is true and viable. The second language teacher looks at language outside the learner's previous experience. The drama teacher draws on life within each person's experience. The language/drama teacher is the one who marries the two approaches.

In my opinion, teacher training should try to see what drama and language have to say to each other. Employers might like to look at teachers who have this kind of experience. Schools which offered programs that combined language and arts education might find themselves with an

untapped market of eager learners. Learners who are fond of drama might find it an easy way to learn a language.

The language teacher, who uses drama brings new contexts to the classroom. He enables students to have the conversations they might like to have in a cafe in Paris or on Main Street, U.S.A., right in the classroom, free of charge and free of failure.

